'SAND IN THE HAND':
YOUNG PEOPLE'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMERCIAL
MEDIA IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Ian C. Grant

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores young people's experiences of contemporary, commercial media. It aims to provide a holistic understanding of new and more traditional media use.

The study draws its theoretical framework from the fields of communication studies, consumer behaviour, cultural studies, marketing, sociology and social psychology. Despite several studies investigating young people and new media, a richer understanding of media consumption is needed, located within an ever more commercialised landscape. Assumptions of new media participation are frequently taken for granted, with limited critical analysis of the consumer experience. Studies from a marketing perspective have focused exclusively on managerial effectiveness to the detriment of consumer realities. Moving beyond media effects, it takes an active consumer-centered approach, contextualising new media consumption within the everyday lives of young people. It compares and contrasts practitioner tactics with young people's lived experiences of new and traditional media.

Multiple methods of enquiry were used, informed by an interpretive approach. The initial fieldwork consisted of 15 interviews with 'expert' agency practitioners, investigating perceptions of youth marketing and the tactics deployed. Following a pilot study, the main consumer phase explored the mediated experiences of adolescents aged 13-17. A total of 175 secondary school pupils from three diverse school settings participated. Each completed a self-completion questionnaire, a smaller sample also contributing a time-based diary. 45 pupils participated in the qualitative phase, guided by the principles of phenomenology. Photo-elicitation and psycho-drawing techniques were utilised to enrichen discussions.

The new media experiences of young people in this study were indeed bound up in their everyday lives. Young people were found to have a complex range of 'new-media' experiences, embedded in their 'in home' and 'out of home' lifestyles. Their active use of the internet, for mood enhancement, experiential learning, escapism and communication, rarely encompassed commercial motivations. Of several barriers to new media use, online practitioner tactics caused the greatest concern. For many young people, such actions were deeply de-motivating, constituting an unwanted intrusion, in contrast to the symbiotic relationship synonymous with traditional advertising. Their consequent elusiveness is epitomised through the metaphor "sand in the hand".

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

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1. Background to the study

> 'The internet has the potential to radically transform not just the way individuals go about conducting their business with each other but also the very essence of what it means to be a human in society"
>
> Hoffman *et al.* (1995:1)

Hoffman *et al.* (1995) envisaged a society transformed by new forms of media such as the internet; one in which the internet plays a transformational role, shaping and directing everyday lives. One does not have to look far to discern the impact of the internet and other forms of new media on marketing communications theory and practice. New media has become an integral part of every marketing communications textbook and a growing number of practitioners' marketing plans. Internet literature reveals a plethora of studies examining how best to maximize the effect of the internet on consumer behaviour. However, few have sought to look beyond such effects, to explore the everyday experiences of consumers who actively use new media for their own social and personal uses.

This study is an exploration of young people's experiences of new forms of media such as the internet and mobile phones. It seeks to move beyond the new media advocacy argued by social commentators such as Tapscott (1998) and critically explore young people's relationships with new forms of media. This required an approach locating media consumption within the context of everyday lifestyles and traditional media rather than a narrow marketing-centric viewpoint of new media use. It was informed by the call of Thompson *et al.* (1989) to "put consumer experience back into consumer research". By focusing on the uses of, and meanings derived from, mediated experiences, the study offers a more expansive understanding of the phenomena in question (Spiggle 1994). Furthermore, the study sought to compare consumer experiences with perceptions and tactics deployed by marketing

practitioners.

This study has listened carefully to the experiences of young people rather than society at large. Young people have been depicted as the embodiment of the digital world (Katz 1996), ideally suited to the challenges posed by access to new forms of media (Buckingham 2000). Researchers have rarely, however, adopted a critical perspective, basing their assumptions on the experiences of a select few advocates rather than more diverse viewpoints (Tapscott 1998). This research argues that the viewpoints of older adolescents is of particular importance, given their unique position: on the cusp of adulthood, experimenting with new ideas and concepts (Arnett 2000), influencing others close by (Ward 1974) and beyond, and sophisticated in their dealings with marketing practices (Ritson and Elliott 1999).

The genesis of this research stems from my own experiences as a former advertising agency planner. Having spent many years conducting focus groups with young people and executing plans targeting a youth audience, rarely did I have the opportunity to truly explore the consumer perspective of young people's mediated experiences. My position as researcher was conditioned by the need to explore advertising concepts rather the broader context of media use. One comment stuck in my mind, providing a spark for subsequent exploration. It came from a fifteen year old boy participating in research for a well known Scottish fizzy drink. We had been discussing how best to hear about advertising messages and he replied that in certain circumstances, advertisers had no right to communicate with him. He was referring to his mobile phone, a newly acquired possession which he clearly treasured. Like many others, I had assumed he would welcome dialogue with one of their favourite brands, whatever the medium and in whatever context.

A review of the literature reveals a history of media use research, predominately from the fields of cultural and media studies. The uses and gratifications approach, offering a response to criticisms of 'media effects' (Wimmer and Dominick 1994), offered a promising start point. Its premise was that media use is *active*, *selective* and *goal-directed* (Katz in O'Donohoe 1994), providing an initial framework for understanding media use beyond the confines of commercial interaction. The more culturally-oriented work of Buckingham (2000, 2002, and 2003) and Livingstone and her co-

researchers (1999, 2002, 2004, and 2005) provided further inspiration to seek out explanations embedded in the everyday life experiences of young people. Their work suggested that a richer, more socially sensitive understanding could be achieved, building on the initial uses and gratifications approach. A multiple-methods approach was therefore pursued, seeking a more holistic understanding of new media consumption.

2. Primary research scope

A pilot study (Grant 2002) provided the ideal opportunity to explore the possibilities of a multiple-methods approach. The primary research was then conducted between 2003 and 2004. In advance of the main research phase, 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted with practitioners, across a range of youth-related advertising, research and media agencies. Practitioners were treated as 'expert' respondents, their perceptions, experiences and viewpoints providing vivid contrasts with the lived experiences of young people.

The main phase of the research comprised schools-based research, amongst older secondary-level pupils. Accessing young people through a range of school types ensured that diverse experiences could be explored, rooted in a variety of socio-cultural backgrounds. After several months of negotiation, three schools were found matching the criteria of *urban fee-paying*, *suburban state* and *rural state*. The variety of school types ensured that young people were not treated as a homogenous group but as a diverse set of people, in terms of their location, affluence and social background. Only 13-17 year olds were included in accordance with secondary school levels S4-S6, and consistent with the concept of older adolescents.

A total of 175 individuals participated in the study spanning the three schools. Each participant was offered the opportunity to complete a survey with questions covering media access & use, attitudes to lifestyle, marketing & technology and a section on young people's uses and gratifications of different media types. Participants were also encouraged to complete a seven-day diary, mapping out their leisure time use including media consumed.

To develop a contextualized understanding of media use, 45 individuals took part in mini focus groups. Each group consisted of three mutually selecting friends, making a total of 15 groups or 5 per school. Informed by the principles of phenomenology, the qualitative research explored how adolescent experiences of new media fitted into their everyday lives. Three separate sessions were conducted with each group, building a sense of rapport and trust with the moderator. After the initial briefing session, participants were encouraged to take 'photo-diaries' depicting their lives in, and out of their homes. This second session explored themes of leisure, lifestyle & media, using the photographs as a means of 'driving' discussions. The third session then concentrated on experiences of use and misuse of new forms of media. Personal drawings allowed participants to express themselves visually as well as verbally, providing a richer sense of how they felt about the internet.

3. Thesis structure

This thesis divides into three main parts: a review of the body of literature, consideration of the methodology employed and presentation of analysis and conclusions.

In the first part, **Chapter Two** sets the scene, addressing the literature pertaining to young people and the media in its broadest sense. **Chapter Three** focuses on research into young people and the new media phenomenon. **Chapter Four** assesses the suitability of the uses and gratifications tradition as a framework for understanding new media use. The final literature chapter, **Five,** focuses on relationships between marketing practices and young people through commercial media. The design for the empirical research programme is outlined in the second part of the thesis: **Chapter Six** covers the main arguments for a multiple methods research design.

The final part of the thesis covers findings from practitioner and then main schools research studies. **Chapter Seven** outlines the main themes emerging from practitioners' perspectives and stances taken when targeting a youth audience. The remaining analysis chapters cover the breadth of research findings into young

people's media consumption, integrating quantitative and qualitative findings. **Chapters Eight** and **Nine** outline access to, and patterns of media use through quantitative analysis whilst **Chapter Ten** provides a qualitative assessment of how media fits into young people's daily lifestyles. **Chapters Eleven, Twelve** and **Thirteen** combine quantitative and qualitative findings to assess how new media is used in comparison to other forms of media and in contextualised environments. Consideration is given to motivations for active use and barriers preventing more enthusiastic experiences. The remaining analysis chapter, **Fourteen** completes the circle by exploring young people's relationships with marketing practices, focusing on their experiences of commercial new media targeting. **Chapter Fifteen** completes the thesis, drawing together the main themes emerging from the study before assessing their implications for theory development, public policy and marketing communications practice.

CHAPTER TWO

YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE MEDIA: SETTING THE SCENE

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1. Youth in the age of digital media

"Children are at the epicenter of the information revolution, ground zero of the digital world... children have the chance to re-invent communications, culture, and community. To address the problems of the new world in new ways"

(Katz 1996 cited by Sefton-Green 1998: 1)

The words of Katz almost a decade ago epitomized a viewpoint that children and young people were the catalyst for social change affecting many aspects of contemporary living. Central to this thesis was the way in which media, and in particular new media, would be used by young people to actively influence everyday lives of those around them. Almost ten years on, new forms of media such as the internet and mobiles phones have indeed become naturalised, almost taken for granted aspects of contemporary youth lifestyles (Livingstone and Bober 2004). Such new forms of media offer tantalizing prospects for marketing practitioners seeking to find new ways to target a youth audience. Kline (1993) highlighted the growing influence of commercial practices across the digitalised worlds of communications, culture and community. Such practices do not however exist in isolation. They exist within the context of young people's everyday lives: the activities they enjoy, their domestic lives, school, work and social lives.

This chapter will therefore introduce that world to the reader, seeking to interpret the state of knowledge about youth lifestyles, youth consumption and how media fits into this complex equation.

2. The advent of 'youth' studies

Studies of 'young people' or 'youth' have been the subject of academic study for many years (see Coleman and Warren-Anderson 1992). This thesis is particularly concerned with the interrelated subjects of lifestyle, media use, consumption and marketing issues. According to historians Hollander and Germain (1992), marketers as early as the 1920s recognised the value of the "youth market" (Giles 1922). The term 'youth' became more familiar after the post-war period. Abrams (1959) described the 'youth quake of the fifties', a time of burgeoning awareness of teenage identity allied to the emergence of conspicuous consumption. Abrams was the first to isolate youth as an important consumer group in its own right, with its own distinctive tastes and spending patterns.

It was the turn of the sociologists in the seventies to recognise youth as an important transitional and culturally-influenced group, through the work of Corrigan (1979) and Hebdige's subcultures (1979). Their research studies were typified by ethnographic methodologies, seeking to establish deeper understandings of social phenomena. Hebdige's work in particular described how young people were drawn together by cultural affiliations, sometimes at odds with the norms of society, and therefore described as rebellious or outsiders.

By the nineties, greater emphasis was being placed on 'youth' as a distinct life stage. Researchers such as Beck (1992) and Chisholm and Du Bois-Reymond (1993) talk about how young people were capable of "shaping their own biographies", pursuing their own personal destinies. Fundamental concepts such as the 'individualisation' of youth can be traced back to such researchers as can concerns about 'risk and marginalisation'. These studies are important as they highlight that young people do have personal ambitions, desires and values. They suggest a capability not only to articulate such a viewpoint, but to shape their future destiny. In a media context, this is clearly important as it lays the groundwork for concepts such as the 'active audience'.

More recently, attention has turned towards youth as a social conception, with its own rituals, peer influences and tensions. Studies such as Ritson and Elliott (1999) for example focus on advertising consumption behaviour of adolescents, describing the importance of social interplay in television advertising use. The importance of peer relations in understanding youth behaviour has been a recurring feature of recent social sciences research studies (Berndt 2002, Hartup and Stevens 1999). Social relations constitute a particularly important concept for adolescent development as young people progress through the rituals of courtship, peer relations and a shift from family to friends. It therefore plays a central role in their consumption of media.

A typology of studies concerned with the characteristics and considerations surrounding notions of 'youth' is provided in Table 1. The studies cross the spectrum of social sciences disciplines and provide an overview of conceptual development across twenty five years. With the table, a number of debates can be observed including the importance of social background versus individual development, age versus lifestage, peer group and sub cultural versus parental influence. Although this thesis does not seek to develop new theories defining 'youth', they are debates which will resonate in forthcoming issues of media use. The concepts also help to frame forthcoming arguments on the importance of studying an adolescent audience.

Table 1: Typology of concepts and definitions surrounding 'youth'

Concept	Authors	Characteristics	Insights and/or weaknesses
Youth as 'demographic' grouping	(Moschis and Moore, 1982) (Stewart 1992)	♦ Traditionally defined as aged between 15-24 ♦ Sometimes divided into older adolescents (15-19) and young adults (20-24)	♦ Only a start point to any study ♦ Limited theoretical backdrop
Youth as a 'series of 'transitions'	(Jones and Wallace 1992) (Coles 1995) (Banks *et al...* 1992)	♦ Phase in life between childhood and adulthood ♦ Adulthood = successful transition ♦ Transitions as careers	♦ Looseness of definition – conflicting definitions of concept of 'transition'
Youth as 'psychoanalytic phenomenon'	(Coleman and Warren-Anderson 1992) (Fornas and Bolin, 1995) (Redhead 1990)	♦ Importance of individual development within such a transition ♦ Psycho-sexual and psychological lifestage	♦ Concentrates on personal level at expense of social dimension
Youth as function of 'social determinants'	(Coleman and Warren - Anderson 1992) (Ritson and Elliott 1999)	♦ Social setting of individual ♦ Peer influence ♦ Tensions between individual, institutions and social rituals	♦ Concentrates on social level at expense of the personal.
Youth as 'age of decision making'	(Banks *et al...* 1992) (Bates and Riseborough 1993)	♦ 16-19 as time when critical decisions made ♦ Time of personal choice and active decision making ♦ Individualism	♦ Initially located with structuralism ♦ More recent theories apply to active role of individual

Concept	Authors	Characteristics	Insights and/or weaknesses
Youth as 'extended transition'	(Kiernan 1983) (Jones and Wallace 1992)	♦ 1990s phenomenon; extension of youth into mid-twenties ♦ Delayed employment, extended home life/education ♦ Individualistic but insecure youth society	♦ Although provides insights into polarity between 'haves' and 'have nots', provides little beyond in terms of theoretical understanding
Youth as distinct 'subculture'	(Coté and Allahar 1996) (Hebdige 1979) (Clarke and Cricher 1985) (Redhead 1990)	♦ Relationships with peers ♦ Development of cultural identities ♦ Notions of deviance & subculture	♦ Provides forerunner of post modern concepts of youth: eclectic, fragmented, difficult to generalise
Youth and 'generational/ cohort' theories	(Coleman and Warren-Anderson 1992) (Strauss and Howe 1991) (Coupland 1992) (Richie 1995) (Tapscott 1998)	♦ Generation as divide between young people and parents ♦ Generation - common histories and experiences ♦ Generational gaps	♦ Increasingly difficult to distinguish different generations ♦ Closing of generational gap a counter-argument

3. Youth and commercial consumption

Young people have become the subject of more intense scrutiny since the fifties through the growing influence of commercial competition and the personal consumption of goods and services (McNeal 1992). Davis (1990) suggested that the term 'teenager' was directly linked to the rise of the 'youth market' in the mid fifties. Stewart (1992) goes on to argue that such markets can be tracked back to the increased affluence and prosperity of the post-war society. It is difficult to estimate the true value of commercial consumption amongst children and young people. McDougal and Chantrey (2004) cite US figures suggesting that purchases made directly by children aged 4-12 in 2002 accounted for $40 billion, for 12-19 year olds a further $155 billion. McNeal, cited in the same article, estimated that US kids account for another $500 billion through influencing their parents. Clearly therefore, the

commercial value of young people's consumption practices is very attractive to companies and organizations.

There is little doubt that marketing practitioner interest in young people has grown exponentially with the rapid growth in their perceived worth. Young people and children were described by Kline (1993) as living in the "age of marketing", a reference to the impact of commercial practices on the lives of young people. Two years later, Kline went on to suggest that "the rise of multinational children's industries mean that children everywhere are becoming the targets of these promotional communications" (Kline 1995: 110-111). Wartella (1990) described the change in emphasis since those early days in the 1950s, from youth as merely a route to the 'parental pound' to valued consumers in their own right:

> "... if capitalism can be said to have created the teenager in the 1950s, children are now increasingly addressed directly as consumers in their own right, rather than simply as a means of reaching parents".

Since then, many researchers in different consumption categories have described the rise of the youth consumer, with rising resources of personal disposable income. They are conceived as fully-fledged consumers in their own right as well as effective influencers of parental and household purchases.

It is evident that much of the research has focused on the child audience, often under the age of twelve. In a recent paper, Langer (2004: 253) for example suggested that "toys, games, films, food and branded stuff marketing to children in everyday life are among the most visible manifestations of (global) consumer culture". Langer's work reinforces the fact that much of the research on youth and commercial consumption has focused on the concept of 'childhood' (see Cook 2002, Kline 1993, Seabrook 2001, Seiter 1995). There are however several reasons why researchers should be focused on the adolescent years rather than returning to the well-trodden childhood years. The next section will therefore look more specifically at the adolescent years.

4. The adolescent years

Six main reasons can be identified from the literature for a study of adolescents in the context of youth media consumption.

Firstly, the life stage from early adolescence towards adulthood is characterised as a period of intense change and transition (Roth and Brooks-Gunn 2000). It is a time of formation of behavioural patterns, attitudes and values as young people seek to establish their own personal identity and persona. Hence it is a time of turbulent transition between childhood and adulthood (Arnett 1992) in which many attitudinal and behavioural developments evolve and start to crystalise.

Psychosocial researchers such as Erikson (1987) locate adolescence within a social and cultural life development plan, stretching from childbirth through to old age. Adolescence according to Erikson covers the years 12-18 and can be understood as a time of great identity confusion as young people make the transition from puberty to early adulthood. Other researchers have been more specific, distinguishing changes between early and late adolescence. Banks *et al.* (1992) for example argued that between the later ages of 16-19, 'active decision making' becomes more critical and some of life's more important decisions are made. It has also been argued that more sophisticated developmental skills allow older adolescents to harness advanced decision-making abilities. Researchers have argued that particular skills become especially important during older adolescence including the ability to allocate attention (Manis *et al.*. 1980), take a variety of perspectives (Moshman and Frank 1986) and develop decision-making competence (Mann *et al.*. 1989).

Secondly, desires for experimentation and risk taking become more prevalent during adolescent years. Arnett notes that adolescence is a time for trying out new things, sometimes with higher levels of associated risk. Risk taking is connected to increased desired for independence; one American study showed that the waking hours teens spent with their families fell by 33% to 14% between 5th and 12th grade (Larson 2001), as they sought to physically and emotionally distance themselves from their parents and start to learn through their own experiences. Experiences through

lifestyles followed and even products consumed, are then thought to have a significant influence on their future personal trajectory and life career. From this, it can be deduced that the adolescent years are amongst of the most important, if not the most important formative years. And during these years, media consumption plays an influential role in such attitudinal and behavioural formation.

Thirdly, researchers have argued that young people are increasingly capable of influencing the decision-making of others, sometimes in a consumption context, as they reach their teens. Ward (1974) highlighted the importance of 'consumer socialisation' from an early age, developing relations with parents, peers and the media. Those skills become more refined during adolescent years as young people become more adept at influencing others, including their parents (Belch *et al.*. 1985, Foxman *et al.*. 1989). The trend of 'Kids Getting Older Younger' or KGOY (Cox 1998) with its inferences of increased consumption and media sophistication are symptoms of the growing influence of young people, at an earlier age. Spero and Stone (2004) termed teenagers 'agents of change' because of their independence of thought and ability to influence others through communication.

Fourthly, young people, particularly adolescents, are thought to be a barometer of social change in terms of their impact on society and the surrounding culture (Widdicombe and Woffitt 1995). Davis (1990) reinforced this by arguing that cultural changes emanating from young people do in time permeate into mainstream adult culture. In a new media context, Katz (1996) and Tapscott (1998) both stressed the impact that youth internet consumption is having on others around them. It is therefore evident that young people not only have an influence on those closest to them but have a subtle influence on society as a whole. The trends emanating from adolescents and young adults in a short space of time become accepted by society as a whole. This can be evidenced across a range of cultural commodities, from mobile phones to i-pods, from brands of jeans to favoured musical artists.

Fifthly, older adolescents' more advanced skills can be expected to translate into more literate forms of media consumption. Ritson and Elliott (1995, 1999) found that older adolescents were indeed highly literate in the context their advertising consumption. In turning attention to new media consumption, research has found that older

adolescents have one of the highest usage levels for internet and mobile phone consumption, and have therefore been labeled the 'electronic generation' (Buckingham 2000). The adolescent or teenage years represent a hugely important audience for any researcher seeking to develop a better understanding of traditional and new forms of media.

Finally, and as an overall consequence of the above, the 'youth market' has become an extremely attractive one to commercial companies. This has been further encouraged by the rising levels of disposable income accessed by today's adolescents. In the U.K. according to industry research by Datamonitor, "12-16 year olds spend on average £3 billion a year whilst the total income of teenagers across Western Europe has increased from 3 billion euro to 14.7billion euro from 1997-2002" (Spero and Stone 2004: 154). Such consumer patterns as emerging loyalties to brands and companies are not just relevant to one point in time. As Moschis and Moore (1979) argued, many of these attitudinal and behavioural traits are carried forward life, emphasising to commercial practitioners the value of targeting the youth market with the hope of attracting customers for life.

Having established the importance of conducting media research amongst an adolescent audience, the next section delves into their lives to establish a better understanding of who they are. Where possible, the literature covers a UK perspective given that this study was located in Scotland.

5. Locating young people

5.1 A start point: social-demography

A natural start point is to assess trends in the socio-demography of adolscents. In Scotland for instance, adolescents are categorised as aged between 10-15 and then 16-19 years old. Table 2 shows that both age groups are destined to decline in number after several years of growth (GROS 2005a). One might be tempted to interpret this as a sign of waning interest in this group over the next few years. However, this is unlikely given their continued influential status. It is conceivable that attention in the

future will intensify on a smaller number of influential young people, the so called 'opinion formers'.

Table 2: Population projections of young people
Thousands, Scotland

Year	10-14	15-19	All adolescents
2003 est.	320	324	644
2006 est.	307	327	334
2011 est.	278	309	587

Source: GROS 2005, 'Projected population of Scotland (2003 based) 2003-2028'. *General Register Office for Scotland* [Online]. Available: http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/popproj/03population-projections.html

A number of socio-economic trends have shaped the characteristics and attitudes of young people still living at home since their rapid growth in numbers in the 1980s. According to Richie (1995) in her US analysis of Generation X, these included the falling birth rate of parents with the advent of the pill, the increase in the number of working parents and the consequent balancing of domestic and family life. The most common characteristic according to Gibb (1992) was the near universal exposure to divorce. Richie also included the financial implications of the recession of the early 1980s and the increase in single parent households. The end result was the much-hyped Generation X, made infamous in Coupland's (1992) fictional novel for being independent, angst ridden, teenage drop outs. A comparable depiction of this generation is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Depiction of Generation X.

Generation x ...

> High hopes, battered by 1990 recession
> Sceptical and cynical
> Trust and respect a thing of the past
> Wary of future - live in present
> Dismissive of promises and idealism
> Individualist - non collective

Source: The Henley Centre (1999)

Source: The Henley Centre 1999, *Consumer and Leisure Futures,* The Henley Centre, London.

Some of these underlying characteristics are still very much evident in early 21st century households, others have changed. For instance, the number of family breakdowns remains high and the number of lone-parent households continues to rise (33% of all children in the UK had divorced parents in 1999 according to the General Household Survey (1999). Also, the number of working females continues to rise: 41% of women with youngest dependent aged 11-18 are currently in full-time employment (Labour Force Survey 2001). Therefore, the tensions noted in the early nineties that existed because of exposure to non-traditional domestic situations continue to accelerate.

The current generation of young people have, however, also benefited from an unprecedented rise in household income levels and corresponding expenditure levels (General Household Survey 2001). During the same time period, unemployment has fallen from over 7% in the early nineties to 4.8% by 2000 (Labour Force Survey 2001). McGowan (2000) argues that increased wealth and affluence have had a significant influence on the consuming behaviour of the current youth generation, in an era of economic stability. Although many young adults are spending more time at home with mounting personal debts, levels of personal disposable income have continued to rise. A national survey by TRBI Maritz (2003) found that the average income of a 13-14 year old living in the UK was £794, and £1850 for 17-18 year olds earned primarily through part-time work.

Drawing on the above, it is evident that for today's youth, the increased autonomy and independence experienced (Beck 1992) continues apace. Their perceived independence is however mixed with a growing uncertainty about what the future holds, increasing feelings of risk regarding their future life careers (Beck 1992; Coles 1995). Indeed, such independence is arguably not all consuming. The reduced desire to leave home early and the on-going financial security of homelife mean that more are economically dependent on their parents for extended transitions between school and work (Coles 1995; Jones and Wallace 1992). The parental home, even in an increasingly non-traditional format, remains a crucial environment for development of youth values, attitudes and lifestyles.

5.2 The values of young people

Arguably the most talked about depiction of young persons' values in recent years came out of the so-called 'Generation X' phenomenon. Coupland (1992) and subsequent social commentators such as Richie (1995) described a generation of young people in the early nineties whose values appeared to be ones of ambivalence, fierce independence, self-doubt and sometimes outright cynicism. This was the generation supposedly at odds with many aspects of their lives: their parents, their career and their prospects.

McGowan (2000) suggested that the current generation of young people in Britain are no longer typified by rebellion and/or indifferent behaviour. His commercial research for the Added Value Company argued that youth values are more typically associated with those belonging to adulthood: stability, pragmatism, integrity. In McGowan's view, young people are "freed from the pressures to rebel" against traditional institutional and governmental bodies because of increasing comfort, wealth and prosperity. The depiction of a generation more concerned with job security than the desire to rebel was also at the heart of a study titled 'Nearly Normal' (Blizzard 1999). In the US, Wolburg and Pokrywczynski (2001: 36) described the current generation of teenagers, labelled Generation Y, as "less cynical, more optimistic, more idealistic, and more inclined to traditional values".

Finally, the Future Foundation (Rand 2003) in a study of 500 13-18 year olds in the UK found that 85% agreed with the statement 'I am happy with my family life', again offering evidence to reject the rebellious, independent stereotype of previous generations. Rand argues that the desire to seek greater freedom and personal expression is less necessary because many teenagers already have what they want, and feel a strong bond with their parents, even if separated or divorced.

It is evident therefore from a brief reprise of young people's values that this is a complex, even contentious area. Because of the complex variables involved, it comes as no surprise to hear that young people are said to hold multiple and often contradictory views of themselves (Harter 1990). McGowan suggested that young people's characters are becoming more fluid and multi-faceted. This is an important consideration when developing youth-orientated research methodologies.

5.3 The link between domestic change and commercial consumption

One trend that has continued apace since the early nineties has been the continued separation from the traditional nuclear family. It has been suggested that this has encouraged a greater sense of autonomy, freedom and openness amongst today's young people (Hall 2000, De Chenecey 2000). Richie (1995) contended that young people become 'adults' at a younger age, taking on greater responsibilities, whilst adolescents enjoy greater autonomy both within the family and in society at large. Young people are seen to live in an accelerated culture in which they require to grow up faster (Stoltman 1999) and for the first time in history, are believed to be educating adults on subjects such as e-media (Phillips 2000). The suggestion that young people are growing up faster and are therefore more likely to adopt 'adult values' at a younger age was the basis for the marketing acronym KGOY (Cox 1998). Kurnit (2004: 20) however warns there are dangers in such generalisations about childhood, growing up and the commercialisation of play:

> "...we would do well to take careful note of the idea that kids just want to be kids. KGOY suggests that we should market older products with older appeals at kids who are growing older earlier. It suggests that the toy business is over at the age of 8, that kids do not want to play or interact in a kid way, that their holy grail is all things teen. It is so not so"

Stoltman claims that the world of media and advertising has played its part, exposing young people to the 'full life experience' at an earlier age. Young people are therefore seen to be more worldly-wise, more experienced and facing up to increased responsibility at an earlier age. This links back again to reasons for the destabilisation of the family nucleus (Reed 1994). Giddens (1991) provided some positives emanating from such experiences suggesting that such destabilisation can increase child responsibilities and even make for a more democratic environment. This has led to claims that young people and children are more involved in decision-making and play a more influential role in the choice of products and services (Reed 1994).

5.4 A consuming generation: teenage spending patterns

As emphasised by Kline earlier, adolescents have become synonymous with increased commercial consumption. Spero and Stone (2004) illustrated the growing level of income young people receive, against a backdrop of declining numbers. One of the

UK's more authoritative sources of data regarding youth pocket money, conducted on behalf of Bird's Eye Walls shows above average increases per annum in average weekly pocket money since 1995 (Bird's Eye Walls 2002).

A breakdown of young people's spending patterns in Table 3 highlights importance of ICT related purchases including CDs, video games and mobiles in monthly teenage spending. The table also highlights the influence of age, with mobiles in particular growing in importance. Clothes remain the most important purchase category for all ages according to this study.

Table 3: Average teenage spend per month (£)

Age	11-12	13-14	15-16	17-18
Average per month	*68.0*	*60.0*	*100.00*	*144.0*
Sweets, drinks, snacks, takeaways	6.0	9.0	11.6	17.2
CDs, records	8.8	5.6	8.8	9.6
Video games	3.2	5.6	4.8	1.2
Clothes, shoes	13.0	7.8	20.0	28.0
Mobiles (top up cards, accessories	5.2	8.4	10.0	11.6
Magazines	2.8	2.8	3.2	4.4
Going out	5.0	5.6	15.0	32.0
Savings	12.8	10.0	11.4	26.8

Source: Maritz 2003, 'School Life', unpublished commercial youth research, *TRBI Maritz/Vegas*, August

Asked in a different way, a competing survey highlighted the gender disparities of teenage spending. A study by MillwardBrown on behalf of Lindstrom and Seybold (2003) (Table 4) found that boys felt under more pressure to buy computer and video games whereas music, clothes and toiletries were more important for girls. Going out was a source of peer group pressure for both sexes. Although such studies are difficult to compare, it is clear that there are distinct gender differences when considering issues of product and media consumption.

Regional disparities also exist in young people's spending patterns. A survey of regional levels of pocket money by Halifax (2004) suggested that young people in

Scotland received higher levels of weekly pocket money than any other region in the U.K. at £9.23 a week. This implies that Scotland will remain an attractive region for marketing practitioners to target their efforts.

Table 4: Pressure to conform when spending

Do you sometimes feel pressure to buy certain products, such as clothes, shoes CDs or anything else, because your friends have them? (% agreement)

Gender	Boys (11-14 yrs)	Girls (11-14 yrs)
Going out	57%	71%
Tapes/CDs	45%	60%
Computer and video games	40%	26%
Clothes	33%	57%
Toys and games	29%	26%
Toiletries	23%	53%

Source: Millward Brown/BMRB in Lindstrom, M. with Seybold, P. 2003, *BrandChild: Remarkable Insights into the Minds of Today's Global Kids and their Relationships with Brands*, Kogan Page, London, pp. 53.

5.5 Consumption and notions of youth

Any research study focusing on youth media consumption is intrinsically linked to issues of personal consumption and commercialism. Although consumption could be argued to extend beyond commercial practices, there is little doubt that much of contemporary consumption is influenced by commercial desires and plays an increasingly important role in young people's lives. Tomlinson (1990) suggested that the very centrality of consumption to contemporary life is a major watershed, dividing the modern from the post-modern society.

Youth self-conception and issues of personal identity of contemporary youth are said to be wrapped up in the consumption of goods and services. Gabriel and Lang (1995) suggested that consumption is now 'the key' to entering adulthood, a mature and recognised part of everyday living. Willis (1990) added that adulthood is now perceived as much by consumption patterns as issues of marital or educational status. Consumption therefore plays its part in the transition from adolescence into adulthood, shaping young people's needs, wants and projected identities.

There has been considerable debate on how commercial activity such as advertising through the media influences youth consumption behaviour. Much of the debate centres on whether young people are believed to be 'victims' or 'active agents' of such activity. Nava (1992) believed that the 'market driven society' affects youth more than any other group. The term 'fashion victim', sometimes used in marketing circles, highlights this 'duped' viewpoint, where brand obsession and emotional attachment are seen as forms of commercial addiction. Rattansi and Phoenix (1997: 137) suggested that young people are often portrayed as the "hapless playthings of capitalism's new mode of flexible production". In other words, victims of the continual need of commerce to accentuate consumption.

Others take a more liberated view of a young person's abilities. Giddens (1991) believed that young people are highly capable of fashioning their own self-identity, exercising their independent choice in the sphere of consumption. He argued that the very process of consumer culture has liberated young people, allowing them to act as free-floating individuals, capable of constructing and reconstructing their own identities through consumption practices. However, Giddens also warns that such freedoms can induce feelings of insecurity, uncertainty and a lack of grounding. This has important implications for the study of media-related consumption. It suggests that young people have the desire to freely 'pick and choose' from consumption options. Should they express any level of dissatisfaction, they may be more likely to move on and look for a better offering that fits with their own persona and self-image. However, such confidence should not be taken at face value and may mask socially constructed problems of identity and self image.

Miles (2000) suggested that another key dimension to consider is the relationship with peer groups. He argued that few young people are truly individual but use commodities to create images which identify with their peer-group lifestyle. Miles also suggested that fashion-based consumption allows young people a sense of location and place, in a rapidly changing world. He did note however that such foundations can be "rapidly swept away by a torrent of marketing activity". Although the importance of peer relations is undeniable, the suggestion that such individuals are helpless in the face of commercial pressures contradicts evidence of young people's

more sophisticated approach to media consumption, as discussed in Chapter Four.

It is evident that the relationship between young people and consumption is ever more interlinked. Osgerby (1998) called it a symbiotic relationship, linking youth subcultures and commercialism. Lannon and Cooper (1983) also talked about symbiosis in reference to consumers and advertising. In other words, a close association in which one is reliant on the other and vice versa.

6. Youth and 'consuming media'

6.1 The role of media in youth lifestyles

"It is a brand new media world for today's youth generation. Many adults view today's media environment as a daunting, disjointed media landscape. Today's youth generation matured during a time of choice, optimism and empowerment. They were literally born to a world of media choice that places them firmly in control of their media environment"

Geraci and Nagy (2004: 1)

There is little doubt that commercial media continue to play a central role in the lives of young people. Virtually all young people watch television at some point with over three quarters having TV and sometimes digital access in their bedrooms. Nine out of ten 15-19 year olds now have access to mobile phones and most visit the cinema regularly (BMRB 2004). Access to the internet, now an established commercial medium, has now reached almost nine out of every ten teenagers, although there is now universal access in Scottish schools (Scottish Executive 2005).

Geraci and Nagy argue that both the changes in types of media and the changing values and attitudes of young people make media so central to their lives. The fragmentation of media choices combined with the willingness to try new things and adapt to burgeoning media choices make this generation ideally suited to this new media landscape, according to the authors. They also hypothesise that young people are adept at seamlessly switching between traditional and new forms of media, accepting them as very much a part of their everyday lifestyles. Empirical research is needed however to investigate such claims.

Table 5: Youth media access

Media access	11-14 years	15-19 years
Have TV in bedroom	76%	81%
Have video/VHS in bedroom	53%	55%
Own mobile	77%	91%
Access to the internet	88%	89%
Visited cinema in last year	97%	95%
Listen to radio	92%	91%

Source: BMRB 2004, *Youth TGI Autumn*, British Market Research Bureau, London

Traditional and new media are also thought to play central roles in the communication of consumption messages, targeted at young people. This in turn influences the meaning and creation of young persons' identities and self-perception (Thornton 1995). Strasburger and Hendron (1995) suggested that media help young people define important social and sub-cultural boundaries. Arnett (1995, 2000) reinforced the idea that young people use the media to help define the world around them. The messages and images that media communicate are important influencers on young people's values, attitudes and subsequent consuming behaviour.

Media have also been depicted as central to families' everyday lives despite the trend towards the break-down of the traditional family. Tufte (2003) argued that the use of media has almost become invisible in the sense that it is so much part of the daily routine and ritual of everyday life, rather than a more deliberate activity. In her Danish study, Tufte found that electronic media which sometimes acted as a forum for interaction between children and adults, were on other occasions simply a routine part of daily life. Television in particular occupied that central role whereas mobile telephony was viewed as being more important to the younger generation.

7. Conclusions

This chapter highlights the importance of conducting social research amongst a youth audience, focusing on young people in their developing, adolescent years. This

follows a rich vein of research stretching back to the late 1940s. Five main arguments are offered as to why research seeking to understand new media use should concentrate on a adolescent audience. The arguments include the importance of adolescents' lifestage transitions, their individual propensity to influence others around them, their collective societal and cultural influence, their frequent use of new media and finally, their growing attraction to commercial practitioners.

The literature suggests that although their numbers may be about to decline, their influence is likely to continue. This continued influence means that they are a lifestage that will continue to attract the interest of academics and practitioners alike. They are however a group of people difficult to define. Different sources offer diverging accounts of what young people are like, what they believe in and what they stand for. Rather than attempt to provide a definitive version, it is perhaps best to avoid generalisations. This calls for an understanding of young people taking into account their own personal and social contexts rather than seeking to over-generalise and potentially misunderstand. It is evident that media in general and the related issues of commercialisation play ever growing roles of their daily lives. The next chapter will focus on the differing forms of new media which influence the lives of young people.

CHAPTER THREE

YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE NEW MEDIA PHENOMENON

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1. Introduction

The growing popularity of the internet and mobile phones have prompted claims that young people can be defined as much by their new media use as by any other media, lifestyle or even socio-demographic categorization. This chapter investigates what is known about young people and new media, covering their emergence, influence on lifestyles and relationships with media use.

2. The emergence of an electronic generation?

> "I love troubleshooting computer problems for teachers, and it's quite unfortunate that some of them see me a negative influence. Outside the school I help my mom with computer related project. My mom used to ask me why I was always on the internet or playing with the computer. Then I started to involve her and show her what I was doing and she got interested. She now has a computer on her desk at school (she's a teacher) and uses it all the time"
>
> Seventeen year boy cited in Tapscott (1998: 35)

The example above is typical of a viewpoint held by Tapscott and a number of other socio-cultural commentators such as Rushkoff (1996) and Katz (1996), showing that young people are firmly at the centre of a technological revolution, a revolution in which youth and new media are inexorably associated. Buckingham (2000: 41) suggested that young people are perceived to have inherent characteristics, such as aptitude for change, which are somehow uniquely "related to the characteristics of new media".

This 'technological deterministic' viewpoint, according to Buckingham, assumes that new forms of media such as the internet and gaming are creating a generation of very active, very involved and very (new media) literate consumers. In his book 'growing up digital', Tapscott (1998) went as far as suggesting that "for many kids, using

technology is as natural as breathing". He based his assertions on a select group of American children whom he collectively described as the 'N-Generation'. Personal characteristics such as 'self-expression', 'discovery', 'self-development', 'being creative', 'inquisitivness' and 'self-reliance' were used to portray a generation of instinctive advocates of all new forms of media. In a similar vein, Rushkoff used the term 'screenagers' to describe a younger 'pre-teen' version which he believed had sufficient cognitive skills to cope with vast amounts of information involved in new media. He argued that this younger generation were very comfortable switching between media options and displayed a general lack of loyalty to any one format. Finally, Katz (1996) regarded the internet as a form of liberation for young people, providing opportunities for escape from parental and institutional boundaries, a space in which they could create their own cultural identity and child-centered communities.

Commercial practitioners have also been instrumental in building up the notion of a highly influential generation of electronic users. In a media context, Bill Gates in a keynote speech to faculty and students of the New York Institute of Technology, said of the so-called 'e-generation' of young people:

> "...the web will change their world as much as television transformed our world after World War II".
>
> (cited by Leonard 2000: 21).

At the core of this quote was the idea that the internet is transforming young people's lives and shaping their cultural existence. In a similar vein, Peters (1998: 22) claimed that "...no other technological innovation has captured the imagination of users with the speed and impact of the internet". The transformational potential of the internet was also advocated by Hoffman *et al.* (1995), quoted at the start of this thesis.

The emergence of such evangelical viewpoints contrasts with more pessimistic accounts of the impact of electronic media on young people. Researchers in this 'opposing camp' have focused their attention on the effects of new forms of media on children in particular.

Provenzo (1991) for example highlighted the likelihood of computer game violence

being imitated, giving as evidence the Columbine shootings. Griffiths (1996) pointed out the dangers of computerized addiction and its impact on education achievement, whilst Alloway and Gilbert (1998) concentrated on the gendered stereotyping and negative role models they found in new forms of gaming. Such examples mirror a long tradition of concerns over media effects stretching back to the origins of mediated communication in the early 20th century. Livingstone (2002: 5) pointed out that "similar questions were asked about the introduction of video games before the internet, about the VCR a couple of decades earlier, about the introduction of television before that, about radio, cinema, comics and so on". Drotner (1992) labels this 'historical amnesia', a societal tendency to forget about previous generations so called moral panics about media effects. Buckingham (2002) concluded that the focus of such concerns lies with the entertainment rather than educational potential of new media. Young people are defined not as active users of new forms of media, but as victims in their dealings with the internet, games and now mobile phones. Authors such as Postman (1983, 1992) have extended previous work on 'the death of childhood' by arguing that the real impact of electronic forms of communication has been to accelerate this trend, creating a new generation of young people divorced from a more socially inclusive childhood.

Researchers exploring the mediated worlds of young people should however be wary of the extreme viewpoints of the two opposing camps outlined. The technologically determinist viewpoint argued by Tapscott and Rushkoff places technological innovation centre stage and as a consequence, may be in danger of ignoring the socially constructed and contextual factors known to influence new media use. Similarly, but from the opposite extreme, a series of stereotypical representations such as the 'screen zombie', the 'couch potato' and the 'computer addict' emerge from an overemphasis on the negative effects of new media use. Such positions only serve to reinforce negative stereotypes with limited relevance to young people's everyday relationships with new media. Finally, Neuman (1991) suggests that adopting a non-technological, non-media centric viewpoint also has its dangers. In such a scenario, young people are depicted as disinterested in media consumption, too busy 'hanging out' with their friends to spend time interacting with media. Inevitably, the realities of young people's relationships with all forms of media lie somewhere between or along the spectrum of the extremes. This calls for a research methodology that takes a

'youth-centred viewpoint' (Livingstone 2002), examining the entirety of young people's lifeworlds, not just their media consumption in splendid isolation.

Before examining this approach later in the chapter, it is important to examine why new media emerged centre-stage in our understandings of young people's lifestyles.

3. The influence of new media on youth lifestyles

The first question emerging from any discussion of new media and society is an understanding of what precisely is new media. Livingstone (2002) suggest that new media can be defined in terms of "technology" (interactivity, digitalization, convergence etc), "services" (delivery of information, entertainment, political participation, education, commerce, etc) and "textual form" (genre hybridity, hypertexuality, multi-media etc). This in part explains the vast amount of research now conducted into new forms of media and the internet in particular. It covers many disciplines and theoretical standpoints, necessitating an interdisciplinary approach drawing from psychological, social, childhood and youth, sociological, consumer behaviour and marketing perspectives. Expanding on the work of Livingstone (1999), four main themes offer insights into why the new media has become such an important topic to study, particularly in the context of young people.

3.1 The multiplication of personally owned media

The current generation of young people has grown up with the idea that multiple forms of media are easily available and primarily for their own personal use. Media is no longer the preserve of the 'family unit' as access and use have dispersed; media is increasingly accessed on the move or in young people's private bedrooms. For example, mobile phones were accessed by over 91% of older adolescents and 77% of younger adolescents in a recent UK study (BMRB 2004). In the same study, television was found in 81% of older adolescents' bedrooms, and 76% of younger adolescents. Computers, DVDs and cable access can be found in a growing number of more affluent teenage bedrooms. In a purely domestic context, The Henley Centre (1999) referred to this trend as the 'deepening of in-home entertainment', with a more

extensive range of entertainment now available to a wider range of audiences, including young people.

Figure 2: The deepening of in-home entertainment

Deepening of in-home entertainment

HOME ENTERTAINMENT	
Digital TV Internet Mini-disks Pay TV DVD's CD's CD Rom	1990/2000's
Cable/satellite PCs Video Walkman	1980/90's
Tape recorders Terrestrial TV	1950/80's
Radio/record players Press	Pre 1950's

Fragmentation of audience

Source: The Henley Centre (1999)
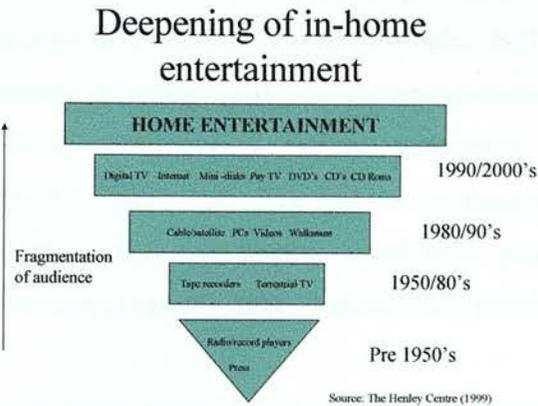
Source: The Henley Centre 1999, *Consumer and Leisure Futures,* The Henley Centre, London.

This 'privitisation' of media use brings with it a range of social and cultural issues which affect how media is used. For example, the internet has traditionally been a family resource located in a shared space in the home. The trend is however for greater use in teenage bedrooms and where this is not possible, can result in competing demands over the amount and nature of that use.

3.2 The diversification of form and content

New forms of media such as the internet are said to have fragmented both media format and media content. Diverse computer games, multiple cable and satellite channels and an almost endless supply of accessible websites offer young people a vast array of mediated options from which to choose. This media fragmentation can be understood within the broader western societal trends towards greater individualism (Beck 1999), offering young people a far wider canvas upon which to pursue and consume their own lifestyle orientated interests. Young people are now able to access an outside world beyond their existing domestic and close social network, exposing them to far wider global influences. (Stald 2004).

Researchers such as Facer *et al.* (2003) refer to the effect such influences have on young people's online consuming behavior. Seiter (1995) for example argued that young people take the diversity of online images and meanings and remake them for their own needs and interests. In this sense, young people are said to be active creators, using new media content to shape their own personal identities. This taps into the rich vein of consumer behaviour researchers who believe that personal possessions come to represent rich symbols of personal attachment and interests (Lury 1996). Lury argued that in contemporary society, consumers create their own identities in part through the objects they buy and use in their everyday lives. If accessed and embraced, the online environment could offer young people a rich source of new consumption experiences to help construct their personal identities.

Facer *et al.* point out that this process is complicated by the constant change in associations of new media and their contents. What was seen as cutting edge and innovative one year can very quickly become dated and even obsolete. Further complexity can be seen in the juxtaposition of media form and content. Both offer contrasting sets of associations and meanings. Young people are therefore likely to engage in a form of 'bricolage' (Lévi-Strauss 1966, de Certeau 1984), picking and choosing aspects of new media form and content, adding them to their many other sources of cultural influence and combining them together to form personal identities.

3.3 The convergence of media

The technological trend towards convergent forms of media, covering all aspects of media, information and telecommunication services mean that media is becoming more interconnected. Media is no longer consumed entirely in isolation but often used in tandem or sequentially. Internet content can be accessed through digital televisions and vice versa. Similarly, the next generation of 3G phones currently on sale offer a growing range of services traditionally associated with computers and televisions. Lindstrom and Seybold (2003) argued that young people's open-minded attitudes and acceptance of technological change will ensure that they are always willing to embrace new mediated experiences. Media 'channels' such as television and computers could therefore become less relevant as young people increasingly access

mediated content from a range of 'converged' sources.

3.4 The shift to more interactive communication

One of the most important concepts underpinning the shift to new media has been the concept of interactivity, challenging traditional notions of passivity and limited activity. Newhagen (1998) went as far as arguing that the traditional concepts of media audiences were now irrelevant in the context of the more 'interactive' internet.

Marketing researchers such as Peters (1998) referred to interactivity as a system of mutual influence. This implies greater consumer control through 'contact' and 'content'. Communication researchers such as Rafaeli and Sudweeks (1997) based their definitions on the constant interchange of intra-personal communication that the internet allows. They distinguished between one-way communication, two-way or reaction communication and then inter-active communication as typified by online discussion boards, chat rooms and e-mail threads. Hacker (1996) suggested that equality of communication, free from distortion is what separates interactivity from mere connectivity. More recently Livingstone and Bober (2004) distinguished between socially interactive media such as e-mail and instant messaging, and textual interactive media such as the co-creation of online documents and websites. A more detailed conceptualization of interactivity extensively researched elsewhere can be found in Ha and James (1998), Jensen (1998), Kiousis (2002) and McMillan (2002).

Interactivity is an important concept for marketing practitioners. The characteristics of interactivity have been one of the prominent factors encouraging online advertising and general marketing practices. Increased interactivity has been cited increasingly as the likelihood of return to websites (Bezjian-Avery *et al.* 1998, Rodgers and Thorson 2000, Jee and Lee 2002) and interacting with online adverts (Yang 1997, Chen and Wells 1998, Cho and Leckenby 2000).

Little research has however focused on the degree to which consumers including young people welcome and actively engage with the interactive opportunities offered by new forms of commercial media. Too often, the concept of an interactive user is taken for granted and not rooted in the everyday experiences of the audience. For

practitioners developing online marketing applications, the degree of willingness to interact with their services and advertisements is crucial to the success of their efforts.

3.5 The commercialisation of new media

Although the internet's origins lay in the desire for virtual forms of personal and artificial communication, it has now become a focal point for commercialisation, spawning the term e-commerce. For young people, this offers a spectrum of opportunities and problems to encounter. Montgomery (2000) for example highlighted the "proliferation of web sites and other forms of new-media content" designed for the 'adolescent market'. This subject will be explored in greater depth in the following chapter.

This chapter has outlined some of the reasons why new forms of media have become more influential in the lives of young people. To assess how influential they have become, the following section will look at studies of how young people use new forms of media. The main focus will be on the internet al.though reference will be made later in the chapter to mobile phones. Other new media choices such as gaming will not be explored as they were peripheral to the efforts of marketing communication practices at the onset of this study. It should be noted that since the fieldwork, gaming as a media choice has been an increasing focus for marketing activity.

4. Assessing internet access and use

The latest available figures on internet access highlight that by February 2004, 58% of all UK adults had used the internet, a figure that has risen from 54% in 2003 and 49% in 2002 (ONS 2005). Such figures are not household based and therefore do not differentiate between those with and without young children. They therefore give little indication of the dynamics of use with family households.

Livingstone and Bober (2004) did find that 75% of 9-19 year olds have at some point accessed the internet at home, a figure significantly higher than the national average

of 54% suggested by the ONS. The study was also able to assess differences in levels of access by key socio-demographic indicators using a sample of 1,511 children aged 9-19. The researchers found that internet access in schools was now almost universal but a significant minority of young people at home still did not have access. Levels of access were lower amongst those from a more working class background, highlighting that the so called 'digital divide' (Hoffman *et al.* 2000a) remains an issue for certain communities (Livingstone and Bober 2005). Livingstone and Bober (2004) also found regional differences with Scotland having the fourth lowest level of computer based domestic internet access.

Table 6: Which of these have you ever used to access the internet?

Age band	Computer at school	Computer at home	Elsewhere
9-11 years	87%	70%	50%
12-15 years	98%	77%	67%
16-17 years	97%	81%	68%

Source: Based on Livingstone and Bober (2004: 10)

There are dangers however in over-emphasising the importance of the internet in the lives of young people by simply studying levels of access. The internet remains a relatively new phenomenon and as such, the degree to which young people have adopted the internet into their daily lives remains unclear. Such figures offer little in terms of a more detailed picture of how often the internet was used and for what purposes. Their more recent findings (Livingstone and Bober 2005) do however go some way to filling this gap.

A number of research studies evolving in the last five years caution against being carried away with the steady rise in levels of access and use. The futura.com project (Byfield 2000) and the work of the ESRC's Virtual Society? (Wyatt 2000) both questioned the notion that the internet has become a 'must have' obsession, central to the lives of today's teenagers and young adults. Svennevig (2000:655) argued that there has not been an "unequivocal shift in time use amongst p.c. and internet users away from TV". He also noted that European 16-24 year olds still spend 4.5 hours per week on average watching TV whilst only 0.8 hours per week using a p.c.. Such figures are now outdated but cast doubt on whether the internet has taken over from television as the pre-eminent media choice for young people. Such doubts contrast

with the more optimistic, almost evangelical predictions of Tapscott and Rushkoff.

To gain a better understanding of what impact the internet has made in the lives of young people, it is necessary to take a step back and assess how the internet is actively being used at present.

5. Researching young people's internet use

Barwise *et al.* (2002) highlighted the growing stream of theoretical studies on the internet and its various applications. These covered areas such as information-intensity (Glazer 1991), the nature of interactivity in marketing (Blattberg and Deighton 1991, Rust and Oliver 1994), methods of communication (Morris and Organ 1996), through to ethnographic work on household-technology interactions (Venkatesh 1996) and the main pioneers of internet marketing theory, Hoffman and Novak (1996 a, b). The internet continues to be an area of growing academic attention, from cultural, media and marketing communications research perspectives.

5.1 Studies in internet use

In order to build up a better understanding of the internet phenomenon, it is important to map out the extent of current knowledge on how personal consumers currently use the internet.

There are no recognised and accessible sources of trend information on how young people use the internet. The ONS (2000-2004) does however offer a longitudinal study of how internet use has changed amongst adults. It highlights that many activities such as e-mail have become commonplace, the levelling off of figures suggesting that e-mailing has reached a natural level of popularity for three quarters of the population. In an early US study, Katz and Aspen (1997) found that the most frequent reason for initial internet use was e-mail. Less common practices only three years ago such as educational searches and downloading music have now become commonplace occurrences, especially amongst the young (Madden and Rainie 2005). The figures also highlighted the growth in commercial online purchasing with almost

half the population buying or ordering by February 2003 for adults. This figure has undoubtedly risen sharply since with the burgeoning popularity of online shopping. A key question is therefore whether young people embrace the internet for commercial uses to the same degree as adults.

Table 7: Percent of UK adults who have access to the internet (by purpose of use)

Internet Purpose	July 2000	April 2001	April 2002	February 2003
Finding information about goods/services	70	73	76	79
Using e-mail	69	71	76	72
General browsing or surfing	64	61	61	53
Finding information related to education	34	38	38	40
Buying or ordering tickets/goods/services	28	35	38	48
Personal banking/financial/investment	21	25	28	29
Looking for work	18	18	20	24
Downloading software, including games	17	25	n/a	n/a
Playing or downloading music	n/a	n/a	11	14
Using chat rooms or sites	17	17	17	18
Playing or downloading music	16	20	19	23
Using or accessing government/official services	15	20	17	17
Reading or downloading on-line news	n/a	n/a	28	26
Other things	11	4	3	4

Source: Office for National Statistics (2005) http://www.statistics.gov.uk/Statbase.

For a more youth orientated perspective, the studies by Livingstone and Bober (2004, 2005) offer snapshots of selected online activities amongst 9-19 year olds using the internet (at least once a week).

The figures highlight that few activities were daily occurrences in comparison to mobile phone use. Instant messenging and e-mail were relatively frequent communication uses but the sheer convenience mobile made it a more frequent mode of communication (Leung and Wei 2000). The infrequency of chat room use on the other hand highlights that not all modes of internet communication are popular amongst young people. It suggests that actual use of online activities such as

chatrooms is significantly lower than might be inferred by the volume of debate witnessed in national newspapers. It also suggests that despite convenient access, other factors are more influential, discouraging more extensive use of services such as chatrooms.

Figure 3: How often do you use the internet?

Figure 10: How often do you...?

Base: 9-19 year olds who use the internet at least once a week (N=1,257)
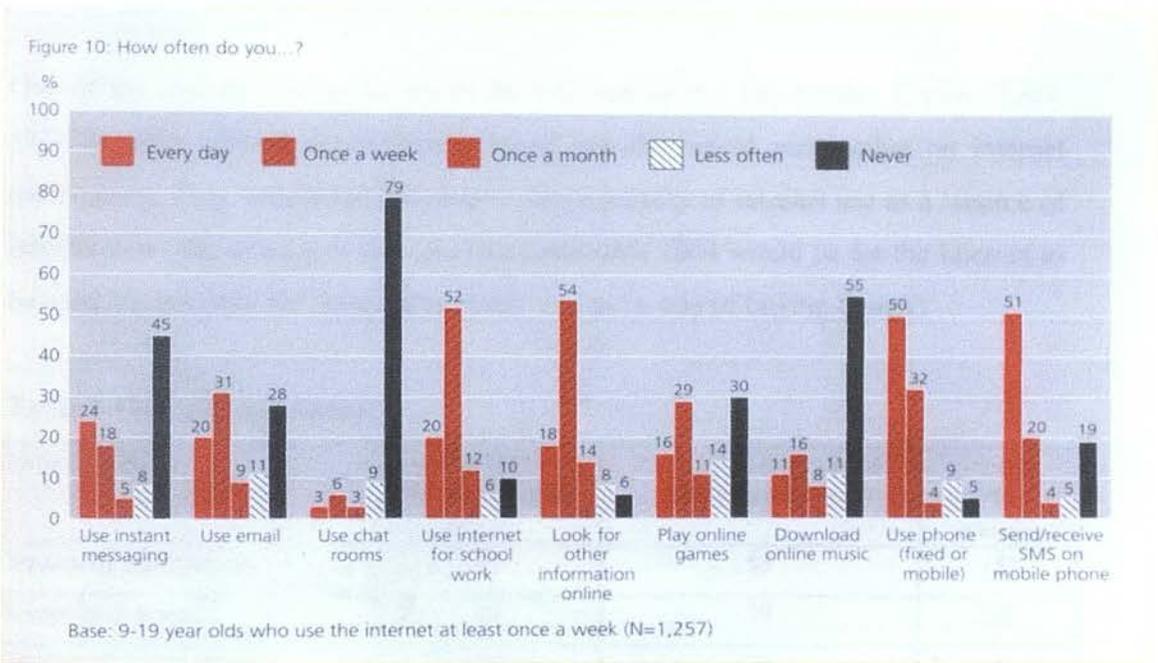
Source: Livingstone and Bober (2004: 21)

The figures also point to the growing importance of internet use for school work. 90% of the sample claimed to do work for school or college on the internet, compared to only 70% for playing games online and 45% for downloading music. The figures do not however differentiate between school work completed at home or in school but highlight their growing importance as 'work' related tasks. Given the psycho-social background of the authors it is perhaps not surprising that the initial 2004 study offered little in terms of commercial uses of the internet. There was for example no differentiation between information seeking for commercial and non commercial purposes nor any information on the purchasing of goods and services. Their later study (2005) does separate out commercial opportunities, grouping them together with career opportunities. The 2005 study discovered that 40% of 9-19 year olds looked for products/buy products online, a figure that is likely to have grown very rapidly in the

last two to three years as the commercial opportunities have become more apparent.

Although it is clearly important to map out such purpose or activity types, such figures do little to advance our understanding of the prevailing motivations underpinning internet activities.

5.2 Existing research on motivations to use the internet

One of the first studies conducted in the UK was by the The Henley Centre (1999: 177-78). This offered a practitioner based non-theoretical perspective on internet motivations. They concluded that despite the popularity of internet use as a 'source of information', the trend over the next five years until 2004 would be for the internet to be used increasingly for 'keeping in touch' and as 'a way of buying things'.

Table 8 Uses of the internet

Uses Statements	Now (1999) % respondents	Five years time (2004) % respondents	+ (-) % change
Source of information	63	55	(8)
Keeping in touch	29	39	10
Source of entertainment	24	28	4
Way of buying things	13	32	19

Source: The Henley Centre 1999, *Consumer and Leisure Futures*, The Henley Centre, London, pp. 45.

Since 1999, there has been a plethora of research studies from a diverse range of perspectives into internet use. The following table summarises some of the key studies into internet use amongst young people. The table excludes studies informed by the uses and gratifications tradition which will be covered separately later in the chapter.

Table 9: Perspectives on youth internet use

STUDY	TARGET AUDIENCE	MAIN FINDINGS
Bingham & Valentine (1999)	Children's uses of the internet (UK)	Internet as central to childhood stories Internet as 'frontier' technology Cyberkids – competencies and complexities
Montgomery (2000)	Adolescents internet uses and commercial exposure (US)	The 'promise and perils' of exposure to online commercialism
Roberts (2000)	Internet access and young people (US)	Privatisation of new media for personal use Exposure to new forms of media attention
Turow and Nir (2000)	Role of the family in children's internet use (US)	Internet as area of discord and sensitivity between parents and children
Verrept and Gardiner (2000)	Children and the internet (UK)	Provision of entertainment vehicle Building of global communities - new media
Facer, Facer, Furlong & Sutherland (2003)	Motivations for young people's computer uses (UK)	Computer (and internet) use orientated around construction of (gendered) peer group identity
Wyatt, Thomas and Terranova (2002)	Use and non use of the internet by young people (UK)	Identification of internet rejecters and those no longer engaged
Thomson and Laing (2003)	Young people and online commercial uses (UK)	Internet use for information searching and influencing purchasing decisions
Alberos-Andrés (2004)	Adolescents use of internet (SPAIN)	Internet use although less prevalent incorporated into fabric of daily lives
Cranmer (2004)	Internet access and social inequality at home (UK)	New social inequalities within and between families who use internet at home
Kaltiala-Heino, Lintonen and Rimpela (2004)	Adolescents &addictive internet use (FIN)	Identification of excessive use, resulting in psychological problems
Livingstone and Bober (2004)	Experiences of young people and their parents online (UK)	New divide for internet use, centring on quality of use. Separation between the 'stimulated' and the 'unengaged'
Montgomery, Gottlieb-Robles and Larson (2004)	Youth and citizenship (US)	Internet use by young people to become e-citizens
O'Connell, Price and Barrow (2004)	Primary school children's use of the internet (UK)	Study not available through British Library
Seiter (2004)	Children's internet uses (US)	New forms of digital divides through internet use
Stald (2004)	Young Danes and the internet (DEN)	Convergence of internet and related electronic devices through use Global reach, local roots of int. use

The studies illustrate the diversity of internet uses and related issues amongst young people. Amongst the more important ones are the debate over whether the internet is used primarily for more pleasurable or functional pursuits (Verrept and Gardiner 2000), the depiction of young people as pioneers of different types of internet use (Bingham and Valentine 1999, Tapscott 1998), the importance of peer group involvement in internet use (Facer *et al.* 2003), the emergence of internet communities amongst young people locally and on a worldwide basis (Stald 2004), the link between internet use, personal identity and self ego (Facer *et al.* 2003) and the emergence of young people as 'world citizens' through internet use.

The studies also highlight a number of emerging barriers to more enthusiastic internet use. These include the exposure to commercial practices (Montgomery (2000), the emergence of new forms of digital inequalities in youth internet use (Seiter 2004, Cranmer 2004), the separation of digital enthusiasts from digital rejectors (Wyatt *et al.* 2002, Livingstone and Bober 2004) and the emerging divide between parents and young people over internet use (Turow and Nir 2000).

Livingstone and Bober (2005) called such barriers 'online risk'. The 9-19 years olds in their study described four main types of risk; pornographic content (accidental or on purpose), violent or racist content, privacy risks, and contact risks such as bullying or meeting up with online strangers. The area of online risks or barriers to greater use is still an area in its infancy, offering much scope to establish a better understanding of all experiences of young people online, not just the more positive ones.

Few studies with the possible exception of Alberos-Andrés (2004) and Livingstone and Bober (2004, 2005) consider the use of the internet in the context of young people's everyday lifestyles. Internet use is clearly an important, integrated facet of how young people choose to live their lives. There is a danger that if the internet is studied in isolation from competing media and lifestyle choices, such uses are given no sense of comparison. The table also highlights that many of the studies focus on cultural, sociological and psychological issues. As such, less emphasis is given to the commercial uses of the internet by young people. Although Thomson and Laing's (2003) study does outline informational seeking and purchasing behaviour of young

people, it suffers from a lack of comparison with other competing uses of the internet.

6. The internet compared to traditional media channels

Some researchers have conducted their research into internet within the frame of other forms of communication and indeed marketing communication. Cultural studies academics Hayward and Wollen (1995) for example argued that"...the extraordinary hyperbole surrounding many aspects of digital culture should not distract us from its continuities with more traditional forms of screen based entertainment". From a managerial perspective, the internet is deemed to have specific advantages and disadvantages over traditional communication channels as illustrated in Table 10:

Table 10: Internet advantages and disadvantages for marketing communication

Internet advantages (vs. traditional media)	Internet disadvantages (vs. traditional media)
• Two way interaction	• Active choice to use, limits surprise
• Virtual in nature - no physical form - instant access	• Little selectivity, universal access
• Dynamic - last minute changes need little effort, low cost updating, real time information	• Vast competition to attract visitors
• Tool to access topics, navigate effortless, find documents	• Well defined demographics and psychographics of visitors can narrow focus
• Full multi-media applications of text, sound, video	

Sources: Based on Ainscough, T. L. & Luckett, M. G. 1996, 'The internet for the rest of us: marketing on the world wide web', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 20, pp. 36-47; Breitenbach, C. S. & Van Doren, D. C. 1998, 'Value-added marketing in the digital domain: enhancing the utility of the Internet', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 6, pp. 558-575.

From a personal consumption perspective, researchers such as Rust and Varki (1996) have argued that interactive media (as opposed to merely the internet) will eventually displace traditional media. They hypothesised that interactive media will be able to satisfy consumers' information needs more satisfactorily because of the quality and depth of information available. They also argued that interactive information is more tailored and so consumers will bypass information they consider irrelevant. Their conclusion was that interactive media will functionally displace traditional media.

Others including Coffey and Stripp (1997) have highlighted the complementary rather than displacement nature of 'new' and 'traditional' media. They found that although TV and the internet have a range of different benefits, the simultaneous use of new and traditional media suggest they can compliment each other.

Rust and Vardi's argument however, assumes that user experience of that medium is entirely satisfactory. Lin (1994) concluded that the internet will displace traditional media only when it can deliver services, content and entertainment more efficiently, attractively or conveniently. Although there is evidence of minor reductions in TV viewing time amongst online users (Berniker 1995, Crispell 1997), the scenario advocated by Linn has been rightly rejected by more cautious academics. They warn against being carried along in the hype. Svennivig and Firmstone (2000) noted that it is rare that an innovation catastrophically displaces the existing means of communication. They concluded by suggesting that the nature of the uptake of a new technology may be misleading as it might not necessarily determine its long term use and so by implication, it is far too early to judge.

7. Researching young people's mobile use

Beyond internet use, there are a number of other forms of new media use which should be considered. Most prominent amongst these, with most relevance to commercial practices, has been the emergence of mobile phones in the lives of young people. Pedrozo and Wilska (2004: 4) argued that the adoption of mobile phones in the U.K. has been "one of the most conspicuous social changes to happen over the last ten years".

Mobile phones have been seen as an essential element of developing youth lifestyles in the UK (Tully 2002 cited in Pedrozo and Wilska 2004:4), primarily through their ability to connect and synchronise social peer networks. Either through voice, sms and now visual forms of communication, mobile phones are seen as central to all forms of youth related communication. Over the last two or three years in the UK, texting has emerged as one of the most prolific teenage lifestyle activities. Tran (2003: 1), a

consultant for industry mobile marketing consultants flytxt offers his version as to why texting is so important to young people:

> "Why do teens text? Texting is more than just a function, it is a vital part of their lives and the medium of choice, not only can it be used to convey the latest gossip and information, it is an ideal way for anonymous chatting, sharing secrets, and of course instigating romance"

Researchers have also suggested that mobile phones are increasingly used for symbolic purposes, allowing young users opportunities to express their personal identities through phone use (Pedrozo and Wilska 2004). Ling and Helmersen 2000) for example pointed out that ownership of the latest models reveals a consumption-related aspect of young people's lifestyles and subcultures. Jones (2002) extended this by arguing that mobile phone use amongst young people mirrored the concept of 'neo-tribalism' with phones the symbolic linking of young people of shared values and interests.

Although research into mobile phone research is relatively recent, it has been possible to categorise research studies under four main headings; *diffusion* research, *adoption* research, *uses and gratifications*, and *domestication* (see Pedersen and Ling 2002). Surprisingly however, a limited number of these studies relate to a youth audience despite the high levels of mobile phone ownership amongst a youth audience.

The pre-eminent study of mobile phone uses and gratifications was conducted by Leung and Wei (2000). They identified seven different gratifications; 'fashion/status', 'affection/sociability', 'relaxation', 'mobility', 'immediate access', 'instrumentality' and 'reassurance'. This was however conducted amongst a sample of adults over the age of eighteen. Similarly, a study by Höflich and Rössler (2001) into texting uses and gratifications in Germany identified similar gratifications again amongst an adult audience ('reassurance', 'sociability', 'immediate access/availability', 'instrumentality', and 'entertainment'). It is evident that neither study compared mobile phone use with other new or more traditional media choices, offering only a limited basis for comparison and assuming that mobile use operates in isolation of competing media choices and indeed social context.

Studies in *domestication* research have however focussed more on the differences in adoption patterns between young people and other users. One study confirms that mobile adoption falls away after the age of twenty (Mante-Meyer and Haddon 2001). The most detailed studies, located within the social context of use, have been conducted amongst Scandinavian adolescent audiences. This may in part be because mobile penetration is higher in Scandinavia than any other part of the world. Studies by Oksman and Raitiainen (2001) in Finland and Ling (2000), Skog (2002) in Norway suggest that teenagers are not homogenous audiences for mobile phones; their attitudes and usage patterns vary widely depending on variables such as social background, gender, lifestyle interests and technological literacy. They also confirmed the degree to which mobile phones have become integrated in young people's everyday lives. A variety of reasons have been suggested for the widespread popularity of mobile phones amongst young people. They include the fashionability of phones (Ling 2004), their symbolism as a sign of individuality (Taylor and Harper 2001) and their social identification and sign of peer group acceptance (Yoon 2003, Oksman and Turtiainen 2004).

A number of non-age specific studies have started to explore issues of consumption and identity, in a similar vein to internet research. Most of these studies have identified not just the rise of phone consumption but a number of associated problems. These include organisational surveillance in terms of who is watching whom (Green 2002), the 'fashion victim' status of use (Davide *et al.* 2004), the seduction and pitfalls of mobile phone consumption (Dholakia and Swick 2003), problems of mobile isolation (Leung and Wei (1999) and finally issues of mobile annoyance (Monk *et al.* 2004). Research has not yet established to what degree many of these more problematic aspects of mobile phone use match the everyday experiences of young people in particular.

8. Conclusions

This chapter has outlined the spectrum of viewpoints associated with the emergence of new media in the lives of young people. These range from the evangelistic proclamations that the internet has transformed the lives of young people through to

the predictions of child-centred exploitation in the face a technological evil. Inevitably, young people's experiences of new media will fluctuate depending on personal experience and circumstance. It is therefore all the more important to examine how young people use the internet in the context of their overall lifestyles, and not divorced from other competing media choices. It is also important to assess the nature of their experiences, withholding pre-determined assumptions which might bias any research conducted.

Four main themes have been abstracted from the literature pertaining to new media. The multiplicity of owned media, diversification of form and content, convergence and shift to greater interactivity all provide start points in exploring aspects of new media use. Studies conducted into new media use (internet and mobile phones) amongst young people have grown in number to cover a wide range of inter-related issues. Few of them however provide insights into how the internet fits into young people's everyday lifestyles. Furthermore, many have been conducted outwith the auspices of marketing research and so rarely provide an insight into how new media use relates back to commercial consumption.

To date, the literature reviewed focused on young people and media use but has not explored in any detail the theoretical perspectives underlying media use. The next chapter will therefore briefly outline the different traditions in theorising media use before focusing on one particular tradition.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS TRADITION

1. Introduction

Literature is divided on how media influences young people and children in particular. One traditional school of thought outlines how media effects children in a negative manner. Media is said to expose children to experiences that were once the preserve of adults such as explicit sexual scenes and violent conduct (Elkind 1981). Elkind argues that children experience media such as television before they are 'emotionally ready' to handle it. The widespread use of television was said to be the equivalent of allowing young children to be present at "wars and funerals, courtships and seductions, criminal plots and cocktail parties" (Meyrowitz 1985: 242). This argument was then extended to the internet. Postman (1992) and Meyrowitz (1985) both evolved such arguments, arguing that the electronic media is causing the destruction of childhood. Postman uses a deterministic viewpoint, blaming the media for creating detrimental social change and influencing children in a negative sense, isolating them from other contextual social forces.

In contrast, a more liberated and active viewpoint has emerged in recent years. In relation to electronic media, Buckingham (2000: 41) argues that "far from being passive victims of media, young people are seen to possess a powerful form of 'media literacy', a spontaneous natural wisdom that is somehow denied to adults". In the context of advertising, researchers have adopted a more active, meanings-centred approach to understanding media consumption (O'Donohoe 1994).

In media studies, one tradition in particular has become synonymous with the notion of the active audience, the uses and gratifications tradition. This chapter will outline arguments for and against the use of the tradition as a theoretical framework for a study into young people and new media consumption.

2. Background to the Uses and Gratifications tradition

In response to criticism of the 'media effects' in the late 1940s (Wimmer and Dominick 1994), the uses and gratifications tradition of media research has a "long and well documented history" (Bracken and Lombard 2001: 103). Rather than attempting to measure alleged powerful, direct effects of media consumption, uses and gratifications scholars sought to move the focus from 'effects on' to 'use of' media.

Early scholars drew most of their inspiration from the functional work of Wright (1959) and before him, Lasswell (1948). Both researchers argued that people use media to suit their own individual needs, and this held greater sway than theories of media influence and dominance of audiences. A number of early studies dating back to the 1940s, examined the way in which audiences actively used various media genres such as radio, reading, quiz programmes, serious music, children's comics and newspaper reading. Each of the early pioneering studies formulated a list of social and psychological variables, served either by the content and/or the medium itself. Studies such as Herzog's (1944) analysis of 1940's radio quiz shows found that people actively listened for activities like competitions, for educational purposes, to self-rate themselves and for the joy of the sport they listened to. Later studies such as Berelson *et al.* (1954) and Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) were primarily descriptive, seeking to clarify responses of audience members to meaningful media categories. The uses and gratifications (U&G) school of media research therefore argued that the focus should be on how audiences *use* media rather than on how the media *effect* audiences.

Since its inception, the tradition has been used for a wide variety of media related topics, illustrating its enduring popularity for media researchers from the 1950s onwards. Table 11 categorises the diverse range of studies spanning five decades since the emergence of the uses and gratifications tradition. The table excludes more recent new media studies covered later in the chapter.

Mendelsohn (1964) for example identified seven motives for listening to the radio: 'companionship', 'bracketing the day', 'changing mood', 'counteracting loneliness or

boredom', 'providing useful news' and 'information', allowing 'vicarious participation in events' and aiding 'social interaction'. One of the defining studies of uses and gratifications in more recent years was Rubin's (1981) study of television use. Rubin discovered that adults watch TV for many reasons: to pass time, for companionship, for arousal, to relax, to be informed, to escape, to be entertained and for social interaction. His later study (1983) differentiated between viewers who watch TV for reasons of simply 'passing the time of day' and 'to be entertained' and those who watch more actively for 'information seeking'. The lists of statements used by Rubin have since become the hallmark for many subsequent uses and gratifications studies. Studies have also looked at where a particular demographic or personality trait might predict motives for media use. Greenberg and Domminck (1969) for example found that media use motives varied significantly on both racial and social background criteria, amongst US adolescents.

Until the mid 1980's, uses and gratifications was primarily applied to mass communication media (Windhal 1981). However, researchers such as Rubin and Rubin (1985) expanded the tradition to include intrapersonal communication, allowing the tradition to move from a mass to a general communication theory (Galley 2000). This was based on the premise that people seek out others for a variety of motives in the same manner as they seek out sources of mass media for specific motivation reasons. Given this assumption, the uses and gratifications tradition was subsequently used for a range of media, spanning both mass and intra-personal sources of communication.

Table 11: Categorising media uses and gratifications studies.

Category	Topic	Authors	Year
Media specific	Radio soap operas and quiz shows Radio use Reading newspapers and magazines (TV) news gratifications Telephone use Television use Television use and social identity Cable use Programme 'zipping and zapping'	Herzog Mendelsohn Elliott & Rosenberg Payne et al. Baldwin et al. Vincent & Basil Dimmeck et al. Rubin Harwood LaRose & Atkin Stafford and Stafford	1944 1964 1987 1988 1992 1997 1994 1983 1999 1991 1996
Cross media	Traditional media uses Traditional media uses Traditional and new media use	Elliot & Quattlebaum Katz et al. La Ferle et al.	1979 1973 2001
Motivation specific	Overcoming loneliness through media Social origins of media gratification Social and cultural impact of media use Mood state of media use Media use and personality	Canary & Spitzberg Blumler Perse & Dunn Byman & Zillmann Finn	1993 1979 1998 1984 1997
Youth specific	Media habits of children Television viewing and children Cable, TV and VCR use amongst adolescents Children's uses of VCRs Computer games, self esteem and adolescents	Schramm et al. Blumler & Katz Greenberg Linn Cohen et al. Colwell et al.	1961 1974 1974 1993 1988 1995
Other demography	Racial differences in media use Race, social class & adolescents	Gerson Greenberg & Dominick	1966 1969
Theoretical/ Historical	Interaction of use and personal characteristics Gratifications sought and received Media use and media effects Concept of active audience	Rosengren Greenberg Palmgreen & Rayburn Windahl Levy & Windahl	1974 1974 1979 1981 1984

3. Basic principles of U&G research

It was not until Katz *et al.* (1973, 74) that a set of explanatory processes and assumptions underpinning the U&G tradition was clearly presented. Katz argued that studies should be concerned with:

> '...(1) the social and psychological origins of (2) needs, which generate (3) expectations of (4) the mass media or other sources, which lead to (5) differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), resulting in (6) need gratifications and (7) other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones'.

<div align="right">Katz (1973:20)</div>

The assumptions underpinning Katz's approach (O'Donohoe 1994: 53) were firstly, audiences are *active* and therefore seeking *goal directed* gratification; secondly, the initiative in linking need gratification with media choice lies with the *individual*; thirdly, media *compete* with other sources for consequent satisfaction; finally, such gratifications were *highly varied,* encompassing diversion and entertainment as well as information.

Researchers since the late 50s and early 60s have sought to refine and sometimes re-design the underlying concepts of U&G, often in the face of mounting criticism about the epistemological and methodological traditions (Rubin 1981). After limited use through the late eighties and early nineties, the tradition has been re-invigorated by its relevance to 'new' media phenomenon.

4. Classifying U&G research

A number of different classification methods for mass media use have been developed, some central to U&G theory, others operating according to complementary theoretical principles (see Lasswell 1948, Wright 1959, Schramm *et al.* 1961, Stephenson 1967, Weiss 1971, McQuail *et al.* 1972).

Katz *et al.* (1973) were arguably the first to analyse properly the growing diversity of U&G categories and individual gratifications taken from existing literature. They identified 35 different needs, within five basic categories.

These were as follows:

1. Cognitive needs (acquiring information, knowledge and understanding)
2. Affective needs (emotional, pleasurable, or aesthetic experience)
3. Personal integrative needs (strengthening credibility, confidence, stability and status)
4. Social integrative needs (strengthening contracts with family, friends etc)
5. Tension release needs (escape and diversion)

Katz's system still provides a valuable framework for categorising differing media needs. The fact that Katz's five different need categories still have resonance, in the emerging 'new' media needs, emphasises how well it has stood the test of time. Stafford (2003) argues that the internet is so different from other media choices that it requires a classification all of it own. This would however prevent any meaningful comparison with other competing media choices. Perhaps the most extensively used classification scale now used in U&G research was based on the work of Greenberg (1974) who studied television motivations amongst children and adolescents. The scale was refined and expanded to a set of thirty 'initial viewing motivation' questions (Rubin 1981, 1983) in Table 12.

Subsequent researchers who have based their classifications scales on the work of Rubin include Stafford and Stafford's study on zipping and zapping between TV programmes (1996) and Linn's investigation online service adoption (1999). Given the robustness of the scale and continued use, it provides a proven tool for researching new media uses and gratifications.

Table 12: Initial viewing motivations

Categories and Statements ("I Watch TV...")	Mean	s.d.
RELAXATION		
1. Because it relaxes me	3.25	1.07
2. Because it allows me to unwind	2.89	1.17
3. because it's a pleasant rest	2.90	1.04
COMPANIONSHIP		
1. So I won't have to be alone	1.97	1.17
2. When there's no one else to talk to, or be with	2.45	1.25
3. Because it makes me feel less lonely	1.88	1.06
HABIT		
1. Just because it's there	2.38	1.25
2. Because I just like to watch it	2.68	1.16
3. Because it's a habit, just something I do	2.33	1.27
PASS TIME		
1. When I have nothing better to do	2.89	1.3
2. Because it passes the time away, particularly when I'm bored	2.72	1.3
3. Because it gives me something to do to occupy my time	2.38	1.21
ENTERTAINMENT		
1. Because it entertains me	3.71	0.96
2. Because it's enjoyable	3.26	0.91
3. Because it amuses me	3.02	0.99
SOCIAL INTERACTION		
1. Because it's something to do when friends come over	1.59	0.87
2. So I can talk with other people about what's on	2.06	1.07
3. So I can be with other members of the family or friends who are watching	2.39	1.14
INFORMATION		
1. Because it helps me learn things about myself and others	2.71	1.16
2. So I can learn how to do things which I haven't done before	2.09	1.08
3. So I could learn about what could happen to me	2.1	1.06
AROUSAL		
1. Because it's thrilling	2.09	0.94
2. Because it's exciting	2.29	1.00
3. Because it peps me up	1.89	0.96
ESCAPE		
1. So I can forget about school or others things	2.41	1.27
2. So I can get away from the rest of the family or others	1.64	0.92
3. So I can get away from what I'm doing	2.22	1.2
Note: Response options ranged from "exactly" (5) to "not at all" (1) like their own reasons for watching television.		

Source: Rubin, A. M. 1983, 'Television uses and gratifications: The interaction of viewing patterns and motivations', *Journal of Broadcasting*, vol. 27, pp. 41

5. Applying U&G to a youth audience

As illustrated by Table 11, researchers over several decades have used adaptations of the uses and gratifications tradition to study child and adolescent media use.

Schramm *et al.* (1961) for example sought to explain how television use amongst children satisfied a range of functional needs, thereby displacing other competing activities. Gratifications identified included the need for 'escape from family conflicts', the need to 'escape boredom' and need for 'entertainment'. Later studies such as Greenberg (1974) pioneered more child centred approaches to determine the uses and gratifications of popular media choices. Children aged from nine up to fifteen were asked to write an essay on "why I like to watch television". Greenberg uncovered eight distinct motivations for why young people watched television in preference to other activities: 'to pass time', to forget as a means of diversion', 'to learn about things', 'to learn about myself', 'for arousal', 'for relaxation', 'for companionship', and 'as a habit'.

More recently, researchers have moved beyond researching young people's television uses and gratifications to explore the emergence of enhanced viewing experiences through technologies such as cable and VCRs (Cohen *et al.* 1988). Linn (1993: 47) for example explored the enhanced control that motivated adolescents to use VCR and remote control devices. Linn concluded that "adolescent viewers remain a distinctive audience, displaying characteristic viewing activities but similar gratification objectives compared to adult viewers". Colwell *et al.* (1995) used gratification based theory to test out how the emergence of computer gaming compared to more traditional choices such as watching television. The researchers were particularly interested in the effect of gaming on adolescent friendships but found that gaming rarely provided the kind of 'electronic friend' predicted in the computer literature.

There have however been relatively few examples of uses and gratifications applied to new forms of media such as the internet and mobile phones. One exception to this was the study by La Ferle *et al.* (2000) of adolescent cross media uses, although the research concentrated on media activities rather than media gratifications. The study

highlighted the importance of researching changes in adolescent media uses, focusing on differences between the internet and other interpersonal forms of communication. The accumulation of youth orientated studies using uses and gratifications as an approach suggests that it remains a viable option when considering the issues concerned with young people's media use.

6. Criticisms of the tradition

The tradition has been criticised consistently for a number of years and for a variety of reasons. Some of the more prominent criticisms are as follows:

6.1 Audiences are not always active, selective and in control

Media hegemony advocates have contended that U&G theory has overextended its reach in asserting that people are active and in control, when using and interpreting media, independent of external influence (White 1994). The notion of an active audience was described by Severin and Tankard (1997:337) as "a little simplistic or naïve". Critics have suggested that there is limited freedom when choice is restricted and media owners often manipulate the message for their own purposes. This argument is less relevant however in a digital age with hundreds of satellite channels and countless websites for audiences to choice from. Critics have also suggested that audiences are rarely active, often in a transition or passive state and so unable adequately to receive media gratifications. Again however, this argument would appear rooted in notions of traditional media with less relevance to the increasing interactivity of many forms of media including television.

Levy and Windhal (1984), in response to earlier criticisms, argued that individuals display different types of activity, from high to low level. A low level of viewing may for example still obtain 'information' gratification simply from background, habitual watching of the news. The individual may be less active, even concentrating on other things but still receiving important gratifications. This highlights the importance of understanding media use in foreground and background context. Internet use is often portrayed as an active, even interactive media (Ruggerio 2000) but such contentions

rely on definitions of audience activity formulated well before the advent of new forms of media.

6.2 An individualistic tradition

The tradition has also been criticised for its inability to consider the social interaction involved in media consumption (Elliott 1974). Researchers such as Churchill and Moschis (1979) for example argued that socialisation is a fundamental element in media consumption in which parents, peers and others agents influence media consumption. Elliott (1974) argued that such influences and influencers contradict the foundations of U&G assumptions, namely the emphasis on individuality, rational and personal choice. Sohn and Leckenby (2001) went on to suggest that the tradition therefore ignores that media usage is 'socially conditioned' and cannot therefore be fully explained by individuals divorced from their socio-cultural context.

6.3 Clarity of concepts and definitions

The tradition has been criticised for its inability to differentiate clearly between core concepts such as motives, uses, gratifications and theoretical alternatives. Ruggiero (2000:12) added that different researchers attach different meanings to such concepts, leading to "fuzzy thinking and inquiry". The scale and diversity of U&G research has only added to such problems according to its critics. This argues for the need not to overcomplicate, using the approach as a starting point rather than the finishing line.

Another area that has given rise to much debate has been the distinction between gratifications sought (SO) and gratifications obtained (OB). Palmgreen *et al.* (1981) argued that there is still much to learn about relationships between gratifications sought and obtained, the antecedents of such gratifications and ways they relate to media behaviour.

6.4 Data reporting inadequacies

The method of self-reporting has been heavily criticised for its lack of sophistication and overly simplistic approach in light of the complexities of understanding human

behaviour (McLeod and Becker 1981).

Lometti *et al.* (1977) made three specific criticisms. Firstly, they argued that the *a priori* definition of gratification dimensions resulted in research results more dependent on "research input than subjects' responses" (323*)*. Testing of questions can help partially to alleviate this concern but it remains an important issue for any researcher operating in this area to be sensitive of. Secondly, researcher bias might substantially overestimate the number of operable gratifications. Finally, the use of in-depth interviews, designed to overcome such problems, can lead to overly rationalised responses. Other qualitative researchers using in depth and participant ethnomethodological approaches, have successfully identified a range of fantasy, play and escape uses (O'Donohoe 1994).

Rosenstein and Grant (1997) concluded that the mere fact that U&G type self-report methodologies do not report on observable audience behaviour makes them problematic. They suggest that self-reports are based on *a priori*, causal theories influenced by whatever stimuli happen to be salient. As a consequence, a U&G informed research methodology requires sensitivity, ensuring that researcher bias is minimised.

6.5 Theoretical justifications

A range of researchers including Elliott (1974), Swanson (1977, 1979) and Lometti *et al.* (1977) concluded that the tradition offers little more than a "data collecting strategy" (Severin and Tankard 1997: 305). Specifically, the idea of putting lists of reasons for why people use media was thought to lack intellectual rigour because it does not offer deeper, more complex sets of rules or influences which might dictate or direct media use. McQuail's (1984) summary concluded that the uses and gratifications perspective is atheoretical, arguing that if there is a theory, it is tautological and therefore useless. He rationalised that people have needs, they use media to satisfy those needs and those needs are therefore satisfied. He went on to suggest that there is no way of determining the direction of influence between measured 'need' and media use.

Some U& G researchers such as Palmgreen and Rayburn (1979) in response to this,

have used the tradition in combination with other media and consumption theories. A good example of such integration was discussed by Donohew *et al.* (1987) who related U&G concepts to social and psychological origins and subsequent lifestyles. More socially centric researchers such as Morley (1980) have suggested that more work is required to link different patterns of gratifications sought with meanings and interpretations given to specific media messages. He argued that understanding family television uses sought is insufficient if there is little comprehension of the complex meanings experienced (within the household).

7. Alternative approaches to media use

Since the mid 1980s, researchers developed what has now become known as the 'audience interpretation' of media. Audience interpretation theory is based on the premise that media use (and media effects) should be studied in terms of the subjective construction of meaning placed on media, or meanings developed in response to media (White 1994: 3). Studies emphasising the notion of audiences as active constructors of meanings and users of media texts include Lull (1980, 1990), Fiske (1987), Radway (1987), Morley (1990, 1992), Brown (1994).

Morley (1990, 1992) was one of the first in a youth context to emphasise the complexities of media use. His work highlighted that working class youth, far from being manipulated by mass media, developed a counter-cultural subculture or 'discourse', enabling them to interpret mass media. Earlier work also emphasised the socio-cultural differences in family television use (Morley 1986). Contrasting with the prevalent uses and gratifications approach, Morley argued that media use should be understood as part of a wider cultural and social process.

The need to extend understanding using more direct, observational techniques was pioneered by Lull in the US (1980, 1990) and Hobson in the UK (1980, 1982). Their ethnographic style of research was located within the "natural, undisturbed rhythm" of daily domestic life. As a consequence, both researchers highlighted the importance of media use as the 'social glue' which brought families together in conversation. The social uses typology provided by Lull (1990) provides a rigorous basis for

understanding the diversity of socially constructed media use; the work of Lull and Anderson and Meyer (1988) reflecting criticism of the perceived rigidity of the uses and gratifications tradition. Although Blumler (1979) identified three primary social origins of media gratification (normative influences, socially distributed life changes and the subjective reactions of the individual in a social situation), subsequent authors felt that the tradition continued to lack the theoretical sensitivity to identify more subtle 'social' uses. Lull for example advocated adopting more ethnographic techniques to measure the social uses of media consumption. The U&G tradition has been criticised for its focus on the individual rather than the surrounding social and cultural setting. There are parallels here with advertising research in which Ritson and Elliott (1999: 260) suggested that the focus on the "solitary subject of advertising research", borne out of a cognitive psychology, was failing to address the socio-cultural settings.

The work of Ang (1985) also distanced her 'audience' research from the uses and gratifications tradition. Ang argued that social context was more important than the individual psychological uses stressed by uses and gratifications. In particular, she felt that it was important to focus on the meanings derived from active viewing, media content rather than studying their initial motivations sought and then obtained. Finally, she stressed the socially constructed sense of power viewers received from discussions of media plots and storylines.

A range of other related audience theories have emerged since the early work of Fiske. Lindorf (1987) for example found that individuals perceive, use and interpret media in direct interaction with others, binding pre-existing communities through sub-cultural rules and codes of interpretation. The importance of social interpretative communities in understanding media use is later reflected in the studies of advertising consumption by Ritson and Elliott (1999). Livingstone (1990) on the other hand argued that to understand patterns of human action such as media use, there is a need to understand patterns of meanings, beliefs and motivations, collectively known as the social construction of reality. She introduced a number of interpreting dimensions such as the 'moral-immoral' and the 'masculine-feminine', meshing together the traditions of textual analysis with theories of psychological perception.

Finally, cultural analysis of de Certeau (1984) has inspired a stream of audience interpretation focusing on individual mediation of media use, highlighting that different audiences "steal their text" for their own personal uses (Jenkins 1992). His metaphor of the 'textual poacher' refers to how audiences can steal their own meanings from cultural commodities they are offered. Another importance term 'bricolage' was conceived to explain how seemingly irrelevant elements of television stories converge with unexpected powers of identification in the lives of ordinary people (White 1994).

When considering a framework for conducting studies into new media use, it is therefore important to ensure that socio-contextual reasons for media use are not overlooked. An over-reliance on U&G methods might risk over-simplifying socio-cultural forces at work.

8. Evaluating the tradition as a potential research approach

Given the extensive criticisms of the U&G approach and alternative approaches available, O'Donohoe (1994: 55) suggested that "such criticisms may indicate that much research in this tradition is methodologically flawed and theoretically redundant".

There continues however to be a steady stream of researchers willing to defend the tradition. Ruggiero (2000:13-14), whilst acknowledging the lack of theoretical sophistication, suggested that the tradition offers a "benchmark base of data for other studies to further examine media use". Severin and Tankard (1997) suggested that U&G offers a healthy antidote to the emphasis on passive audiences and persuasion techniques and is therefore a valuable tool. They concluded however that there is much to be done before it can be truly regarded as a theory. Researchers have moved beyond the tradition's functionalist roots and now claim to take into account the social and psychological origins of needs, values and beliefs, the motives behind such behaviour and their implications for future media use (see Palmgreen 1984). Models such as those advocated by Palmgreen however risk transforming the tradition from one of potential theoretical paucity into one where the sheer complexity of variables

and constructs could confuse and overburden the basic principles upon which it is based.

Arguably the strongest reasons for considering the inclusion of a U&G informed method lie not in the theoretical advancement of media fundamentals which are already well extensively researched but in the opportunities it offers for understanding new and emerging forms of media use.

9. Rationale for U&G theory in new media research

According to Williams *et al.* (1987), U&G has historically been applied to traditional mass media but has always held promise for so called 'new technologies'. Linn (1996) went as far as suggesting that U&G is the most widely accepted theoretical framework for studying media adoption and use and so is highly pertinent for a new media study.

The term new media in a uses and gratifications context started appearing in the early 1990s through research into the experiences of new technologies such as VCRs and cable services (Cohen *et al.* 1988, Rubin and Bantz 1987, Lin 1993, Kang and Atkin 1999). Such forms of media are arguably extensions of existing media uses and offer limited insights into new media gratifications beyond additional content and added convenience.

More recently, U&G researchers have turned their attention to the growth in ICT applications including computer-mediated-communication (CMC) such as bulletin boards (Kuehn 1994). The intrapersonal and mediated contexts of such new forms of media resulted in researchers placing greater emphasis on social aspects of new media use, drawing in complementary theories such as "media richness theory" to improve understanding of social presence and new media use (Papacharissi and Rubin 2000). Comparisons were made with other forms of intra-personal communication such as e-mail and the telephone (Stafford *et al.* 1999). Ruggerio (2000) suggested that it was the intrapersonal characteristics of informality and reduced inhibition that made the internet different from other forms of mass and

intrapersonal media. The fact that the internet exists on a continuum, somewhere between mass and interpersonal communication, extends its basis of comparison from more passive, non- personal media such as television to more active and intimate media such as internet messenger boards and now mobile phones.

10. U&G as a framework for new media research

Turning to the new media landscape of recent years, and specifically the emergence of the internet, there are a number of arguments for appropriateness of the uses and gratifications tradition for a new media related research study.

10.1 A taxonomy of uses

The first step in studying any new medium or technology is to establish taxonomy of its use. Newhagen and Rafaeli (1996) argued that because of the weight of research already conducted using U&G, it represents the ideal vehicle to conduct such a task. U&G studies have often in the past created, confirmed or rejected a set of attributes/characteristics concerning a medium. There exists a recognisable framework of assumptions to compare and contrast, with little requirement to 'reinvent the wheel'.

This however assumes that the internet does have comparable characteristics and is not, as some have argued (Papert 1996), a completely new phenomenon. Palmgreen, as far back as 1979, was the first to suggest that it is important to examine how media gratifications change with different media characteristics, and in particular, with new forms of media. The U&G tradition therefore represents a viable research vehicle to conduct initial comparisons of existing and new media phenomenon, using recognisable and easily comparable sets of measurements. Ferguson and Perse (2000) for example discovered that the internet was liked for "television" reasons such as entertainment, passing the time, relaxing and for social information but concluded that it remained inferior as an ideal way to relax and pass the time of day. Kaye and Medoff (2001) went as far as describing the internet as a cross between the television and the computer. Other studies such as La Ferle *et al.* (2000) compare different

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activities conducted on traditional and new media for adolescents but did little to explore the deeper motivations for using different media types. Many of the internet studies conducted to date have however explored the internet in isolation of competing media (and indeed leisure choices). They therefore risk providing an analysis of media use taken out of a comparable context. Such studies include Eighmey (1997), Eighmey and McCord (1998), Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999), Anglemann (2000), Ebersole (2000), Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), Stafford and Stafford (2001), Luo (2002), Molesworth and Jenkins (2002) and Stafford (2003).

It is also evident that virtually all the internet derived studies to date have been drawn from an exclusively American context. As Chapter Four will discuss, there is a growing wealth of new media studies focusing on European experiences but none are comparable to existing U&G studies. In areas of new media such as mobile use, European nations such as Finland are significantly more advanced. Researching European contexts can therefore provide a valuable contrast to the standardised American experiences.

Finally, most new media based studies have been drawn from adult or convenience student based samples. The uses and gratifications tradition has a rich history of youth orientated research studies but few have yet to emerge concerning the study of new media despite the importance theorists attach to young people and new media. There is therefore a research gap for a study which seeks to establish a 'benchmark' understanding of new media use, in comparison with other media choices and in contrast with the almost universal emphasis on American adult consumers.

10.2 Laying down the foundations

A second argument lies in basic principles underpinning the tradition. The U&G tradition, because of its original straightforward assumptions, has historically sought not to provide complex understandings of well researched media. The tradition is beneficial however in establishing an understanding of a relatively new medium. Without this, any further more complex and socio-culturally sensitised work may be guilty of lacking solid foundations.

Perse and Dunn (1998) argued that focusing exclusively on social and cultural impacts of new technologies might be premature until we fully understand how and why people are making use of them. Although it would be naïve to assume that the social and cultural impact can be divorced from personal motivations as the authors argue, the underlying point about needing benchmarking research which maps out what motivates individuals to use the internet is a valid one. Without such 'parameter' research, further more detailed ethnographic research may lack the necessary yardsticks and benchmarks upon which to develop critical theory. A good example of this was the new media work carried out by Newhagen and Rafaeli (1996). They identified five defining characteristics of communication on the internet; 'multimedia', 'packet switching', 'hypertextuality', 'synchronicity' and 'interactivity'. Given that one of the underlying assumptions underpinning U&A research is that gratifications are *highly varied*, then the process of confirming existing gratifications and establishing new ones would appear to suit the *varied* criteria.

10.3 Revisiting basic assumptions

It is also important to consider the assumptions upon which the U&G tradition is based. The dominant one assumes that audiences are '*active, selective and in control*'. Whilst it has been argued that there is considerable doubt regarding the concept of active audiences in relation to the more passive traditional media, a strong argument exists for exploring whether the concept of an active or indeed interactive audience is appropriate to the internet.

Newhagen (1998) for example argued that identification of the importance of 'interactivity' for new media reinforced the notion of the active user. Interactivity has been defined as the "degree to which participants in the communication process have control over, and can exchange roles in their mutual discourse" (Williams *et al.* 1998:10). Ha and James (1998) suggested that such interactivity includes playfulness, choice, connectedness, information collection and reciprocal communication The degree of passivity is substantially reduced and the degree of involvement substantially heightened. Kaye and Johnson (2002) go on to suggest that the goal orientated nature of internet use, with its emphasis on searching behaviour, means that

users are aware of the needs they are trying to satisfy and hence more active in their orientation. The internet however may not always be wholly appropriate for vindicating the concept of active use.

10.4 Recognising the socialised perspective

Finally, U&G has been criticised for its over-reliance on the individual at the expense of a more socially contextualised explanation. Bellamy and Hanewicz (1999) suggested that the supposed 'one-to-one' relationship of the internet means that users are atomised and fragmented, divorced from social ties and context. Indeed, the findings from one of the earlier studies on web site use (Eighmey 1997) advocated 'personalness' as a defining motivation. One key difference with the internet and now mobile phones undoubtedly lies with what is known as its asyncronetic properties (Ruggerio 2000). Senders and receivers of electronic messages for example are staggered in time. Indeed, it is within readers' own control when, how and if they respond to such messages. Because individuals can store, consider and reflect before responding, individual control could be said to operating (Chamberlain 1994). Some media scholars have gone as far as suggesting that the internet is the ultimate in individualism, empowering in terms of both information sought and created (Singer 1998).

This form of methodological individualism however ignores certain social characteristics of contemporary internet use. Internet communities (Kozinets 2002), multiple e-mailing practices (Stafford *et al.* 1999) and virtual exchange of ideas and information using messenger boards are all examples of new forms of social behaviour in which social context and socialised behaviour play important roles. It would be naïve to suggest that internet use operates in isolation of external agents such as friends and peers. La Ferle *et al.* (2000) for example found that peer suggestions remained one of the main reasons for adolescent choice of websites. As mentioned earlier, new forms of media such as the internet offer many opportunities for the creation of social relationships that may not have been possible using traditional media. The ability to span geographic boundaries at mutually convenient times for example, can undoubtedly strengthen distant social connections. Stafford (2003: 429) concludes that "there appears to be a strong social component to internet

use that was not present in previous studies".

Research conducted into the intrapersonal forms of new media illustrate that uses and gratifications does have a role to play in extending concepts of social media uses. Beyond the work of bulletin boards, a uses and gratifications has now been adopted for studying mobile phone use. Leung and Wei (2000) for example found that, although mobility and immediacy were the strongest factors explaining mobile phone use, more intrinsic factors such as social perceptions played an important role. Indeed, the research recognised the importance of fashion and status on phone use, both constructs relying heavily on peer influence and social context. More recent research into text messaging highlighted the overwhelming importance of socialised behaviour and new media (Patterson *et al.* 2004).

Before concluding this chapter, it is important to outline and assess the research that has been carried out to date on internet uses and gratifications.

11. Internet research using the Uses and Gratifications tradition

Rafaeli (1986) was arguably the first to use a version of uses and gratifications (U&G) theory to study computer-mediated-communication, specifically relating to bulletin boards. He discovered that 'recreation', 'diversion' and 'entertainment' were the principal user motivations of bulletin boards, followed by communications and learning.

The first identifiable internet related U&G study was a small pilot study of 31 college students undertaken by Eighmey (1997). The study related gratifications to the adoption of a range of websites. Similar dimensions to existing mass media studies were confirmed such as 'entertainment' value and 'personal identity' alongside new media specific ones. His most significant discoveries were 'personal involvement' and 'continuing relationships'. Although Eighmey's findings are difficult to generalise given the limitations of a small sample and relevance only to the world-wide-web (a subset of the internet), the study gives useful indications on the range and unique types of new media gratifications one might hope to find.

In their study of web usage, Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999) stressed that the provision of information is not enough for internet providers. They neither differentiated nor ranked other motivations however, merely suggesting that 'social escapism', 'security and privacy', 'interactive control' and 'social concerns' all played important roles. Ebersole (2000) reinforced the idea of 'information plus', suggesting that although the world-wide- web provides an important learning resource for school children, other motivations such as 'pleasurable experience' appeared more important to young people.

Dicken-Garcia (1998) further explored the concept of 'personalness' first advocated by Eighmey (1997, 1998). The internet was found to place stronger emphasis on informal, interpersonal conversation (topics users are less likely to discuss on the telephone for example). This 'less inhibited behaviour' was thought to be closer to the concept of word of mouth than interaction with newspapers or television. Their conclusion was that such 'informality' enhanced the credibility of the information provided.

Perhaps the most relevant study (in the context of this research study) was the investigation of teens' use of traditional media and the internet conducted by La Ferle et al. (2000). 189 teenagers from a high tech school in the US were asked to self complete a U&G based survey in class time. The researchers confirmed the importance of 'need based' gratifications and went on to suggest that traditional media were best at fulfilling entertainment and leisure needs. Teens' use of the internet focused on homework, news and current affairs, in contradiction with Korgaonkar and Wolin's suggestion that information based motivations were less important. It was noticeable however that the uses suggested by La Ferle et al. were limited to ten variables and bore little relation to previous U&G studies. Indeed, it could be argued that La Ferle et al. mixed up activities such as 'help with homework' and 'music' with overlapping motivations such as 'fun' and 'making friends'. An important distinction should be made between the underlying motivation and the subsequent activity.

The complete list of studies outlined in Table 13 illustrates the range and prioritisation of internet uses. They also provide points of comparison with other media choices.

They do not however provide much needed richness and depth of understanding that other non U&G informed studies such as Buckingham (2000) offer. It is also evident that most of the studies offer a purely American perspective. This is in contrast to the more diverse range of European studies conducted using alternative paradigms and methodologies. One of the few exceptions to this was the study by Molesworth and Jenkins (2002) which relied on a small sample of young adults to conduct a qualitative study.

Table 13: Uses and gratifications of the internet

STUDY	RESEARCH QUESTION/METHOD	RESULTS
Eighmey (1997)	- user perceptions of 28 commercial web sites - factor analysis of 176 completed questionnaires - US adult sample screened by internet use	❖ identifies six thematic areas: marketing perceptions, entertainment value, informational value, ease of use, credibility, interactivity
Eighmey and McCord (1998)	- user experiences of 5 commercial websites - factor analysis of 31 questionnaires (US pilot) - 70% experienced internet users	❖ new dimensions identified: personal involvement and online relationships
Kaye (1998)	- uses of internet and impact of traditional media, esp. TV - sample of 207 US college students - PCA factor analysis of results	❖ six web uses identified: entertainment, social interaction, pass time, escape, information and web site preference ❖ 25% reported spending less time watching TV
Perse and Dunn (1998)	- exploration of how CD ROM ownership and internet capability linked - 1071 US telephone surveys	❖ computers used for entertainment, escape, habit and to pass time ❖ internet capability linked to entertainment and to pass time
Stafford *et al.* (1999)	- exploration of household use of electronic mail in US - 112 active users (out of 881 sample) - interviews and paper survey	❖ e-mail used primarily for intra personal motivations ❖ use for 'personal gain', and 'for business' of lesser importance
Angleman (2000)	- identifies internet user patterns - online survey of 100 adult users in US - factor analysis	❖ hypothesis that user control motivates internet use confirmed

STUDY	RESEARCH QUESTION/METHOD	RESULTS
Ferguson and Perse (2000)	- explores similarities between television and www, using functionalist perspective - online survey completed by 250 students in US college students	❖ web used primarily for school, play, acquisition of information ❖ web not as relaxing as TV alternative
Papacharissi and Rubin (2000)	- audience uses of internet - survey of 279 US students - factor & canonical analysis of motives	❖ five main motives and accompanying antecedents identified ❖ internet found to serve functional alternative to 'face to face' comms.
Ebersole (2000)	- exploration of students' attitudes and uses of internet in US schools - paper and online surveys used - PCA factor analysis of 791 responses	❖ eight key factors identified ❖ research & learning dominant ❖ other factors: entertainment, communication/social interaction, combating boredom, available material, product info, games/sexually explicit materials, consumer transactions
La Ferle et al. (2000)	- comparison of internet use with interpersonal communication sources - questionnaire based survey of 189 US adolescents aged 14-19.	❖ teens' use of the internet focused on research, homework and news & current affairs.
Stafford and Stafford (2001)	- motivations for commercial web site use - 343 questionnaires covering 18-55 year olds in US - PCA factor analysis	❖ four key factors: 'cognitive', 'new and unique', 'social' and 'entertainment' ❖ claims a new media use unique to the internet: socialisation
Kaye and Johnson (2002)	- uses of internet sites for searching for political information - 308 online questionnaires using internet sampling in US - US adults with male orientation	❖ four key factors: 'guidance', 'information' 'seeking/surveillance', 'entertainment', 'social utility'
Luo (2002)	- explores influences of informativeness, entertainment & irritation on web attitudes, usage and satisfaction - 205 questionnaires from US students - structural equation modelling	❖ users who perceive web as entertaining and informative have positive attitudes to internet ❖ users who perceive web as irritating have negative attitudes
Molesworth and Jenkins (2002)	- explores young adults' uses of commercial and non-commercial websites - qualitative sample of 11 16-33 year olds in UK	❖ commercial content meets information, and conative needs ❖ rejection of online adverts

STUDY	RESEARCH QUESTION/METHOD	RESULTS
Stafford (2003)	- early vs. mainstream usage patterns of internet adopters - 1006 adult online surveys of US users	❖ social and content gratifications more important for innovators than laggards

12. Conclusions

This chapter has outlined the main arguments centring on the appropriateness of the uses and gratifications tradition as a framework for conducting research into new media use. The tradition has a long history, passing through periods of sustained use and then shunned in favour of alternative methods. It continues to attract devotees and critics in equal numbers but its longevity is testament to its usefulness. Criticisms of the tradition focus on five main areas: the underpinning assumptions, the individualistic implications, the clarity of definition, the data reporting inadequacies and the theoretical justifications.

The tradition does however offer renewed attractiveness with the emergence of new forms of media. It provides researchers with a tool for ease of comparison and benchmarking with previous studies. Similarly, the assumptions of users who are "active, selective and in control" is appropriate for the characteristics of new forms of media such as the internet. It is evident from the literature that amongst the new media studies conducted to date, few have focused on a youth audience, particularly outwith the dominant American environment. A more detailed discussion of the new media research conducted to date will be given in the following chapter.

Researchers using a uses and gratifications approach are obliged to consider the more serious criticisms raised. In particular, the view that such studies treat respondents as isolated individuals, divorced from their social context is one that cannot be easily resolved by a total reliance on this approach. Similarly, the tradition has been criticized for the provision of information devoid of richness of meaning and interpretation. This questions whether a study conducted into new media use should

rely exclusively on the uses and gratifications tradition for its theoretical input.

CHAPTER FIVE

YOUNG PEOPLE AND MARKETING PRACTICES IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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1. Introduction

A full understanding would be incomplete without a focus on commercialised aspects of young people's new media use. This chapter will introduce the reader to the related topics of young people, new media and commercialism before detailing advertising practices, relationship building and brands in the context of new media consumption. The chapter will also critically evaluate the tactics used by practitioners when targeting young people.

2. Young people, new media and commercialism

Few studies have specifically explored the new media experiences of young people in such a commercial context. Advocates of the online environment such as Lindstrom and Seybold (2003:163) outline why they feel it is an important subject for marketers:

> "It's important that marketers pay attention to the virtual world phenomenon, because these worlds may soon become one of the most important forums for human interaction"

Turning specifically to the internet, studies have focused on the information searching and purchasing behaviour of young people online. Livingstone and Bober (2004) for example estimated that 40% of 12-19 year olds 'look for products or shop online' in the UK. Children have been recognised as one of the fastest growing online markets for companies to target. Strauss and Frost (2001) predicted a worldwide audience of 77 million users. Earlier studies of children aged 7-16 suggested that only one in three had actively looked for something to buy online, with just 12% making an actual purchase (Lunt 2002). The researcher concluded there was still a residual lack of

interest in 'e-commerce' online amongst children although the later study by Livingstone and Bober indicated that this may now be changing. Lack of access to a credit card is suggested as the barrier to online purchasing.

A study dedicated to young people's online purchasing behaviour by Thomson and Laing (2003) took this a stage further, differentiating between teenagers (13-15 years old) using the internet as a commercial information source, a means of influencing family purchases and a means of direct purchase. The research suggested that 43% of young teenagers had purchased online 'at least once' whilst 41% had used the internet for "window shopping" either to purchase elsewhere or attempt to influence family purchases. Few researchers have looked beyond such figures to assess the full extent of young people's experiences with commerce online.

It is anticipated that young people's experiences of commercial practices online extend well beyond mere information searching and occasional purchasing. It is reasonable to hypothesise that the scope of their experiences should also include their attitudes to, and uses of, advertising and related communication practices. The next section summarises from the wealth of research findings over many years investigating young people's experiences of advertising practices.

3. Young people and advertising practices

Researchers for many years concentrated their attention on the effects of television advertising, particularly on children as opposed to late adolescence. One reason for this according to Bartholomew and O'Donohoe (2003: 433) has been that:

> "The literature on children and advertising conjures emotive images of meek children at the mercy of mighty advertisers"

Such literature draws on the notion that younger children in particular have been depicted as 'at risk', exploited because of their lack of worldly experience (Gunter and Furnham 1998), lacking in cognitive skills and unable to cope with the intentions of advertising practitioners. Young (1998) depicts a classic scenario in which children are seen as 'the innocents', advertisers the 'seducers'. Children represent passive

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consumers in their reception of advertising messages, seemingly incapable of independent thought and interpretation. Researchers have emphasised that this depiction changes with age; Young (1998: 31) suggests that by middle to late childhood, the 'easy' metaphors of innocence and immaturity, of children subject to the onslaught of advertising, cannot be so easily applied.

Roedder John (1999) provided a comprehensive analysis of the progression of young people's understanding and attitudes towards advertising, based on a consumer socialisation framework. She found for example that "by the time children reach their eighth birthday, they not only understand advertising's persuasive intent but also recognise the existence of bias and deception in advertising" (189). Antonides and van Raaij (1998), using Piaget's theory of cognitive development, argue that by the time children approach their teens, they are capable of processing stimuli in a more objective and thoughtful manner, grasping the complexity often inherent in advertising tactics.

Skeptical attitudes emerge, in part influenced by family environment, peers and television exposure. By early adolescence, young people's advertising knowledge becomes more specific, developing an understanding of advertising tactics and appeals (Bousch et al. 1994). Roedder John rationalised this as indicative of the increasingly reflective characterisation of children as they embark on their adolescent years. They are capable of understanding the persuasive intent of adverts, identifying bias and deception in advertising tactics.

Beyond notions of advertising effects and socialisation theory, researchers have used the concept of literacy to assess young people's relationships with advertising practices. This is based on their developing linguistic and "metacommunicative" abilities (Young 1990). With increasing age, young people are thought to be capable of distancing themselves and assessing use and intentions of language commonly found in advertising executions. This might include for example identification and assessment of irony, humour and metaphor. More recently, the concept of advertising literacy has extended to incorporate how young people actively use advertising as part of their everyday existence. Drawing on theoretical concepts of 'meaning based' approaches to advertising consumption and active audience theories, researchers have argued that

young people are capable of using advertising for their own purposes, sometimes at odds with the desires of advertisers. O'Donohoe and Tynan (1998) for example found that young people adopted three main roles – the 'competent consumer', the 'surrogate strategist' and the 'casual cognoscenti' – in their dealings with advertising. Young people were deemed to be capable of switching between different roles, dependent on changing context. Each of these roles suggests a higher level of sophistication in understanding advertising intent, a degree of independence from association with the advertiser and a natural tendency towards scepticism.

The social dimensions of young people's advertising experiences have also been notable characteristics of research into advertising experiences. O'Donohoe (1994) for example highlighted the complex and intensively social role that advertising can sometimes play in their everyday lives, through 'entertainment', 'creative uses' and 'diversionary tactics'. Ritson and Elliott (1995, 1999) referred to the social consumption of advertising meaning. Their ethnographic research of sixth form adolescents found that advertising was used in a social context for ritualistic purposes, sometimes as a means of influencing others and gaining peer group superiority. Such positions assume a level of mastery according to Bartholomew and O'Donohoe (2003), using advertising to demonstrate a raised level of cultural competence.

Finally, a small number of researchers have highlighted that young people do not always welcome the attentions of advertising practices and at times, are increasingly capable of rejecting their advances with age. Batholomew and O'Donohoe for instance found that 'ad. avoidance' was a skill young people are already familiar with, from early adolescent years. Much has been made of young people's cynicism towards advertising practices especially when discussing the 'generation x' phenomenon of the late 1980's (Bond and Kirshenbaum 1998, Richie 1995).

4. Online advertising practices

Marketing practitioners are increasingly aware of the potential for targeting young people through online communication methods. Geraci and Nagy (2004) remind us why this might be so:

"To reach them (teenagers), you must go where they are, and the internet has evolved from an interesting tool to the central medium in their lives"

Literature focusing on young people and online advertising practices is firmly in its infancy, reflecting the recent emergence of increased internet use and growing commercial activities. McNeal (1992) highlights that online advertising practices cover a spectrum of activities targeting children, from websites to contests and online promotions. This is complicated by the lack of clear dividing lines between what might be deemed commercial advertising and editorial content (Yuan *et al.* (1998). Cai and Gantz (2000: 213) claimed children in particular have difficulty telling the difference between commercial and non commercial content in their early years. The authors concluded that "...children may be especially vulnerable to the web's seamless mix of editorial, advertising and promotional material"

This suggestion harks back to the traditional advertising effects literature, reflecting concerns amongst parents, regulators and educators about the negative effects of commercial practices on young people. Montgomery (2000) argued that advertising and marketing are quickly becoming a pervasive presence in the 'kids spaces' of the world wide web. This reflects a concern that commercial activity including advertising is extending its influence almost unnoticed yet restricting young people's non commercial digital consumption. Such arguments of creeping encroachment by commercialism echo the arguments of Klein (2001) for youth consumption in general. Implicit is the assumption that commercial activity has a negative influence, with young people unable to withstand its 'dangerous incursions'. Montgomery cited the merger of advertising, content, market research and direct sales online as evidence. Two reasons offer a counter-point to the negativity surrounding media effects and new media. Firstly as the previous section has discussed, young people particularly in their teenage years are thought to be relatively sophisticated in their understandings and uses of advertising in general. It would therefore be reasonable to hypothese that such sophistication might transfer to an online environment. Secondly, the transition of that understanding onto an online setting should be helped by their much hyped 'expert' technological abilities in dealing with new forms of media.

The downbeat assessment of the effects tradition contrasts with the more upbeat hopes of marketing practitioners looking to target young people through online practices. Verrept and Gardiner (2000: 26) for example argued that commercial online activity "offers all those elements of online activity that children find attractive: fun, control, and shopping". The authors seek to reassure parents, downplaying the potential negatives of spamming and intrusive direct marketing techniques.

Beyond the studies mentioned, there remains a paucity of literature studying young people's experiences of, and beliefs towards, advertising in an online context. Table 14 highlights the more prominent marketing orientated studies focusing on online advertising. Most commonly, they utilise American adult samples and positivistic survey techniques. The majority concentrate on the processes towards, and effects of, advertising rather than the 'lived' experiences of the users. Consequentially, few studies offer rich, detailed insights into experiences of online advertising, centred on rather than isolated from their everyday lives and experiences.

Two studies that did try to touch on the consumer experience of online advertising were Schlosser et al. (1999) and Wolin et al. (2002). Both studies highlighted both positive and negative attitudes towards online advertising practices, highlighting factors such as consumption beliefs and socio-economic background. Both studies were based on the conceptual framework of 'Attitude to the Ad'. In a UK context, Rettie et al. (2001) provided further evidence of negative attitudes, specifically user alienation towards internet advertising. They found a significant level of consumer annoyance with the practices of online advertisers. This raises the question of whether young people, given their traditional scepticism towards advertising, will react in a similar manner to advertising practices in an online content. Exploratory research by Grant and Waite (2003) amongst older teenagers and young adults indicated that ad annoyance was one of the most significant barriers to greater online use.

Table 14: Studies into online advertising

Study	Research method	Key focus
Berthon *et al.* (1996)	Conceptual	Model of how online advertising works
Briggs and Hollis (1997)	Online adult survey (US)	Relationships between banners, attitudes and behaviour
Maddox and Mehta (1997)	Focus groups and surveys, aged 16 or over, users and non users (US)	Importance of URLs in internet advertising
Hofacker and Murphy (1998)	Experimental design, random sample (US)	Effects of copy testing and banner ads.
Yuan *et al.* (1998)	Circumstantial and observational evidence	Relationships between online advertising and content
Schlosser *et al.* (1999)	Telephone based, adult sample (US)	User attitudes and attitudes to online ads.
Bruner II and Kumar (2000)	Online representative survey (US)	Impact of web experience on Attitude to Site & Ad.
Bush and Bush (2000)	Survey amongst agencies and clients (US)	Impact of internet on advertising agency practices
Choi and Rifon (2002)	Online adult questionnaire (US)	Antecedents and consequences of online advertising credibility and effects
Rodgers and Chen (2002)	Questionnaire to agency practitioners (US)	Attitudes of practitioners to internet advertising
Wolin *et al.* (2002)	Online adult questionnaire (US)	Users' beliefs, attitudes and behaviour towards online ads.
Ha (2003)	Online adult questionnaire (US)	Comparison of online advertising through different channels
Yun Yoo *et al.* (2004)	Online questionnaire	Effects of animation on banner advertising

5. Online relationships

A growing number of researchers argue that the most important criterion for online commerce is the establishment of online relationships (Zineldin 2000, Wang *et al.* 2000, Allan and Chudry 2000). This moves the focus from attitudes towards advertising to the establishment of online relationships. It assumes that the online environment is compatible with the development of longer term relationships between practitioners and online users rather than on a transactional basis (Long *et al.* 1998).

Implied in such scenarios is the need for a high level of mutual trust for successful e-commerce. Johnson and Johnson's branded presence on teenage community websites has been held up as an example of companies forging successful relationships with young people in a digital context (Kenny and Marshall 2000).

One critic however of this 'cosy' relationship is the post modern interpretation of marketing on the internet. Venkatesh *et al.* (1998) argued that such relationships might be far from mutually beneficial. They cite the fragmentation of individualism, the disintegration of social foundations and the acceptance of change as characteristics of the contemporary youth generation that encourage a rejection of the 'institutional advances' of commerce online. Their ideas question the notion that individuals will happily and unquestioningly engage with commercial relationship building practices. A few studies such as Denegri-Knott and Molesworth (2002) have started to highlight young consumers' willingness to ignore commercial advances, discovering a more deviant desire to 'lie, cheat and steal' from corporations for personal gratification. Examples given included lying about on site registration to avoid junk mail, lying to abuse free trail registration sites and lying in chat rooms they know companies monitor.

Although such views may not be representative of all young people, they do highlight a more subversive desire to undermine marketers' intentions online. The emergence of activities such as illegal downloading practices (British Phonographic Industry 2004) and a general distrust of commercial intentions suggest that this is an emerging area, warranting further investigation.

6. Mobile advertising practices

Beyond the world-wide-web, digital marketing communications has become most commonplace through mobile phone networks. Its importance is recognised and increasingly targeted by industry marketing bodies. Mobile marketing consultants for example echo the importance of texting to teenagers' everyday lives. Tran (2003:1) tells us that:

"Brands have embraced sms in order to target the youth market, which has traditionally been very elusive. Using sms, marketers find it surprisingly easy to engage with youngsters by communicating with them through a medium and in a language they understand"

For marketers, the attraction lies in the ability to target consumers "anywhere and at any time" (Mort and Drennan 2002). For a youth audience, that attraction is heightened by the higher levels of consumer acceptance and usage of mobiles. This however assumes that young people always want to interact with commercial forms of communication and welcome co-sharing personal and commercialised communication through the same device. Given Tran's role as a consultant, it is not surprising that he goes on to argue that despite the vulnerabilities and possible dangers in targeting young people through mobile phones, new sets of guidelines offering advice on targeting young people issued by the Mobile Marketing Association will ensure responsible practices are adhered to.

Research studies focusing on mobile phone use have started to provide findings across a range of advertising and marketing related topics. These have included the right to personal privacy and mobile marketing (Milne and Rohm 2003), the 'drivers' of mobile advertising such personal identification, constant connection, location and context sensitivity (Perlado and Barwise 2004, Dholakia and Dholakia 2004), anticipated success factors in mobile marketing activities (Barnes and Scornavacca 2004) and geographic and cultural variations in mobile diffusion (Sundqvist *et al.* 2004).

It has been argued that as more young people migrate to mobile services, marketing practitioners will naturally follow, as they become more difficult to reach through traditional communication channels (Silverman 2004). This will undoubtedly encourage practitioners to target wireless networks more aggressively. The advent of rich forms of media content such as video files may only further encourage this trend.

Studies of consumers' actual experiences of mobile marketing are few in number and limited in scope. Bughin (2004) argued that teenagers across Europe are interested in a degree of interactivity, in this case linking their television and their cell phone. This research study mirrored attempts by brands such as addidas to encourage texting to

integrate with new television campaigns (Silverman (2004). More studies have focused on text messaging and advertising (Rettie and Brum 2001, Barwise and Strong 2002, Derrick 2004, Patterson *et al.* 2004, Rettie *et al.* 2004). Given the personal nature of mobile phone use, it is perhaps not surprising that consumers were initially found to be unreceptive to commercial text messaging (Rettie and Brum 2001). An industry study of 1000 adults found that only 13.2% were accepting of sms marketing techniques (New Media Age 2003). A further media study found sms marketing to be the second most irritating form of marketing behind telemarketing (Derrick 2004). In contrast to this, Rettie *et al.* (2004) found that only 21% of their respondents regarded sms advertising unacceptable. Specifically, they found younger consumers to be more accepting of the medium, depending on campaign interest, relevance and incentives. The divergence of findings across these two studies confirms the immaturity of research into consumers' experiences of mobile marketing.

One factor cited as encouraging more positive attitudes towards mobile marketing practices is known as "permission marketing". Godin (1999) defined permission marketing as "offering the consumer an opportunity to volunteer to be marketed at". Barwise and Strong (2002) for example conducted a study of permission-based mobile advertising techniques, concluding that consumers were more receptive when explicit permission has been granted. In response to the number of spam related text complaints, Nettelton (2004) reports that the European Parliament has imposed an "opt in" requirement for companies utilising text messaging services.

Similar to the larger number of studies in internet advertising, there is a marked tendency for researchers to treat mobile advertising as somewhat divorced from the realities of young people's everyday lives. The studies conducted to date do not attempt to understand how young people's attitudes towards mobile advertising fit into their everyday mobile use and how attempts at mobile marketing impacts on their everyday lives.

Beyond different forms of new media advertising, it is also important to understand young people's relationships with commerce through the lens of 'branded'

relationships. Young people have been said to have a symbiotic relationship with brands and a separate stream of literature covers young people and their commercial experiences through brands.

7. Young people and brands

One of the ways in which marketing practitioners have sought to secure young people's loyalties has been through extensive brandings practices. Psychologists suggest the process of brand association starts at a very young age. According to McDougal and Chantry (2004), babies as young as six month old are forming mental images of corporate logos and mascots, progressing onto making specific request for brand name products by the age of three. By the time children develop into adolescents, they are capable of understanding the subtle differences between the values a brand projects and the associated user imagery. A study of Danish children found that teenagers were able to recall 13 different cereal brands, 12 soft drink brands, 6 sports clothes and 8 mobile phone brands (Tufte 2003).

Brands are recognised to play a central role in the peer generated conversations of adolescents (Ritson and Elliott 1999). Researchers Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) have gone as far as claiming that brands can sometimes be the conduit for communities to form in the first place. They characterise this as consumers claiming to want to do their own thing whilst in reality doing it with thousands of other like minded consumers. Brands can also bring with them their own set of peer related pressures. Brands can be the source of pride, envy and partisan behaviour. One US youth study suggested that the pressure to conform to branded norms reduced with age (see Table 15). The pressure to conform to branded stereotypes was thought to reduce as older adolescents feel better equipped to follow their own personal identities.

Table 15: Peer pressure decreases with age

Do you sometimes feel pressure to buy certain products such as clothes, shoes, CD's or anything else, because your friends have them (%)?

Age band	12-13	14-15	16-18
% Yes	54	30	17

Source: The Centre for a New American Dream 2002, 'Youth Survey' in *Brandchild: Remarkable Insights into the Minds of Today's Global Kids and their Relationships with Brands*, eds. M. Lindstrom with P. B. Seybold, pp. 52, London, Kogan Page.

Seybold (2003) suggests that young people are equally enthusiastic about brands in a digital environment. She evidences this by highlighting that teenagers wearing t-shirts with 'e-imagery' has been one of the most popular trends in American secondary schools. In a later chapter of Lindstrom and Seybold (2003), Lindstrom discusses the merits of building a virtual brand in cyberspace, arguing that such activities are fraught with problems but do offer a unique way to reach out to young people online.

Unfortunately, the area of branding in a digital context with relevance to a youth audience again remains a subject bereft of studies that provide a rigorous academic perspective beyond the subjective opinions of practitioners.

8. Practitioner tactics

The tactics of youth marketing industries have come under increased scrutiny by the media, academics and government. Geraci and Nagy (2004:1) suggest that:

> "Issues such as increased commercialisation directed at children, online privacy, marketing in schools, the content of children's media and advertising have all become part of an international discourse"

It is surprising then that research focusing on marketing practitioner perceptions and attitudes targeting young people remains limited. Academic research for example has historically concentrated on advertising agency methods, structures and internal roles (e.g. Grant *et al.* 2003).

A recent study by Geraci (2004) conducted an online survey amongst a spectrum of commercial organisations targeting young people. The study was not designed to be critical in nature but provided useful insights into how practitioners see young people. It found for example that practitioners see young people as "technically advanced, smart and savvy, very busy and stressed". The practitioners researched depicted young people as powerful and smart but disconnected from society because of their anti-establishment viewpoints. This view has overtones of previous depictions of young people as wayward and lacking in moral conviction.

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It is possible to develop further this picture of how practitioners view young people using anecdotal comments made in practitioner orientated journals such as *Admap* and *The Journal of Advertising & Marketing to Children* (now renamed *Young Consumer*). De Chenecey (2000: 42) for example, a trends forecasting consultant, argued that practitioners should recognise young consumers as complex, critical and demanding consumers and advises brand owners (his clients) to present a truthful and embracing approach which encourages "real relationship marketing". Newall (2001: 25) argued that practitioner- consumer relationships are notoriously difficult to sustain given the lifestage changes through which young people are progressing. Given the "breakdown of traditional institutions such as family, religion and the class system contributing to a lack of security and a collective identity crisis", Newell argues that brand owners can position themselves as beacons of hope offering a greater sense of belonging and acceptance. This viewpoint underlines the notion that brand owners are in a highly influential position, attempting to influence the value systems which young people are adopting, either consciously or subconsciously.

Marketing practitioners are known to have developed sophisticated processes and information based systems for developing a better understanding of young people's values, attitudes and relationships with commercial brands. One such survey frequently used by practitioners is BMRB's annual 'Youth Lifestyles' survey which includes statements on young people's attitudes towards commercial practices such as 'advertising just manipulates your views and attitudes towards products and brands'. In an online context, questions asked include statements such as 'I worry about the amount of personal information that could be held on computers about me'. Such information is however outwith the public domain and therefore accessible only by subscription services designed for practitioner use.

9. Critical studies into practitioner tactics

It is evident that the literature highlighted above rarely gives a more critical insight into marketing practitioner tactics when targeting a youth audience. Although studies such as Montgomery and Parnik (1996) and Mongomery (2000) provide a critical

account of commercialism in the digital age, it is from an observational rather than empirical point of view.

One notable exception to this was an academic study conducted by O'Donohoe (1996) amongst advertising practitioners. She concluded that practitioners and young consumers were both relatively sophisticated in their dealings with each other, and at times collusive in its production and use. O'Donohoe noted that when both sets of interests collided, practitioners felt 'threatened' by the advanced state of young people's advertising literacies. Such viewpoints reflect the notion that young people are now expert decoders, capable of stepping "outside the consumption role which advertisers intended" and using advertising for their individual and social purposes (Bartholomew and O'Donohoe 2003: 438).

The post-modern literature on brands and consumption also offers us a theoretical viewpoint on marketing practitioner tactics (Holt 2002). Although not directed at a youth audience, the findings have relevance to the kinds of tactics practitioners might adopt when targeting a youth audience. Holt for example suggests that brands can adopt several techniques to provide consumers with 'cultural resources'. These include the ability to 'weave' brands into cultural communities (i.e ethnic subcultures, consumption sports related communities, arts and fashion), and the growing popularity of 'stealth' branding. Stealth branding avoids direct communication, relying on the diffusion of brandings through 'tastemakers' and more subtle forms of communication such as product placement. What characterised both techniques is a sense of camouflage and indirect communication in which the consumer may not be aware or conscious of what motivates of the communication.

In a similar vein, Southgate (2003) introduced the practitioner art of 'coolhunting', a form of youth research in which practitioners seek to identify which is 'cool' amongst youth subcultures and recreate this for consumption purposes. Rushkoff and Wells (2001) argued that such practices are detrimental to teenage youth culture:

> "How can teens develop their own culture when each idea is co-opted and sold back to them before it's had a chance to mature? ..Don't adults have anything to offer besides a mirror?"

In the arguments of both Holt and Rushkoff, the assumption is that practitioners still believe they can influence and shape the values and beliefs of young people, sometimes using tactics 'above the radar', other times 'below the radar' (Bond and Kirshenbaum 1998). Few have however attempted to translate such ideas into a digital context, asking what kinds of tactics and methods practitioners deploy using new as well as traditional media channels. The complexity of the digital environment highlighted in earlier chapters offers practitioners opportunities but also many drawbacks. Research is needed to identify precisely what kinds of practices are being used in the digital environment and how young people respond to such advances.

10. Conclusions

This chapter has drawn together literature pertaining to nature of relationships between young people and marketing practices, covering traditional media practices such as advertising before assessing how such relationships manifest themselves in the digital era.

Although there is rich tradition in research studies looking at young people's relationships with advertising, this has yet to evolve into a full understanding of how such relationships manifest themselves in a digital context. It is evident that many of the issues redolent in advertising research have applicability to the online and mobile context. In particular, the debate between media effects and media use when discussing how young people engage with online marketing practices is highly relevant. Concepts such as ad entertainment, social uses of advertising, peer influence on advertising, concerns about privacy and marketing intrusion all have relevance to the digital arena. Little is known about whether young people welcome engagement with online advertising in the same manner as argued for traditional advertising. The few studies conducted to date highlight certain ambivalence towards marketing practices online. Similarly, studies emphasise the importance of brands to the lifestyles and attitudes of young people, and the growing reliance on relationship marketing. This raises the question of whether the online environment is simply an extension of all marketing activities and to what degree young people welcome the diverse practices marketers utilise online or through their mobile phones.

It is important in making such explorations to separate out the tactics of practitioners from the experiences of young people. What little research there is suggests that marketing practitioners deploy a range of tactics to target young people, sometimes through stealth and deception. There is little however to link such tactics to assumptions about how young people use different types of media and how these relate to a changing media landscape.

CHAPTER SIX

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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1. Introduction

The literature chapters have described the approaches and methods used to explore young people, traditional and new media consumption and their relationships with marketing practices. This chapter presents the research issues and methods designed to explore young people's experiences of commercial media, the digital age and the tactics of marketing practitioners which target them.

The chapter starts by outlining research aims and objectives emerging from the literature review. The philosophical foundations for the research are then discussed, justifying the use of multiple methods within an interpretive framework. Although the main thrust of the study is consumer-orientated, an initial practitioner-based study is be outlined and justified. The main consumer-based study is then outlined, discussing key issues concerning a research study amongst young people in schools. Quantitative issues are detailed before turning to qualitative data collection. Research instrument, selection of variables, sample size and proposed analysis are outlined in turn for both lifestyle diaries and self-completion questionnaires. The chapter then turns to qualitative data collection methods, covering the selection of mini-interviews, group composition and sample, research setting and analysis techniques. Finally consideration is given to evaluation of the methods chosen.

2. Research aim and objectives

This study aimed to explore the nature of young people's experiences of commercial media at a time when media has been evolving rapidly. In pursuing this aim, the study sought to locate such experiences in young people's everyday lifestyles, and to provide a contrast with the tactics of marketing practitioners seeking to target them.

Given the increasing use of new media to target young people, the initial research phase explored practitioner motivations and methods. Specifically, the research sought to pinpoint the insights, strategies and tactics of 'experts' seeking to target and build relationships with young people.

The main phase of the research turned to young people's experiences of traditional and new forms of media. There were four main objectives of the 'consumer' phase of the research.

Firstly, the study sought to explore the diversity of young people's lifestyles and time use within which media consumption operates. Studies by Buckingham (1993, 2000) and Livingstone (1999, 2002) have highlighted how intrinsically linked media consumption is to youth lifestyles, playing a central role in the time spent, meanings assimilated and identities created. Furthermore, the work of Lull (1990) and Anderson and Meyer (1998) ensure that socio-contextual reasons for media use are not overlooked. New media studies to date have not fully explored the socio-cultural context within which such experiences operate.

Secondly, the study sought to investigate young people's attitudes towards 'new' and more traditional media. The literature review highlights the spectrum of viewpoints on the nature and degree of influence of new media, such as the contrasting positions of Tapscott (1998) and Postman (1992). The study therefore set out to map out young people's broad attitudes that might influence media use before exploring specific attitudes towards internet and mobile phone use.

Studies such as La Ferle *et al.* (2000) have been inconclusive on how young people select and actively use different media choices in the digital age. There have been few studies using either the uses and gratifications tradition or more culturally informed positions that provide a full assessment of active media choice in the light of the growth in popularity of new media. The third objective was therefore to compare and contrast young people's uses of traditional media choices such as television and radio with prevalent new media ones such as the internet and mobile phones.

Fourthly, only a few research studies (such as Livingstone and Bober 2004, 2005) have established that young people's experiences of new media are not exclusively positive. Furthermore, such studies rarely provide a full exploration of the commercial aspect to negative experiences. It was therefore important to identify issues holding back young people's positive experiences of new media. In doing so, the study sought to establish how such issues shape the nature of relationships between consumers and practitioners.

Finally and fundamental from a managerial perspective, the research sought to establish young people's understanding of and attitudes towards the new media initiatives of marketing practitioners. The literature review highlighted that young people have a symbiotic yet ambivalent relationship with marketing communication, capable of expert decoding and yet sometimes deep scepticism (see Bousch *et al.* 1994, Ritson and Elliott 1999, Bond and Kirshenbaum 1998, Bartholomew and O'Donohoe 2003). There has however been limited exploration of young people's experiences and attitudes towards the tactics of companies and brands operating in the digital age.

3. Research approach

3.1 Paradigm selection

This study has been informed by Guba and Lincoln's (1998: 200) definition of a paradigm as:

> '...a set of beliefs ...it defines for its holder the nature of the 'world', the individual's place in it and the range of possible relationships to that world and its part'

Within a paradigmatic set of beliefs, the researcher approaches a research topic armed with a set of ideas and assumptions about 'how things really work'. Guba and Lincoln (1998: 201) refer to this as '*ontology*'. Such beliefs help the researcher establish the "form and nature of reality" they wish to pursue. An ontological position then dictates the kind of relationship that can be assumed between researcher and research findings. This is referred to as '*epistemology*'. Finally, the researcher is in a position to select the '*methods and analysis*' (consistent with ontology and epistemology) best suited to

answering the research question(s). The positivistic paradigm assumes that reality does exist (*ontology*) and findings can be said to be objective and true, irrespective of context and situation (*epistemology*).

As a counterpoint to positivism, the interpretive paradigm was developed in the late nineteenth century through the work of Weber, Dilthey and Kant (Smith 1983). This paradigm can be found in many descriptions and forms including 'naturalistic inquiry' (Geertz 1973, Lincoln and Guba 1985, Belk *et al.* 1988), 'constructivist approach' (Guba and Lincoln 1998) and 'humanistic enquiry' (Hirschman 1986). Other more multi-dimensional forms of inquiry such as the postpositivistic or post-modern perspective can also be loosely located within the broad church of interpretavism (Quantz 1992). Spiggle (1994: 491) set out four ways to distinguish such alternative perspectives from the dominant positivistic approach:

> '...(1) the attempt to understand meaning of texts through interpretative procedures, (2) the focus on context, (3) the use of qualitative data analysis, and (4) the frequent use of emergent research designs and inference processes.' [1]

The crucial words used by Spiggle, which unites the disparate body of interpretive research is the "attempt to understand". As Jankowski and Wester (1991: 52) have noted, the essence of interpretive inquiry is "the analysis and interpretation, through verstehen or empathetic understanding, of the meaning that people give to their action". This often involves the development of rich and detailed understandings of the subject in question. Geertz (1973) described the desire to seek out 'thick descriptions' which might fully describe and flesh out phenomena.

An interpretive paradigm has implications for the relationship between researcher and the researched (epistemology). The researcher and the phenomenon under scrutiny are thought to be interlinked rather than independent. Because of the complexities and ever changing nature of social research, interpretive research design evolves and changes as the relationship between parties shifts and develops (Thompson *et al.* 1989), a characteristic of particular importance given the dynamics of new media use.

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[1] A more detailed assessment of assumptions underpinning positivism and interpretivism (Hudson and Ozanne 1989: 509) is presented in the Appendix 1

The broader fields of consumer behaviour and media studies show a slow but steady movement towards interpretive frameworks, sometimes incorporating qualitative methodologies (e.g. Belk 1995, Sherry 1991, Hirschman 1986, 1989). Studies in new media consumption using an interpretive ontology are relatively few, often justifying their approach on methodological rather than ontological grounds. Molesworth and Jenkins (2002) proposed qualitative methods in reaction to the abundance of quantitative studies focusing on internet use. Evans (1990: 147) however argued that there is no "rupture" but "continuity" when considering an interpretive approach for 'uses and gratifications' informed research. He claimed that both traditions are involved in the generation of 'meaning' and both place considerable weight on the "individual's subjective experience of this (self-generated) meaning" (152).

The key difference between the methodology proposed in this study and the rigid principles laid down by Spiggle lies in the methodological rather than ontological or epistemological assumptions. Interpretive research has traditionally advocated the use of qualitative research in order to capture the richness of consumers' experiences (Ozanne and Hudson 1988). It is assumed that the researcher needs to be closely involved in the phenomenon allowing for greater openness and hence understanding (Hirschman and Holbrook 1986). In seeking to establish a complete understanding of a specific phenomenon however, multiple methods including the use of quantitative as well as qualitative methods can be insightful and compatible with an interpretive approach. Consumer cultural theorists Arnould and Thompson (2005: 870) argued that:

> "CCT neither necessitates fidelity to any one methodological orientation not does it canonize a quantitative-qualitative divide. Consumer cultural theory researchers embrace methodological pluralism whenever quantitative measures and techniques can advance the operative theoretical agenda"

The arguments for a multi-method approach for this study will now be outlined.

3.2 A multi-methods approach

The advent of digital media, and specifically the internet, has created the need for academics to review how they carry out media related research. In advocating a more enlightened view of internet research, Ruggiero (2000: 25) concluded that:

> '...to truly understand new media technologies, critical scholars should learn to embrace multiple levels of analysis'

The issue of multi-methods, sometimes narrowly and hence confusingly referred to as methodological triangulation (Mathison 1988), has created significant debate in the past. Bryman (1998) argued that quantitative methods are founded on the 'positivistic' paradigm of objective truths whilst qualitative methods are associated with the 'interpretative/naturalist' paradigm. His inference was that the two are mutually exclusive and any mixing is ontologically and methodologically non-compatible. At the other extreme, the pragmatic viewpoint argues that all research at some stage involves judgmental interpretation in design and implementation (Campbell 1979, Gummesson 2003). Kidder and Fine (1987: 69) maintain that because all forms of research comes together as a form of "story telling" (Kidder and Fine 1987: 69), there exists no incommensurability.

This study argues for a 'middle ground position', specifically that paradigms should not be confused nor mixed but methods are not exclusive to any one paradigm. Therefore, methods can be combined provided there is clarity on the issues of ontology and epistemology (Rossman and Wilson 1985). Fischer (1990: 264) states that positivistic and interpretive methods are not necessarily incompatible although they are incommensurable and so need to be judged according to different standards.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods each bring their own set of characteristics to research differing aspects of phenomena. Quantitative methods tend to be more precise, explicit and pre-determined with variables identified in advance and validity pre-determined. Qualitative on the other hand are best suited to exploratory questions, open ended variables, sensitivity to context and focusing on the intentions, explanations, and judgements of participants (Howe 1988). It is

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acknowledged that dangers exist when undertaking multiple-method studies (Mark and Shotland 1987) and care needs to be taken in all stages of the design, implementation and analysis of the study.

Mixed method research strategies do however offer several benefits to the researcher including increased meaningfulness of data (Green *et al.* 1989) and convergence and corroboration of data (Webb *et al.* 1966). Of the alternative mixed method strategies considered by Green *et al.* (1989), this study proposes a study consistent with the concept of *'complementarity'*. In this version, different methods can be used to research different but overlapping aspects of the same phenomena (Greene *et al.* 1989: 258, Price and Arnould 1998). Based on the arguments of increased meaningfulness and interpretability, this research incorporated quantitative followed by qualitative methods. Each method was used to capitalise on its own strengths with the objective of "yielding an enriched understanding". Quantitative methods were used to lay a descriptive 'bedrock' of understanding, qualitative methods to enrichen and deepen that understanding. The study remained firmly located within interpretive ontology and epistemology.

Some excellent examples of mixed methods research exist in the fields of media studies (Schaefer and Avery's study of audience conceptualisation using survey and depth interviews, 1993) and in consumer behaviour (McQuarrie and Mick's pluralistic study of advertising rhetoric, 1992). Other interpretive researchers including Hirshmann (1986), Lutz (1989) and Hunt (1991) have each advocated using multiple methods but with a critical perspective. Lutz cautioned that non-judgmental, non-critical pluralism is just as bad as dogmatism. In a similar vein, this study utilised a traditional 'uses and gratifications' style quantitative survey, but not in isolation of other complimentary forms of data to ensure a critical position is maintained.

The closest metaphor to the proposed research design came from Price and Arnould (1998: 341). In their metaphor, the voices of a choir "create forms that are greater than the sums of the parts and makes themselves experiences of empathy" (based on Blacking 1987). In a similar manner, it was hoped that combining quantitative and qualitative, in a sequential manner, would create a richer, more satisfying conclusion. A sequential version of mixed methods, starting with quantitative followed by

qualitative methods, is a version of facilitation research advocated by Hammersley (1996), and for media research by Jensen (2002: 272). It was proposed that each method be analysed separately according to its own methodological criteria. Upon satisfactory conclusions from each method, findings were compared and contrasted in the concluding chapter.

In summary, the research design advocated the adoption of a holistic perspective to gain a broader and deeper understanding media consumption patterns, in the context of young people's lifestyles. This incorporated sequential mixed methods within an interpretative paradigm, starting with quantitative and finishing with qualitative methods. An overview of the sequence of the research is provided in Appendix 14.

4. Practitioner research study: rationale and design

The literature review highlighted a lack of attention paid to how marketing practitioners engage with and develop communication plans aimed at young people. The first phase of research was therefore designed to explore the perceptions and attitudes of agency practitioners before comparing their viewpoints with the experiences of young people.

4.1 Selection of 'experts'

Practitioners were selected on the basis of being 'expert' respondents (Dexter 1970). Marshall and Rossman (1995) described 'elite' respondents as the most influential, the prominent and the well informed in any organisation or community. As a former marketing consultant, the author was cognisant of the value that such insights might offer, although vigilant to the need for critical interpretation of such viewpoints

In the commercial advertising agency environment, four main agency types were identified as likely to yield 'experts' with experience in developing communication plans aimed at youth audiences. They were *youth marketing/research agencies, creative advertising agencies, traditional media agencies* and *new media agencies.* Other agency types including direct mail and sales promotion agencies were not

targeted because creative advertising agencies continue to be perceived as the lead-planning agency for most clients (Grant *et al.* 2003). Potential 'experts' were selected at a senior level within each agency reflecting their industry knowledge.

4.2 Research approach

The research was designed to explore expert respondents' perceptions, attitudes and methods for targeting young people. Each 'expert' was expected to have a particular viewpoint on the main research questions: the trends shaping youth consumption, relationships between young people and marketed brands, the ways young people are thought to use media choices and their own tactics for successful targeting of the 'youth market'.

The author recognised that viewpoints expressed were likely to be second-hand, developed and altered to suit commercial agendas. Therefore, a critical approach was needed to ensure viewpoints were considered in their context. It was hoped that viewpoints expressed could then be compared to themes identified in the literature and emerging from the experiences of young people, another form of triangulation advocated by Jick (1983) and Rossman and Wilson (1985). Given that most of the practitioners had experience in commissioning and conducting youth research, the author also wanted to draw on such experiences to assist in the main study design.

A purposive sample (Mason 2002) was derived from practitioners identified as having an active interest in youth marketing. Contact details were obtained from personal contacts, identification of conferences speakers and those associated with well known youth brands in the marketing press. The author used previous commercial experience to assist in the selection of potential participants. Potential respondents were contacted, initially by e-mail and then with a follow-up telephone call. Thirty-five contacts meeting the recruitment criteria were identified, fifteen of whom were willing and able to take part in the research.

4.3 Data collection methods

Given the lack of empirical data, the study was exploratory in nature. Qualitative interviewing lends itself to exploratory research as it offers the opportunity to pursue a rounded understanding of the subject matter, eliciting "rich, contexualised data" (Mason 2002: 4). Qualitative research is also consistent with the interpretative philosophy underpinning the main research study outlined earlier.

Face-to-face interviewing was selected as the means of understanding the experiences of other people and the meanings of that experience (Seidman 1998). It offered a number of benefits over competing qualitative methods. The researcher can access insider information more easily and ask direct questions unlike when simply observing. Face-to-face interviewing offer 'experts' a greater sense of privacy than group interviews, encouraging individuals to openly express their views. Lines of enquiry can be modified and interesting responses immediately followed up (Robson 2002). Finally, it gave the author opportunities to become an active participant in the dialogue, using personal experiences to guide and inform the discussion. This kind of interviewing is consistent with the concept of the 'empathetic observer'. The author's previous employment in advertising planning allowed for a credible enactment of this research position.

A semi-structured form of interviewing was used to ensure flexibility in the topics discussed and interview style. Pre-determined questions were modified to accommodate situation and context (Robson 2002). Given the risk that 'experts' might resent an excessively rigid style of questioning (Marshall and Rossman 1995), semi-structured interviewing ensured that respondents were given sufficient scope to provide the "richer array" of personal insights sought.

Thirteen semi-structured interviews were carried out between autumn 2002 and spring 2003. The remaining two interviews were carried out by telephone because a suitable date could not be found to interview either individual. The telephone interviews followed a similar pattern of questioning although it was noted that conversations were shorter because of medium constraints. Of the thirteen face-to-face interviews, eight were carried out in the greater London area, two in Glasgow, two in Edinburgh

and one in Amsterdam. The geographic dispersal was primarily a function of the centres of concentration of agencies in the UK. Greater London continues to be the home for many marketing agencies in the UK whilst Glasgow and Edinburgh combined represented the next largest concentration of agencies. One interview was carried out in Amsterdam as the individual concerned had spent many years working on youth orientated brands in the UK. The sample was also designed to ensure a spread of agency types: five *youth marketing/research agencies*, four *creative advertising agencies*, three *traditional media agencies* and three *new media agencies*. A list of the participating individuals is provided in Appendix 2

4.4 Procedures

Interviews were typically carried out at the offices of respondents for their convenience. An interview guide was drawn up, informed by the literature review and the author's previous professional experiences. Questions were open-ended and broad in nature because "a high proportion of intelligent, provocative open-ended questions ...allow them the freedom to use their knowledge and imagination" (Marshall and Rossman 1995: 83). Given the author's position as 'empathetic observer', the interviewing style was deliberately informal. The interviewer explained the purpose of the research and gave a brief history of his credentials. It was hoped that this would put the respondent at ease and increase the likelihood of the interviewer gaining immediate respect and rapport. Initial 'setting-the-scene' questions sought to establish the respondents' background, experience in working with youth audiences and indicative experiences of working with youth brands. Subsequent "grand tour" topics (Spradley 1979), in no specific order, covered perceptions and trends covering youth consumption, understanding of how young people use media, attitudes towards traditional and new media and strategies and tactics adopted for targeting young people. During the interviews, the author sought to establish his own knowledge of the subject matter thereby continuing to build respondent confidence and, at times, to provoke a response. In this respect, the style of questioning differed from phenomenological questioning used in the main study, which discourages a more interventionist style of questioning. Confidentiality was guaranteed to encourage respondents to volunteer client case studies.

The interviews typically lasted from seventy to one hundred and fifty minutes. At all times, the author was conscious that respondents were time pressured although a number were happy to extend conversations beyond the allocated time. All face-to-face interviews were taped and transcribed verbatim resulting in 145 pages of transcript and accompanying notes. Conceptualisations were then developed, informed by the data and literature review. *N-vivo* was utilised once initial codes had been drawn up to assist in the process of comparing of textual data. Because the interviews were spread over three months, the author was also able to develop initial ideas and hypothesises and feed them back into subsequent interviews. In line with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) call for 'member checks', a summary of the findings was sent to each respondent. Four of the respondents responded with helpful comments on the findings.

5. Main schools research study: rationale and design

5.1 The rationale for 'older adolescents'

Chapter Two provided a number of interrelated reasons for exploring contemporary media consumption amongst young people, and 'older adolescents' in particular. The next issue to resolve was how to access young people. An age band of 13-17 years was selected to conform to concept of the 'older adolescent'. This was consistent with the concept of older adolescents outlined in the literature review and also matched upper school classes of S4-S6.

5.2 Accessing young people

It was decided that accessing young people through secondary schools represented the most viable method for ensuring research aims were met. Schools continue to account for the majority of child and youth orientated fieldwork (Goodwin 1997) and are well practised in dealing with academic research requests. Given the financial constraints involved in postgraduate study, schools also represented a cost-effective means of involving young people in meaningful research. Schools research also offers young people educational benefits over and above their current studies. Given the significant

role media consumption plays in lives of young people, it was hoped that involvement in this study would provide them with a unique opportunity to reflect on the uses and meanings of the media they consume.

5.3 Seeking out diversity

In selecting suitable schools, the author was mindful of the assumptions underpinning interpretive approaches. In searching for a 'full and complete understanding' of contemporary media consumption, interpretive research stresses the need for a contextualised understanding of phenomenon. The dominant criterion used for accessing young people was the desire to explore the diversity in young people's experiences of new and traditional media.

Diversity in how young people consume media implies the need to access groups of young people across various strata of society. The literature review illustrates that young people can be categorised by socio-demographics, lifestyle and attitudes. It was the author's judgement that selecting a diverse range of schools locations was the optimum way to facilitate diversity. Sampling across a number of sites (Wallendorf and Belk 1989: 76) has been found to maximise the range and quality of data (Denzin 1989: 95).

The east coast of Scotland was chosen as the macro-geographic sampling region for reasons of convenience. Two main criteria were used for selecting schools to ensure a diverse sample. Given the nature of the research objectives, micro-geographical location was deemed the first criterion. Young people living in urban environments lead considerably different lifestyles to those in rural locations. Schools can be categorised by urban/suburban and rural locations (see Livingstone and Bober 2004 for a similar categorisation). Secondly, schools can also be categorised by the levels of affluence and sociocultural background of their pupils. The influence of affluence on contemporary media consumption is evidenced by differing take-up of broadband throughout the UK One accessible method of identifying differences in societal background is by using postcode DEPCAT depravation scores (Mcloone 1997). A DEPCAT score is a weighted score combining car ownership, male unemployment,

overcrowding and social class. Schools were selected to ensure a range of DEPCAT scores between schools selected. It was decided however that educational achievement should not be used as a criterion as this might presuppose a link between media sophistication and educational attainment. Similarly, school size was not considered a suitable criterion as there is no proven link between size of educational institution and consumption of contemporary media. Using diversity as an overarching criterion for schools selection is often used within education research (Kalton 1984). Business Education departments were targeted to encourage a higher a higher likelihood of participation.

The number of desired schools was a function of the overall number of participants needed for the quantitative analysis. It was estimated that a minimum of 150 consenting pupils would be needed to conduct uses and gratifications factor analysis (Hair *et al.* 1998). It was also thought that recruiting more than 50 pupils from any one school was unrealistic given that the point of access would be through Business Education departments; this meant recruiting three different schools. Based on the aim of diversity and the criteria identified, three ideal school 'types' were created as blueprints for recruiting schools. These were *'rural state'*, *'urban fee-paying'* and *'suburban state'* (see Table 16).

Table 16: Schools by selection criteria

Selection criteria	School a: *'rural state'*	School b: *'urban fee- paying'*	School c: *'suburban state'*
Region	Borders	Lothian	Lothian
Type of area	Rural	Urban	Sub-urban
Type of school	State	Fee-paying	State
Est. social grade	Mixed	Middle class	Working class
DEPCAT Score (1991)*	3	1	4

* 1 = postcode with lowest level of deprivation, 5 = postcode with highest level of deprivation.

5.4 Issues to consider in youth research

Embarking on youth related research study requires consideration of a unique set of research issues and concerns. The problems or 'distances' that exist between researcher and young person have been categorised as physical, social, cognitive and

political (Graue and Walsh 1998). Taking account of the significant literature on this subject, the issues researchers might encounter can be grouped together under headings of 'power and status', 'cognitive understanding' and a growing number of 'ethical considerations'. Each of these will now be discussed in turn.

5.4.1 Power and status

Morrow and Richards (1996) argued that the biggest challenge facing youth researchers lies in the disparities in power and status between adult and children. Mayall (2003) added that children will always occupy a subordinate role *vis a vis* adults; researchers have a moral responsibility to take this into consideration. Only by reducing the distance or the 'power balance' between researcher and child (as Mayall puts it) can researchers fully encourage participants to speak up and be heard.

Although the participants in this research were older adolescents aged 13-17, it was obvious approaching this research study that a twenty-year age gap between researcher and participant might be problematic. In attempting to bridge the gap, the author was mindful of the advice of Pollard (1987). Pollard suggested that researchers should think carefully about their personal identity and ability to establish rapport with their participants. In common with ethnographic or quasi-ethnographic (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott 2003) techniques, the author sought to build familiarity with participants over a period of time, increasing the frequency of contact especially with those going on to participate in the qualitative aspects. Qualitative research requires a more personal relationship between researcher and participant and so the author attempted whenever possible to establish first names and memorise casual conversations. At times, this was difficult as timescales became extended and so notes were taken to jog memories.

Furthermore, attempts were made through choice of clothes and ways of addressing pupils to ensure that the author was not perceived as another form of authority. Encouraging participants to use the author's first name built up personal relationships whilst reduced fears of institutional stigma (Corsaro 1985). Although the author was also able to draw on his extensive commercial experience in hosting discussions sessions with adolescents, he was mindful of not positioning himself as an 'expert figure' as this might have biased the research and inhibited conversations.

At the centre of the research design was the desire to take a reflective, 'youth-centred' approach to the fieldwork (Fraser *et al.* 2004: 24). In common with interpretive principles, this approach puts participants at the centre of the research, signalling that they should be treated as 'competent reporters', capable of reflecting and recounting their own experiences (James and Prout 1996). In doing so, the power balance shifts back towards the participant, ensuring a greater sense of self-empowerment in the process. Young people were therefore not seen as objects to study but individuals best-equipped to recount their own life experiences (Mayall 2000).

It should be stated however that the research was not designed to allow for participants as fully-fledged 'co-researchers' (Smith *et al.* 2002). This style of research implies participants becoming fully active in deciding on all aspects of research aims and methodologies (Christenson and Prout 2002). The author felt this would have detracted from the requirements of presenting a Ph.D. thesis derived essentially from the author's own interpretations.

5.4.2 Cognitive understanding

As mentioned earlier, the choice of age group reflected the desire to access a more advanced cognitive development expected of older adolescents (Moshman and Frank 1986, Mann *et al.* 1980). It was hoped that older adolescents would be able to provide more vivid, thought-provoking stories than younger adolescents or children could accomplish. Inevitably however, the depth and richness of feedback of qualitative groups was highly dependent on the make-up and dynamics of the group set-up. Sociologists have argued that researchers should be more concerned with the cultural environment of young people than their individual age or lifestage (Dunn: 1988). The researcher hoped that by varying the geographic location of access to young people, different cultural viewpoints could be sought out and established across the age band.

Because of the older age and more advanced cognitive abilities, researchers can forget that adolescents are going through a critical development phase. Krueger (1994) advised that care is needed so as not to over-extend their abilities. In qualitative research, sessions were designed to last no longer than 60 minutes before

concentration starts to waiver. Quantitative surveys were structured into clear sections to assist concentration levels whilst changes in the sequences of discussion guides also helped to re-invigorate participants.

By early adolescence, young people are very adept at controlling what they want to reveal (Middleton *et al.* cited in Christensen and James 2003). Adolescents in particular are known to be wary of revealing too much of their own persona and identity. They may also be motivated to deliberately distort the answers given in any research forum (Baxter 1994). The use of multiple methods over a period of time in keeping with ethnographic principles was designed to overcome such problems of trust and inhibitions. Although the author was not aware of any deliberate desire to distort the findings, occasional examples of sarcasm and even contempt for a line of questioning suggested that young people are only too aware of the nature of their contribution.

Projective techniques were also chosen during the qualitative phase of the project to overcome some of the cognitive issues highlighted. Projective techniques can help to break up the potential for boredom offering a more involving form of feedback. They can also help young people to express thoughts that might be problematic otherwise (Parker 1984). Rook (2001) found that such techniques provide a 'comfortable medium' for overcoming problems of shyness, inhibitions and problems of 'social desirability' influences. A more detailed account of rationale for projective techniques is provided later in the chapter.

The use of questionnaires amongst young people can also present its own set of cognitive problems. Scott (2003: 102) advises researchers to:

> "…identify problems with comprehension and ambiguities of question wording, to detect flippancy and boredom, and to discover discrepancies between the child's understanding and the researcher's intent"

The self-completion questionnaire and diaries were extensively tested in a pilot study amongst thirty adolescents in a school setting to identify problem areas. Feedback forms and mini-group discussion sessions were used to discuss and resolve problem

areas. The revised questionnaire was pre-tested amongst a separate group of five adolescents to check that improvements made were satisfactory.

5.4.3 Ethical considerations

Researchers in recent years have become more aware of the range of ethical issues when considering youth studies. Alderson (1995) highlighted ten ethical considerations to counteract this in her work for Barnardo's. This section outlines those considered in depth for this study.

Ethical considerations can firstly be applied to the research purpose. Although this research did not examine topics with an explicit moral framework, there were ethical aspects to the study. Topics such as personal privacy/intrusion online, personal identity & media consumption and bedroom culture each involve potentially sensitive subject matter. During discussion sessions, care was taken with respect to the rights of individuals (particularly in group situations where peer pressure is prevalent), promising that subjects considered overly sensitive would be avoided.

Informed consent by parents and participants has been one of the most topical and contentious issues in recent years (Morrow and Richards 1996). Parental rights and responsibilities are governed by the 'Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Section 291. This act gives parents the right to 'control, direct or guide, in manner appropriate to the stage of development of the child, the child's upbringing up to the age of sixteen' (cited by Mason 2004). In a school research environment such as this research study, consent can be influenced by the privileged position of the school authorities. According to Wallace et al. (1997) children can be viewed as a 'captive sample', participating more out of duty than willingness. In an environment where the power balance rests heavily with school (and parents), it is not difficult to conceptualise scenarios in which consent is given but not welcomed. In addition to the obligatory parental consent, it was decided that written consent should be sought from all potential participants. Attempts were also made throughout the research process to give pupils the option to opt out of the research if they changed their mind. This only happened once when one pupil decided that he could "no longer be bothered" taking photographs.

Information provided to parents when asking for consent stressed the voluntary nature of the research whilst outlining the benefits that might accrue. The standard of information improved throughout the project as the author learned about the nature of parental concerns. In particular, parents wanted to know the full extent of the use of photographic equipment and who precisely would have access to the output. All participants signed a written consent form before being allowed to proceed with the research. A verbal briefing by the author attempted to informalise the process, allaying any fears over reprisals for non-participation. Although those 16 and over are considered legally old enough to make such decisions for themselves, written consent was secured from all parents to avoid any confusion between participant, parent, teacher and researcher.

There are also ethical issues involved in the 'selection, inclusion and exclusion' of participants (Anderson 1995). By targeting Business Studies/Education departments, the researcher hoped to be able to narrow down the number of participants to a manageable number whilst offering the research to those to whom it might be most relevant. Questionnaires were handed out to each entire class selected to ensure that no one pupil felt excluded. The qualitative stages of the research did involve a process of selection within classes but a presentation of the results to all consenting participants was promised to ensure all felt involved. The researcher was never made aware of any cases of unhappiness at non-involvement although some individuals might have been disappointed at not being selected.

Alderson (1994) suggests that issues of privacy and confidentiality should also be considered. Although the author could not promise anonymity from the researcher given the nature of the study, anonymity of the disseminated results was promised. The Data Protection Act (1998) declares that data can only be processed for a specific purpose and in many cases, only with full consent. As part of this promise, researchers must ensure that any findings do not identify the individuals concerned.

Care was taken to ensure that questionnaires and research tapes were anonymous to all but the author whilst photographs used in documents and presentations were properly anonymised. Any intimate conversations or discussions were held away from teachers

to encourage openness and bypass overprotective teachers (Holland *et al.* 1996). Finally, clear guidance was given to parents, participants and teachers on the anticipated dissemination of the research findings to ensure that all involved felt reassured about issues of ownership of data and dissemination of personal information.

5.5 Researching in schools

There are a number of methodological considerations unique to researching in schools. Because of their popularity, gaining access to schools for youth research is increasingly problematic. Lovey (2000: 130) referred to this as "research fatigue". In this research study, the most common reason given for not being able to take part was the volume of requests for access to school children. One headmaster contacted estimated that he consented to only 10% of requests. Schools have also been characterised as "under pressure from national curriculum demands and funding shortages" (Morrow, 2001: 206). As a consequence, the school environment can no longer be viewed as a convenient place for research. Seven related issues in schools research will now be discussed: gaining access, gatekeepers, practicalities of access implementation, school context, teachers and compensation.

5.5.1 Gaining access

Much care was taken in this study to produce an introductory letter establishing the right kind of credentials and communicating sufficient information. The backing of a respected educational institution (University of Edinburgh) and a government funding body (ESRC) provided initial credibility. Even when school accept initial advances, researchers have faced situations of having to negotiate compromises and even rejecting a sought after acceptance (Hammersley 1984). Feedback from initial rejections was used in subsequent letters to improve chances of agreement, acknowledging previous concerns. In all, a total of twenty six schools were contacted through letter and follow up telephone call over a period of nine months. Three schools accepted the offer and met the researcher's criteria.

5.5.2 Gatekeepers

Pole *et al.* (1999) noted that there may be layers of gatekeepers within any school who exercise power over children and require convincing. Their motives can include the need to protect the child, test out researchers' motives and filter out damaging research (Mason 2004). In this study, one example of protracted negotiation with multiple gatekeepers gave a salutary lesson. After six months of negotiation and agreement with the headmaster, head of department and initial teacher contact, the school finally rejected the request when a fourth 'gatekeeper' emerged. The individual in question could not be convinced of the merits of the research despite many months of positive feedback. Identifying and being able to convince each potential gatekeeper then became a research imperative. As Prendergast (1994) highlighted, negotiations can become protracted and additional time for negotiation must be built into research planning. It should be added gatekeepers can assist the researcher once supportive, providing introductions and assisting in negotiations with potential participants.

5.5.3 Practicalities of access

The final consideration in gaining access was the need for an accurate knowledge of the school year (Lovey 2000). Given that this research project was estimated to take at least ten weeks per school, the timings of contacting schools was critical. In the school mentioned earlier, the eventual rejection meant a process of re-recruiting to tie in with the following school year, delaying the fieldwork by over three months. This also meant a rescheduling of the fieldwork in the other two pre-recruited schools, causing significant discussion and upheaval.

5.5.4 Implementing schools research

Once acceptance has been gained, there were number of implementation considerations. There was a danger that any participation in the study became 'just another form of homework' (Denscombe and Aubrook 1992). Verbal and written briefings given were communicated as informative yet fun, positioning the research as youth orientated, enjoyable and ultimately beneficial to the participants involved.

5.5.5 School context

Consideration was also given to the impact of school context on the quality and reliability of data. Physical classroom layouts can reinforce the inherent power balance between adult-child (Holmes 1998). In this research, attempts were made to follow the example of Green and Hart (1999) using less formal classroom settings to obtain a more relaxed and hence richer form of participation. In a study of the social uses of advertising, Ritson and Elliott (1999) conducted interviews in sixth form rooms to encourage a more naturalistic setting than an institutionalised classroom. However, this 'ideal' needs to be balanced against the pressure on schools' space; flexibility was needed to make the most of what was available. Interviews were occasionally hastily re-arranged, in less than ideal settings. In addition, rooms were at times found to be lacking in privacy and the author found himself competing against noise distractions and interruptions. In such cases, attempts were made to 'make light' of the situation to ensure that conversations were not broken up or inhibited.

5.5.6 Teachers

Similarly, the impact of the teacher(s) concerned can raise inhibitions and reduce openness and honesty. Previous studies have found teacher's attitudes to academic research varying from enthusiasm to ambivalence and even cynicism (Hammersley 1984). In this research, the author found the study was welcomed by the gatekeeper(s) once access was negotiated. Teachers however treated the author as an 'expert' in the subject matter because of the author's known commercial experience. The author was keen to downplay this perception once the fieldwork started for fear that such a perception might raise inhibitions amongst participants. It was recognised that teachers have a positive role to play during the initial fieldwork stages; they provide the initial point of contact for the researcher, reducing the 'stranger factor' (Mason 2004) but their continued and at times overprotective presence can be counterproductive. In two instances, the author had private conversations with teacher(s) concerned to ensure that such well-intentioned intrusions did not upset the research setting.

Finally, there is the issue of rewarding the school and participants concerned. There is a danger that researchers can exploit the fact that they have been given privileged access to young people. David *et al.* (2001) however noted the trend towards offering no form of compensation for involvement. In a non-school environment, financial compensation by way of incentives is often offered although this can lead to accusations of bias and false motivations. Given the financial constraints of a Ph.D. research, the issues of bias and the likely problems with schools authorities, it was decided that any compensation should be non-financial. Offers were made to give full sets of photographs from the qualitative sessions back to participants and all were welcomed to a presentation of the findings. At the onset of the research, the author conducted a guest talk on an unrelated marketing subject.

6. Quantitative data collection methods

6.1 The purpose of quantitative data collection

Given the essence of the study is one of attempting to understand phenomena rather than prove or confirm, quantitative data analysis is designed to be exploratory rather than confirmatory (Robson 2002: 399). Exploratory analysis attempts to establish what the data reveals through 'descriptive statistics and analysis' rather than attempting to predict on the basis of theory.

Questionnaire and diary methods were chosen for the exploratory quantitative analysis. The questionnaire sought to establish young people's attitudes towards broad issues of lifestyle, consumerism, media and technology before turning to contemporary media consumption. Specifically, it focused on the uses and gratifications of contemporary forms of media including the internet and mobiles as recommended in the literature review. It also sought to establish young people's attitudes and barriers towards the internet. Diary methods were then used a means of detailing how young people spent their leisure time, including their use of different media choices.

6.2 Sampling within schools

This study adopted a non-probability or purposive sampling method consistent with studies not seeking to establish representativeness across the population. As mentioned earlier, only students from Business Education classes took part. Classes were selected by the appropriate teacher after input from the author.

Each willing member of the class was handed a questionnaire, totalling 175 across the three schools. Each questionnaire was subsequently checked to ensure that each section was completed. Therefore, all 175 questionnaires were used for overall data analysis. However, a number of irregularities were found in the uses and gratifications section, typically through deliberate incorrect answering. Eight responses were omitted from the multivariate analysis of uses and gratifications as a consequence. The diaries proved more problematical to complete. Despite strenuous efforts to simplify (detailed later), only 119 out of a total of 175 were satisfactorily completed. This equated to a response rate of 68%. Of these, 49 came from the *'state rural'* school, 47 from *'fee-paying'* urban school and 23 from the *'state suburban'* school.

6.3 Self-completion questionnaire

6.3.1 Research instrument

The first quantitative research instrument used was a self-administered, structured questionnaire (Appendix 6). This was distributed during class time by the author with a teacher present. Completion in class ensured an interruption-free environment, something difficult to facilitate if participants are in a less controlled environment such as the home. Asking participants to complete both diary and questionnaire at home was also deemed unrealistic given the limited attention spans attributed to young people. Telephone interviews were ruled out given the extra expense, time and inconvenience involved. The final option of completion by internet was discarded as it may have biased the results given the nature of the research objectives.

The questionnaire was administered at the beginning of the session, allowing up to 40 minutes for completion. In most cases, participants finished in 20 to 25 minutes but

additional time limited the stress on slower individuals. To discourage response bias, it was stressed that there were neither right nor wrong answers. The teacher involved in the briefing sessions was allowed to comment only on technical completion issues, preventing any data contamination from exposure to the teacher's own subjective interpretations.

6.3.2 Questionnaire design and format

Part One of the questionnaire covered personal details mirroring the national 2001 census (GROS 2005c) plus some additional questions about media use and access. Part Two (three sections) covered the main attitudinal and motivational aspects of the quantitative research. *Section 1* covered 'Attitudes about lifestyles, interests, principles and convictions', *Section 2* 'Reasons for choosing different types of media (participant language for 'uses and gratifications') and *Section 3* was 'Internet specific' looking at barriers to use.

The questionnaire was fully structured by design, with most questions closed so that standardised and non-ambiguous responses could be gained (Robson 1993). Feedback from the pilot study revealed that participants found closed questions easier to understand and respond to. The subsequent qualitative research phase provided a richness of data, negating the need for open-ended responses. Remenyi *et al.* (1998) strongly recommended the piloting of questionnaires to identify deficiencies in design and question wording. The questionnaire (and diary) was fully piloted, administering it to 31 15-17 year olds at a school in southwest Scotland (Grant 2002). Subsequent to the pilot, a number of major changes were made including the simplification of some questions, shortening of lists of statements and inclusion of additional questions on the internet. See Appendix 5 for a more detailed outline of decisions taken and final list of gratification statements chosen.

6.4 Lifestyle diary

6.4.1 Research instrument

Diaries were selected as the second quantitative instrument for the study to focus on how young people spent their leisure time. The use of self-administered diaries has been an established social science research method for measuring a range of time related tasks (see Stewart 1965, Bolger *et al.* 1989, Dalix and Castro 1999). Diaries are also a regular part of commercial media research projects including the JICNARS Diary Panel on national readership and BMRB's 'National Buying Survey' (2000) time use panel of 26,000 households across the U.K.. In youth media research, Livingstone and Bovill (1999) used a diary system to measure the volume and frequency of new media use amongst children.

Diaries have a number of advantages over other forms of quantitative recording. These include the ease of participant recording over a length of time (Stewart 1965), the generation of significant amounts of data with minimal effort (Robson 1993), first hand accounts of situations to which the researcher may not have direct access (Burgess 1981) and the temporal synchronisation of different aspects of the same behaviour, allowing for ease of comparison of day-to-day activities (Cullen and Phelps 1975). In this research, the use of personal diaries allowed participants to fill in their time related details on a regular basis, with limited time loss between activity and recording. Participants were requested to record diary entries at least twice a day.

One of the main limitations of using the diary method is the trade off between amount and depth of information (Bryman 1995). The use of multiple methods was designed to overcome this concern. Participation fatigue has also been a consideration in diary studies (Toh and Hu 1996) and so the length of the diary was restricted to one week only. Finally, the diary can place a great deal of responsibility on the individual to complete the diary (Robson 1993). It was therefore decided to design a diary with no open-ended questions, in line with Bourgue and Back (1982), who favoured the use of a set of specific questions at specific times in the day, to simply and structure the task. Strenuous efforts were made to shorten the questionnaire and simplify headings from the pilot study to aid this process. However, even after these and other initiatives such

as different coloured pages for each day, response rates were disappointing. Reasons given for not handing in the diaries (discovered in subsequent conversations with teachers) included forgetfulness, losing the diaries, a loss of interest and competing priorities outside the school.

6.4.2 Design and format

The design of the diary was based on the time use diary used by BMRB's 'National Buying Survey' (2000), with modifications informed by Livingstone and Bovill's 'Young People, New Media' (1999) study. A standardised format was used for seven consecutive days, speeding up participant familiarity and helping to ease the burden of completion. Time use was recorded for every hour of each day of the week. This was changed from half hourly recording in the pilot, compromising detail but designed to make the task a less onerous one. Each daily diary was separated into three main sections:

'Where were you?'   ...location of individual
'Who were you with?'   ...social composition of group
'Which of the following media types were you using...?
                          ....Tv, video, gaming, e-mailing etc.

General activities were separated from media consumption activities so that greater detail could be achieved on the types of media young people were consuming. Given that the diary was designed using closed questions, a series of descriptive words and phrases were developed after reference to the diaries mentioned earlier. As with the self-administered questionnaire, the diary was piloted and refinements made to structure and phrases used.

For the final section on media use, participants were asked to estimate to the nearest five minutes for each hour marked how long they spent doing each media activity. This allowed an accurate measure of media use to be calculated. This proved the most difficult exercise for participants to complete. Feedback suggested that a combination of recall problems and boredom contributed. Further details about participant completion rates are provided at the start of Chapter Nine.

6.5 Treatment of quantitative data

Self-completion questionnaires were coded and then passed over to an outside research agency to be entered into SPSS V.10. This allowed for considerable time savings although care was needed to fully brief the agency, discuss ethical considerations and quality check the end results. A random selection of entries was double-checked for errors. After inspection, it was decided that all completed cases should be included for analysis given that participants formed part of a discrete school age bracket. This meant that no outlying cases were excluded (Robson 1993).

6.6 Analysis of quantitative data

The first step in analysis is the construction of frequency tables and then cross tabulations when relationships are being studied (Hair *et al.* 2000). This was completed for all the main questions, following up on relevant lines of enquiry. Basic statistical techniques including mean scores and standard deviations were used to establish rank order and measures of variance.

When specifically looking at uses and gratifications informed questions, there is a need to move beyond single relationships and measure relationships between a range of variables (Hair *et al.* 1998). If the variables are deemed to be independent rather than dependent as is implicit in uses and gratifications theory (Rubin 1983), then canonical and discriminant analysis is rejected (Hair et al. 2000). Measures of interdependence include factor analysis, cluster analysis and multi dimensional scaling. Factor analysis using principal component analysis was chosen as the optimum technique to explore the relationships between variables for each media choices. Factor analysis is most suitable when there are large numbers of variables, and therefore a need to reduce those to a smaller set of underlying subsets (Hair *et al.* 2000). See Appendix 8 for a methodological overview of decisions taken and criteria applied. Decisions relevant to the process of generating findings such as data reduction, appropriateness of data set and initial factor derivations are detailed in Chapter 12.

6.7 Evaluation of quantitative data

Whilst this study is informed by interpretive ontology and epistemology, it remains important to evaluate quantitative methods according to their own standards (Fischer 1990). Of particular relevance is the section on uses and gratifications given the objective of comparing media use with previous studies which base their findings on positivistic assumptions. Consideration is given to issues of *reliability* and *validity* in scale development (Malhotra and Birks 2000).

Reliability assumes that scales consistently measure something (Churchill 1979), covering both consistency of scale through repetition and internal consistency to measure intercorrelations (Spector 1992). Retesting of measures over time (Carmines and Zeller 1979) was not possible for this study on grounds of cost and access inconvenience. Similarly, splitting the data set to measure internal consistency (Malhotra and Birks 2000) was restricted by sample size limitations. Scores of coefficient alpha are presented in Chapter 11 for evaluation of internal consistency. Nunnally and Berstein (1994: 212) argue this remains a strong test as it provides "actual estimates of reliability".

Validity refers to a scale measuring what it is supposed to measure (Churchill 1979), isolating true differences from systematic or random error. This includes content, substantive, criterion and construct validity. Content validity is essentially a subjective process, synthesised from credible research published. Chapter 4 and Appendix 5 assess the decisions taken when constructing a final set of variables. Establishing substantive validity involves variable purification, eliminating those not 'agreeing' with the others in the construct (Malhotra and Birks 2000). Pilot study findings (Grant 2002) were used to refine the list to 24 variables although the small pilot sample remains a limitation. Criterion validity measures correlations between scale and other criterion items such as demographic, psychographic or scores from other scales (Churchill 1987). Chapter 11 presents analysis of such relationships; it should be noted that establishing their existence was not a primary objective and therefore constrained by sample size. Furthermore, the nature of the study precludes the need to assess predictive validity of criterion items. Construct validity sets out to measure what a scale is measuring and how well it measures it (Churchill 1987). This is often

associated with confirmatory factor analysis in advance of more sophisticated model building (Churchill 1987). The findings of the exploratory factor analysis presented in Chapter 11 provide a basis for such measurement should further research concern itself with establishing variable confirmation and theoretically informed model building. This is outside the remit of this study.

7. Qualitative data collection methods

7.1 Introduction and qualitative aims

This section considers the qualitative data collection methods, focusing on the use of mini focus groups, directed by the principles of experiential phenomenology (Thompson *et al.* 1989, 1990). Specifically, the aims of the qualitative research were to explore how young people's media consumption patterns fitted into their lifestyles, their experiences of new forms of media such as the internet (both positive and negative) and how those experiences compared and contrasted with competing media options. The research also sought to establish the views of young people towards practitioner efforts (through advertising and other forms of marketing communications) to access and communicate with them.

7.2 Qualitative approach

Burns (1989 in O'Donohoe 1994: 56) summed up qualitative research as "experiencing the experiences of others". The author's intention was very similar: to discuss first hand experiences, uses and associated behaviours exhibited by young people. As a counterpoint to the quantitative research guided by the theoretical traditions of uses and gratifications, the author sought to look at the subject in a fresh light and achieve a more holistic portrayal of the research topic (Jick 1983). The author also sought to develop rich, thick descriptive accounts of consumers' media experiences (Geertz 1973).

Qualitative interviewing is an accepted and appropriate method for generating data on the life experiences of young people (Mahon *et al.* 1996, Morrow and Richards 1996).

The underlying assumption according to Miller and Glassner (in Highet 2003: 109) is that:

> "...young people can and do create meaningful worlds, and are able and willing to communicate their perceptions to an adult in the context of an interview"

This approach is consistent with a 'youth centred' approach which assumes that young people have a voice to be heard and so accessing their viewpoints is essential. As a consequence, the qualitative methodology was guided by the principles of phenomenology.

7.3 Phenomenological research

In a consumer research context, phenomenology is an attempt to look into or reach the 'lived in' worlds of the consuming participants (Kvale 1983). By doing this, the researcher asks participants to articulate their own "personalised understandings of consumption phenomena" (Thompson and Haytko 1997: 19). See Appendix 9 for details of the three guiding principles of phenomenological research (Thompson et al. (1989, 1990).

Phenomenology was chosen over competing methods because of the emphasis it places on exploring 'lived in' experiences. Given research aims and objectives discussed earlier, this method was deemed most appropriate to access the richness of young people's new media experiences required. Although it is an emerging research method in the fields of marketing communication, its use is by no means unprecedented in the field of e-commerce consumption (see Gould and Lerman 1998). Berthon et al. (1996: 293) suggested that:

> '...this type of research can be used to understand web users and the manner in which they construct their lives and identities – it is a perspective which emphasises understanding from the 'inside'...'

Phenomenological approaches do however have their limitations. Dukes (1984: 202) suggested that phenomenological interviewing can be an exhausting process, "pushing

the researcher to the limit in terms of time, money and probably patience". In combating this, the researcher needs to be highly flexible; one example was continually self-checking to curb the natural inclination to prompt participants into rationalising answers they offer.

Whilst the interviews conducted broadly followed the principles of phenomenology, the design of the topic guide was drawn up after a thorough review of existing literature. In this sense, the interviews did cover a number of set topics, pre-defined and informed by the researcher. However, in most cases the participants directed the flow of the interviews and the researcher made strenuous attempts not to unnecessarily direct conversations.

7.4 Mini group discussions

The data collection instrument chosen was a variant on the qualitative focus group technique known as mini groups.

Focus groups were chosen as they offer a number of well-known advantages over other forms of researcher-participant interaction (Lewis 1992, Morgan 1997). When interviewing older adolescents for example, educational researchers have found that individuals are more willing to discuss and even challenge viewpoints in group rather than individual interviews (Hedges 1985, Breakwell 1990). Madriz (2000) suggested this is most likely to occur when participants have relatively homogenous ideas, beliefs and attitudes and so groups were carefully structured around friendship groups. A less inhibited environment can encourage greater honesty amongst participants (Krueger 1994) although older adolescents are likely to hide their own personal agendas if a level of trust has not been established.

Roscoe *et al.* (1995) found that participants tended to "pool together" accounts allowing for what Ritson and Elliott (1995: 264) described as "multiple reconstructions of previous events". Here, the pooling together of events depended heavily on the structure and stimulus used in group situations. After the experiences of the pilot study, the author introduced projective techniques to catalyse such

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multiple recontructions. This was because even amongst friends, adolescents can feel wary of opening up in an interview situation.

Focus group methodology is also consistent with the phenomenological desire for experiences to be driven by the participant. Barbour and Kitzinger (1999: 5) suggested that:

> '...focus groups are ideal for exploring people's experiences, opinions, wishes and concerns. The method is particularly useful for allowing participants to generate their own questions, frames and concepts and to pursue their own priorities on their own terms, in their own vocabulary.'

Finally, group interviews are particularly suitable for schools based research, encouraging group or collaborative work (Lewis 1992). Experience in focus group methods gives participants the opportunities to learn how to contribute in a safe and meaningful environment. Focus groups may also be more practical than individual interviews involving less scheduling and logistical disruption. However, the author was also mindful of some of the pitfalls of implementing focus groups in schools including poor attendance, forgetfulness and occasional lack of motivation.

Mini groups comprising of 'friendship triads' were chosen to encourage interaction sometimes lost in larger group formats. According to social psychology, mini groups provide for more intimate discussion, each individual given greater space to express their own ideas (Lewis 1992, Krueger 1994). Similarly, smaller-sized groups can allow for discussion on more sensitive topics (Barbour and Kitzinger 1999). The smaller size group can therefore enhance group interaction whilst retaining access to more personalised lifestories (Robson 1993). Researchers have also used smaller 'friendship pairs' (Highet 2003). Friendship groups of three were sought, building on Mitchell's (1997) findings that adolescents tend to nominate groups of three rather than two when given the choice. Furthermore, groups of three increase the likelihood of interaction that 'friendship pairs' may lose.

Small groups run the risk of making participants uncomfortable if unfamiliar or threatened by the other participants. This was one reason why 'natural friendship

triads' were used. Peer pressure in groups can suppress naturalistic feedback (Krueger 1994). Spencer and Flin (1990) reported that young people gave fuller responses when sitting next to someone they liked. Given that the study was concerned with everyday experiences, the use of friendship groupings was a logical one. Previous mass media research studies have supported the use of friendship groupings with children and young people (Buckingham 1987, 1993; Barnes and Todd 1977)

Forms were handed out within class at the end of the quantitative research for consenting participants to fill in. Each form (see Appendix 11) asked individuals to nominate two friends and a reserve. The author then cross-referenced each completed form to ensure that each possible friendship triad comprised of willing friends. The researcher decided not to artificially structure groups by insisting on single sex groups. The end result was a more naturalistic series of groups; four of the final sixteen groups were mixed.

7.5 Piloting the qualitative methods

The pilot study conducted during November 2001 (Grant 2002) used focus group methodology including naturally occurring 'friendship triads'. Five sets of group sessions were conducted, each group meeting twice over a period of a fortnight. The interviews provided a rich vein of data despite the small sample size (see Grant and Waite 2003). The author identified however that more was needed to stimulate the participants beyond conventional questioning given the difficulties faced in adolescent research. Therefore, projective techniques were incorporated to build participant involvement and bonding.

7.6 Selection of projective techniques

Projective techniques have a "long and illustrious history in psychology" (McGarth *et al.* 1993), used in marketing and consumer behaviour fields since the late 1940's (Levy 1963). Participants are expected to project part of themselves onto an external object as part of the interview process (Gordon (1999: 165). Such techniques are therefore suitable for the expression of feelings, thoughts and even deeper-held beliefs, in a less direct and hence more acceptable manner. McGrath *et al.* (1993: 425)

found that projective techniques helped when participants were "unwilling or unable to verbalise their feelings and expression". Projective interviews have not always been restricted to individual interviews; they were successfully used in mini groups by Banister and Hogg (2001).

There are several reasons for why projective techniques are particularly suitable for youth research. They can help alleviate embarrassment evident in experiential based youth interviews (Gordon 1999), can introduce a welcome element of fun into tedious tasks and help build participant rapport with moderators (Boddy 2005). Situations and events can be brought vividly to life and retold in a manner that puts participants at ease, encouraging spontaneous responses. Finally, they help build up a better understanding of how young people structure and interpret their lifeworlds (Levy 1963). This makes them appropriate for this study given the author's desire for a contexualised understanding of youth media consumption. Two specific projective techniques were used in this study: autodriving – photo diaries and psychodrawing.

7.6.1 'Autodriving- Photo diaries'

'Autodriving' is an elicitation projective technique implying that the participant's response is driven by stimuli drawn directly from his or her own lifeworld (Heisley and Levy 1991). Pictures or photographs drawn directly from respondents' lives are the most common sort of stimuli used to encourage response as they offer realistic representations of life experiences or objects.

For this study, photographs were chosen as the most convenient and accurate representation of the subject matter. Photographs have stimulated discussion on subjects as diverse as the rituals associated with holidays (Wallendorf and Arnould 1991), family dinner preparation and consumption (Heisley and Levy 1991), jazz collections (Holbrook 1987) and the effects of crowding on the retail service experience (Bateson and Hui 1992). In the field of advertising and media studies, photo diaries were used by Bartholomew and O'Donohoe (2003) to explore childrens' everyday lives from their own personal viewpoints

Autodriving techniques using photography offered a number of benefits justifying their inclusion. Firstly, in common with other projective techniques, they help research participants 'manufacture distance' from their own cultural environment and "see familiar data in unfamiliar ways" (McCracken 1988: 23-24). Experiences can be retold which do not rely on memory recall, allowing participants to see events in a fresh, more meaningful light. Secondly, the visual dimension of autodriving helps to reduce problems in verbo-centrism thought to be common in advertising research (Zalman 1997: 425). Given that most communication is non-verbal (Weiser 1998), the use of visual techniques helps to tap into and elicit meanings which may remain undiscovered by verbal questioning alone. Thirdly, autodriving techniques are known to enrichen the body of qualitative data, giving participants increased voice and authority to interpret experiences and consumption events (Sherry 1990). Hazel (see Ghate *et al.* 2003) found in his work on juvenile punishment in Scotland that photographs helped to encourage a freer flow of information because participants enjoyed constructing stories and suggesting what was happening in the captured episode. The use of autodriving in mini group formats was designed to give 'permission' to friends to comment on each others lifestyles, thereby further enriching the collective interpretation. Finally, Banister and Booth (2005: 168) argue that self directed photography helps to "build a bridge" between participants and researchers, again helping to reduce the barriers highlighted earlier.

Following a briefing session, participants were each given a disposable camera to take a series of photographs over a period of one week. The photographs collectively formed a photo record of a 'week in their lives' and provided factual representations of the cultural contexts and lifestyles experienced by the participants. A key insight from the pilot study was that young people between the ages of 15-17 spent almost half their week-end leisure time and a quarter of the midweek leisure time out of the home (Grant 2002). Therefore, participants were encouraged to take a range of photographs reflecting both their lives inside and beyond the confines of their homes. This also reflected the fact that the contemporary media landscape is becoming ever more mobile, relying less exclusively on communication in a domestic environment.

Participants were asked to take several shots of their bedrooms. Young people's bedrooms are important sources of inspiration in the development of youth culture,

self identity and media consumption. Steele and Brown (1995) described adolescent bedroom culture as "the place where media and identities intersect", a personal space where adolescents can experiment with their "personal selves" (Larson 1995) and a mediating device in which young people can "explore who they are and who they want to be" (Livingstone 2002: 155). Salinger's photographs of adolescents in their bedrooms (cited in Steele and Brown 1995) illustrated how photographs can illuminate the idiosyncratic and creative ways in which adolescents incorporate media into identity formation. Bedrooms have been described as 'media rich' (Livingstone 2002), a focal point for old and new media and a place where advertising is consumed (Bartholomew and O'Donohoe 2003) The centrality of bedrooms in youth media consumption underlined why 'bedroom culture' should be an important facet of the photo diaries. This was accentuated by Livingstone's claim (2002: 156) that adolescent bedrooms now represent "a new opportunity for targeted advertising and marketing as the media rich bedroom is both a site of reception for commercial messages and a location for the display and use of consumer goods".

7.6.2 'Psychodrawing'

The second stage of the group discussions was designed to shift the focus from adolescent lifestyles towards their relationships with different media and implications for marketers. In particular, the author was keen to understand relationships with newer forms of media such as the internet. A technique known as 'pyschodrawing' (Gordon 1999) or 'projective drawing' (Gordon and Langmaid 1988) was selected to help participants engage and reflect on the subject matter.

Apart from being another enjoyable task, psychodrawing allow participants to access and then share emotions in a "spontaneous, safe and childlike way" (Gordon 1999: 189). It was anticipated that adolescents would welcome opportunities to reflect on the subject matter, then share ideas with a wider circle of close friends. Of the many advantages in youth research cited by Gordon and Langmaid (1988: 210), the notion that such drawings can break down posturing and overcome potential problems of non verbalising of ideas for fear of peer disapproval were thought most pertinent. Although the internet is not an especially sensitive subject for young people, peer group approval of internet use might influence the naturalistic group dynamics.

The technique has been used (almost exclusively) in this field by Livingstone and Bovill (2001). They asked English school children to 'draw a picture of the internet' and found that younger children tend to draw their most frequently visited sites whilst older children focused the diversity of functions and uses reflecting their widened experience of use. Participants in this study were given a pencil and blank sheet of paper and asked to 'sketch out using illustrations and words how they felt about the internet, both positive and negative'. A couple of examples from other research projects were shown to give an idea of what was required. The author was careful to downplay any concerns over artistic merit. Participants typically spent between ten to fifteen minutes completing the task before coming back together to share their ideas and discuss each set of illustrations.

7.7 Sampling

Sampling strategies designed for qualitative research studies are guided by desires to better understand rather than precisely measure or statistically prove social phenomena. Structured rather than random samples are derived to help answer the research questions posed (Kitzinger and Barbour 1999). Such 'structured' samples in interpretive studies have sometimes been very small indeed such as Mick and Buhl's (1992) study of three brothers advertising experiences. Since "qualitative research does not survey the terrain, it mines it" McCracken (1988:17), the focus should be on the intensity rather than extensiveness of the research effort.

The sampling strategy in this study has been informed by the concept of 'purposeful sampling', sometimes (but not exclusively) associated with the theoretical sampling of grounded theory (Mason 2002). The logic of purposeful or purposive sampling (Patton 1990: 169) lies in selecting participants to access "information rich" sources of data in order to build up detailed understanding of the research topic. This study was also guided by the aim of exploring diversity in young people's relationships with media choice. Maximum variation sampling (Patton 1990: 172, Morse 1998: 73) sets out to deliberately select a heterogeneous sample and then observe the commonalties in sample experiences. Whilst the selection of schools in this study identified differing

socio-economic backgrounds, selection within schools focused on diverse uses of new media such as the internet and divergent viewpoints.

Age and gender also contributed to diversity. Selection attempted to ensure that there was an even quota of 13-17 year olds. Given that the groups were designed to be naturally selecting, there was no pre-condition that groups should be either male or female. However, the author sought a balance of male and female groups with mixed gender groups when they fitted the other criteria mentioned. Since studies have shown gender differences in internet consumption (Spender 1995, Maltby *et al.* 2002, Maclaran *et al.* 2004), it was important to identify such characteristics if they emerged.

It was decided that an average of five groups per school should be sufficient for a diverse sample, providing sufficient data to compare and contrast young people's experiences with and across differing socio-economic backgrounds. Unlike purely emergent sampling strategies, the number of groups had to be identified, negotiated and agreed in advance because of the difficulties outlined earlier in conducting schools research. In each school, this involved several stages. The first stage was to identify a list of consenting individuals. For the *state rural* school, this was 55 individuals, *fee-paying urban* 49 and *state suburban* 39. The second stage was to analyse the self-completion questionnaires handed back by each consenting individual, making detailed notes of attitudes and uses of traditional and new (er) forms of media. This was then used to identify a sample of mini groups in each school that offered maximum variation. Appendix 10 details an example of the author's notes made for one particular school. The author resisted one instance of pressure applied to reject an individual based purely on academic performance. The final stage was to notify the 15 selected individuals per school of their inclusion. At this stage, the author was careful to re-establish that each individual was enthusiastic to participate with the other group members.

The only subsequent changes to the sampling frame resulted from attendance and health problems on the day(s) of the research. In most cases, flexibility was built into the research schedule. However, with exams imminent and re-scheduling impractical, the final sample at the *state suburban* resulted in four friendship triads and two sets of

friendship pairs; an identical research approach and style of questioning ensured consistency between friendship triads and pairs. The final sampling frame therefore consisted of 46 participants breaking down into fourteen friendship triads and two friendship pairs. The sample resultant is laid out below:

Table 17: Schools qualitative sample

SCHOOL	CRITERIA	Grp. 1	Grp. 2	Grp. 3	Grp. 4	Grp. 5	Grp. 6
State rural	Year	S4	S5/S6	S5	S6	S4	
	Gender	M	M/F	F	M	F	
	Internet Use	Hvy x2	Lgt x 2	Hvy x 3	Hvy x 2	Hvy x 1	
		Lgt x 1	Hvy x1	Med x 2	Med x 1	Med x2	
Fee-paying urban	Year	S6	S5	S4	S4	S5	
	Gender	F	F/M	M	F	F/M	
	Internet Use	Hvy x1	Hvy x 3	Hvy x 2	Hvy x 2	Hvy x 3	
		Med x 1		Med x 1	Med x 1		
		Lgt x 1					
State suburban	Year	S4	S5	S4*	S5	S6	S5*
	Gender	F	F	F*	F	M/F	M*
	Internet Use	Hvy x 2	Med x 1	Hvy x 1	Hvy x 3	Hvy x 1	Med x 2
		Hvy x 2	Lgt x 2	Lgt x 1		Med x 2	
		Med x 1					

*Paired groups

7.8 Procedures for qualitative analysis

The main phase of the qualitative research took place from August 2003 until March 2004. As with the quantitative research, the fieldwork was sequential following on from the quantitative research. The gap between quantitative and qualitative fieldwork varied from four to six weeks, allowing for return of consent forms, selection of friendship triads and then discussion with potential participants.

7.8.1 Briefing session

Once selected participants had been informed, fifteen-minute briefing sessions were held with each group in private. This gave the author a chance to make introductions

and start the process of getting to know each participant. Building up mutual relationships and bonding with participants is a critical element of research involving longitudinal or ethnographic elements (Morley 1980, Lull 1990, Buckingham 1993). The objectives of the qualitative research were outlined and a short discussion ensued about the role of mini group discussions. Instructions were also given on what was required for the photo diary collection (Appendix 12). Participants were asked to take at least four or five photos of their bedroom and then to use the remainder of the film to capture what 'a week in their life' would be like. Suggestions given included friends, hobbies, activities, socialising, spending time at home/out of the home and part time jobs.

After passing out the written instructions, cameras were handed out and a verbal briefing on how to use the camera issued. Disposable cameras with pre-paid processing were chosen for ease of use and to ensure participants were not involved in any issues of payment. Participants were told that they had seven days to take their photographs and asked to spread out their shots, avoiding the temptation to take too many shots of one subject matter. Cameras were then handed back into the teacher and arrangements made to drop off and pick up the processed film. Finally, the fully developed 24 images were given back to each participant with the instruction to edit down the images to 12-14 images which they felt happy talking about. Given that each discussion session comprised three participants and lasted only one hour, a maximum of 36-42 photos was deemed appropriate. The number of photographs actually selected reflected the variety of contents within the photographs and the degree of duplication within.

A number of minor problems were experienced with the photo-taking exercise. One participant lost his camera which had to be replaced. A second case involved the loss of a set of processed photographs. In this case, the discovery was made too late and so the individual was asked to contribute to the group, describing what her week had been like from her memory and the discussion with friends. The biggest difficulty however involved participants forgetting to bring back photographs at the allotted time. This resulted in a number of postponed groups causing increased work for teacher and author alike. The author ensured that there was flexibility in rearranging such dates (often at late notice) so as to continue the smooth running of the fieldwork

and not to threaten the positive working relationships set up with teachers and participants concerned.

To keep costs down, only one set of photographs was made for the discussion session. At the end of the discussion sessions, participants were asked if they were happy for the author to retain the images providing anonymity was guaranteed. In two cases, extra copies were made for individuals to keep a personal set. In three cases, the author promised to return the original set once images had been scanned into the computer. One participant exercised her right to keep the originals and withhold use of the images outside the discussion group. At the end of each session, a brief discussion took place on how the images would be used and who might have access to them.

7.8.2 Photo diary discussion sessions

For the first full group discussions using the photo diaries, times were arranged between author, teacher and participants. The author quickly found out that trying to arrange times with participants directly was often problematic and so for the rest of the fieldwork, the teacher acted as mediator. This also allowed the teacher to act as a reminder closer to the day of the interview. In one school, a reminder note was put in the daily school news bulletin and posted on the internet. Where possible, school e-mails were also used as reminders. Despite this, some participants forgot or were not being able to attend at the last minute.

In keeping with autodriving techniques (Heisley and Levy 1991) photographs were laid out on a table for discussion. Participants were asked to sort the photographs into piles of similar subject matter. This acted as an icebreaker, allowing them to move beyond the superficiality of the classroom setting to act in a more naturalistic manner. As each pile contained a mix of participant photos, initial conversations were more likely to benefit from group interaction. To initiate the discussion, participants were asked to "tell me about this picture and what is going on?". To aid and extend conversations, the author made notes of a number of important topic areas (Appendix 13). These were based on the pilot study and themes prevalent in the literature. Where needed, clarification was sought and other participants asked if they could relate to the

experiences being discussed. Sessions were tape-recorded after consent, using a miniature microphone so as not to intrude on the sessions. In all cases the researcher guaranteed participant anonymity.

The discussions that emerged reflected the diverse and at times eclectic interests, hobbies and leisure time use of young people. The balance between photographs taken in the bedroom, around the house and elsewhere often reflected the natural inclination and preference of the participants. In one instance, no shots were taken of the bedroom reflecting a natural inclination not to share what might be considered a very private space. This may have been an isolated example of the distance between older male interviewer and younger female participant preventing a fully free and open discussion. In general, there was consistency in the thematic interest areas of friends and family, interests/hobbies, media consumed, activities out of the home and the desire to 'just have fun'. After each interview, notes were taken on the main themes emerging so that the second discussion session could either elaborate on or avoid duplication of important insights.

7.8.3 Psycho drawing sessions

The second set of discussion sessions narrowed the focus from lifestyle dominated subjects to an emphasis on media consumption. Participants were initially asked to describe what they understood by the term media. This was used to ascertain what was entailed by the term 'media' and what kinds of characteristics media shared. Within this, discussion moved onto whether the internet and mobile phones could be considered 'media'. After this initial set of questions, participants were asked to describe what kind of media they would most like to 'use' if they had some spare time outside school hours.

Beyond the initial discussions, conversation was directed towards the internet. Rather than asking direct questions about attitudes towards and uses of the internet, the technique of 'psycho-drawing' was introduced as a way of accessing the subject matter in a more enjoyable, less confrontational manner. Participants appeared to enjoy this method of breaking up the discussion sessions; comparing participants' drawings stimulated much discussion and some hilarity. Each participant in turn was

then asked to describe 'what was going on' in the contents of the drawings and relate what they had drawn to any real life experiences and stories. In this manner, the interviewing was again consistent with phenomenological principles with no attempt made to further rationalise responses by asking "why". Instead, participants were encouraged to give examples and compare experiences.

A number of 'grand tour' topic areas were introduced when relevant to the discussion and, if not covered during the pyschodrawing, returned to later. In particular, mobile phones were discussed in some detail, to compare with internet and traditional media consumption experiences. A further area for discussion was the kinds of relationships companies and brands sought to establish through media channels. This incorporated participant experiences of advertising across different media channels and understandings of how practitioners go about targeting them. This was specifically designed to provide a contrast to the findings of the practitioner research.

7.9 Data analysis

The researcher utilised the principles of phenomenological interpretation as advocated by Thompson *et al.* (1989) to analyse the data. An emic approach dictates that the researcher's own experiences and theoretical notions do not interfere with participant's experiential ones. The text of the interview is treated autonomously, without need for external collaboration. Analysis is therefore limited exclusively to the evidence presented by the participant. This required the researcher to 'bracket' his preconceived theoretical notions rather than impose them on the data.

In line with emergent exploratory design, collection and a brief analysis of the first phase was completed before the second phase commenced. This allowed for initial insights and reflections of participant lifestyles, activities and interests before the second phase commenced. Given the restrictions of the fieldwork schedule, it was not possible to complete a fully transcribed and codified analysis between the two discussion phases. Handwritten notes were made to aid memory and bridge the gap between the two main phases of qualitative fieldwork. Again, the researcher was careful not to form judgements that might bias subsequent discussions. The bulk of the transcriptions took place during and after the fieldwork was complete. A

professional transcriber was used to transcribe each interview verbatim. Although this was expensive, the time saved allowed the author to concentrate on completing the fieldwork and analysing the findings. One professional was used to ensure consistency of transcription. The individual was briefed in person and the ethics involved fully explained. All interview tapes were checked for quality of transcription and to allow the author a sense of the flow of each interview. The author therefore became fully immersed in the process, fully accountable for its output.

Bleicher (1980) suggested adopting a 'part to whole' mode of interpretation for phenomenological informed research, also known as 'hermeneutic circles' (Thompson *et al.* 1994). In line with this method of analysis, the first stage was to seek an understanding of each transcript, identifying broad themes and relating them back to the overall flow of the transcript. This meant seeking an understanding of the individual and collective lifestories emerging out of the photodiary discussion sessions. Salient themes, recurring ideas and patterns of beliefs linking people and cultural setting together were identified (Marshall and Rossman (1995). A similar process was adhered to for analysis of the second phase of discussions, focusing on contemporary media consumption. A second stage then involved relating patterns of commonality between different transcripts which Kvale (1983) referred to as 'global themes'. Separate transcripts were compared so that broad patterns and themes could be identified. This allowed for different interpretations of a similar phenomenon to emerge. Wittgenstein (cited in Thompson *et al.* 1989) referred to this as 'seeing as'; identifying similarities or differences in how different participants experience a situation.

Only at this stage did the researcher utilise a software tool to formalise the process. The delayed use of the software until initial themes were conceptualised was designed to overcome criticisms of computer software packages such as the distancing of researchers from their data (Kaczynski 2004). Transcripts were imported into QSR NUD*IST Nvivo, qualitative computer software package and then coded using the themes already identified. This allowed the researcher to become more systematic in the search for new themes and the re-working and modification of emerging themes. It also enabled easier manipulation of the data than paper based systems could hope for.

There was no precise unit for the codifying of data during this process. A code could relate to a word, phase, sentence and in some cases a whole paragraph. Once a transcription had been coded, it was re-read as whole to ensure that a holistic, contexualised understanding of the main themes had been achieved; a process Thompson *et al.* (1989) refers to as building a "ideographic understanding". Further re-readings of the transcripts and a process of coding and recoding allowed for the emergence of more detailed concepts. This process often involved a greater degree of reflection on the part of the author. As part of the process of reflection, consideration was given to author's own experiences and informal conversations with colleagues concerning the subject matter. Glaser and Strauss (1967: 67) refer to this as triangulating "anecdotal comparisons". Comparisons at this stage were also made with the findings of the practitioner research so that key similarities and differences could emerge.

Once a point of "theoretical saturation" (Glaser and Strauss 1967) had been reached, a final stage involved the adoption of a more sceptical stance towards the emerging concepts and hypotheses. Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) suggested that critical scrutiny tackles any problems emerging from the text and points out ambiguities in the subject matter. For example, negative instances of participants showing no interest in the internet were identified and compared with more positive instances. The emerging theory arrived at then had to either explain such deviant findings or adapt to the changing evidence presented.

7.10 Evaluation of qualitative data

The evaluation of qualitative data has been the source of consideration controversy for a number of years, often dependent on methodological and more recently epistemological perspectives (Shankar and Patterson 2001; Guba and Lincoln 1998).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) provided the benchmark criteria for interpretive evaluation criteria based on naturalistic inquiry, when they suggested that efforts should be made to evaluate the 'trustworthiness' of their research. Their criteria included credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Critics of this direction, such as Holt

(1991: 59) suggested that even these terms are "an attempt to merge interpretive consumer research with positivistic criteria", namely internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity. However, given the need to demonstrate rigour in the evaluation of contextualised data, it was decided that the criteria outlined by Lincoln and Guba provided a suitable framework. The naturalistic context described by Lincoln and Guba is not inconsistent with the principles of phenomenology even if some researchers such as Thompson *et al.* (1989) reject the need for sets of non-positivistic criteria.

Four main questions are discussed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) concerning the trustworthiness of any research. Firstly, the researchers questioned whether the findings of the study can be believed as they depict representations of reality (*credibility*). Secondly, how readily can the hypotheses derived by application to other similar contexts and environments be applied (*transferability*). Thirdly, would the findings be replicated if the study were conducted under a similar set of circumstances (*dependability*). Finally, is there evidence that the findings presented by the researcher are rooted in the data emerging from the participants and their own personalised context and not contrived exclusively from the researchers' own experiences and conjecture (*confirmability*).

At the heart of establishing the *credibility* of the findings was the need to establish methods of critical appraisal of the textual data. Firstly, the author sought to critically examine the emerging concepts, seeking out negative cases of phenomenon as proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990). Findings were discussed with colleagues where feasible. A fellow PhD student, familiar with the 'bracketing' assumptions of phenomenology, independently read and evaluated a small selection of the transcripts. This was designed so that an alternative interpretation might emerge. Subsequent discussions took place and any areas of contention resolved. It should be noted that the author retained the responsibility for the final interpretation of areas of contention such as the importance of understanding barriers to internet use in the context of user lifestyles. Parts of the research were also presented for blind review and presented at several conferences allowing for alternative interpretations to emerge (see Appendix 14 for peer reviewed publications).

The use of multiple methods of qualitative and quantitative data also played an important part in establishing the trustworthiness of the data. Multiple methods ensured those different realms of the experience, and in particular, the uses and gratifications of media consumption, could be obtained and reflected upon. The aim was to develop a more holistic representation by allowing each type of data to voice a particular perspective or behaviour (Arnould and Wallendorf 1994).

For the practitioner research, a formal "member check" was conducted with a full copy of the research findings forwarded by e-mail for comments. However, it was considered impractical to send transcripts or a written version of the findings to each and every one of the schools participants. Instead, the author presented the findings to the two of the three schools, gaining valuable feedback but also giving something back to those who participated.

The concepts of *transferability* and *dependability* are arguably less relevant for conducting phenomenological informed research. The findings occurred from a specific group, at a specified time and place. To attempt to 'transfer' such findings to another context would be to misunderstand the nature of 'lived in' experiences. They are wholly context-bound and therefore any transferring of concepts derived could only ever be indicative. Similarly, it would be virtually impossible to replicate situations and circumstances. Even organising an identical group of participants together at an identical location could yield significantly different results because of the changing cognitive state of the individuals and social dynamics at play.

However, it is important to establish the *confirmability* of the data presented in any phenomenologically informed research. Given that the research places such a heavy reliance on the descriptive stories of the participants, providing proof of authenticity is critical. Although a 'formal audit' of the study has not been possible, the researcher's notes, memos, tapes, transcripts and this thesis document all provide ample evidence to confirm trustworthiness. Throughout this document, verbatim material (including written and visual material) is presented to allow readers to assess confirmability (Wallendorf and Belk 1989). Thompson *et al.* 1989 refer to this as the 'autonomy of the text'; accompanying any interpretation of the text where possible with evidence from the transcripts, but in keeping with the space constraints.

Ultimately however, the final judge of any research will be the reader who, once exposed to the findings, will be able to make up his or her own mind. This is very much in keeping with the principles of existential phenomenology according to Thompson *et al.* (1994: 143):

> "...the final use and value of any given piece of research is determined by the scientific consumer who will either see and agree or will not see and agree with the themes"

8. Independent evaluation of each method

An important distinction needs to be made between the traditional triangulation advocated by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and the sequential mixed methods approach adopted here, within the interpretative paradigm.

Lincoln and Guba argued that triangulation with multiple methods is used to 'validate' information, in the spirit of the true meaning of the word triangulation as a navigational aid. However, such logic argues for a 'consensus reality' according to Thompson (1990) who claimed such logic is dangerously close to positivistic notions. One of the cornerstones of phenomenological philosophy is the idea of multiple and divergent realties. This suggests that researchers should not be looking for one method to validate the other, but simply to provide another perspective on the subject. Multiple and possibly competing claims to the 'truth' can build up more holistic representations of the consumption experience (Shankar and Patterson 2001).

It is therefore argued that each method should be evaluated on its own criteria. The task of the researcher is then to compare and contrast the findings of each chapter and discuss the implications rather than looking for one set of converging realties.

9. Study limitations

A number of limitations to this study should noted.

Firstly, the research study involves a subject matter which is evolving rapidly. The increased use of camera or videophones for example since the fieldwork is one such example. The use of new technologies continues to evolve but the underlying issues detailed throughout the study remain important issues at the presentation of this study.

In seeking a diverse but small scale sample when considering quantitative evaluation, further limitations are evident. More schools recruited would have provided more cases for quantitative analysis. Recruiting further schools would however have presented temporal and administrative issues, and diluted the focus of the qualitative recruitment. The sample per school could also have been extended beyond Business Education departments but again, this would have involved increased school administration and introduced a further consideration of teachers and pupils outwith the subject area. Of most importance however, the guiding philosophy of the study was never to establish a generalisable set of results implicit in large sample sizes, but to seek out understanding in keeping with interpretive principles (Spiggle 1994).

No fieldwork was conducted during the summer months. Undoubtedly, participants' lifestyles would have been different during the summer months and this remains a context worthy of further study. Limitations in research methods already noted in this chapter include the power status between researcher and participants, the drawbacks of self completion and diary formats and the location of interviews. In each case, efforts were made to reduce the limitation observed.

Having detailed the research methods, the next chapter will start the analysis of the fieldwork starting with the practitioner viewpoint.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PRACTITIONER VIEWPOINT

1. Introduction

This chapter details the analysis of 'expert' practitioner interviews. The analysis breaks down into four main sections, reflecting the course of the discussions.

The first section concerns participants' perceptions and interpretation of their own research into young people. The section starts with an overview of the most important trends practitioners see shaping youth people's consumer attitudes and lifestyles. Building on this, the chapter goes into more detail looking at youth relationships with brands and their marketing programmes, influencing the shift towards digital communications. The second section explores issues practitioners believe are important when creating effective communications aimed at young people. The third section summarises the four main stances practitioners adopt when executing youth-orientated marketing communications. The final section considers implications for the role of new media communications.

2. How practitioners 'see' youth

2.1 Understanding young people

Three recurring themes were identified from the interviews which practitioners believed help their planning of (new media) communications aimed at a youth audience. These were 'fragmenting forms of expression', the concept of 'growing older younger' and the emergence of 'multi-tasking'.

2.1.1. Fragmented forms of personal expression

In general, practitioners argued that the values associated with adolescent lifestyles have not changed radically over the last two or three generations. They believe young people's need for independence, identity and peer status (identified in Chapter Two) are still applicable. However, the expressions of those values were thought to have changed as society moves on. The following example suggests that young people are simply finding new ways to express those core values:

> "It is musical fashion rather than clothes, online gaming rather than dancing, texting and communication which is the new form of personal expression. Areas such as music and texting are non gender specific"
> *Media Strategist, Media planning & buying agency*

Practitioners, particularly youth researchers, emphasised the need to look beyond any one lifestyle expression. In their view, young people do not display one particular lifestyle, rather a mosaic of life activities reflecting their life at any particular moment in time. This involves a complex, constantly moving pattern of activities and aspirations as the following quotation illustrates:

> "Rather than going 'this is my life', they will pick bits of lifestyles that suit them. They are not skateboarders; they are more of a magpie. I think categorising people by lifestyle is still applicable to the over 25s but not for younger because they haven't formed it yet"
> *Associate Director, Youth research agency*

This idea of a mosaic of lifestyles is not new, having been discussed in academic circles since the late 1960s with the rise of post-modern thinking. It has parallels with post-modern consumption literature on self-identity (Lannon 1995), lifestyle often being a reflection of that desired identity. More recently, Firat and Shultz (1997: 191) linked fragmentation to the concept of bricolage:

> "The fragmentation in everyday life experiences and the loss of commitment to any single way of being, result in 'bricologe' markets, that is consumers who do not present a unified centred self, but instead a jigsaw collage of multiple representations of selves and preferences"

Similarly, Valentine and Gordon (2000:202) talked about "moments of identity". Patterson (1998) and Cox (1998) both suggested the fragmentation of markets, media and experiences. Again, strands of this were evident in the practitioner interviews, particularly when considering themes of lifestyle trends, speed of adoption and self-identity:

> "You are dealing with an audience who will pick up a trend faster than anyone else. And then drop one faster than anyone else. They are always looking for the next thing. They are building personality through acquiring and discarding facts, cultural signifiers and all this kind of thing. They are quite eclectic but they don't gather them all and keep them all. They gather them all and go onto the next big thing as they strive to identify who they are"
>
> *Partner, Media planning agency*

Evidently, practitioners believe this process of cultural ownership will speed up and fragment, reflecting and perhaps even shaping the fragmentation of media channels (see Patterson (1998) for a review of the proliferation of media vehicles and dissolution of media images). Ruggiero (2000: 28) argued that this increasing 'speed' can also be linked to the instantaneous nature of new media. One consequence of this is that practitioners rarely advocated one way of targeting young people, but a 'mix and match' to suit circumstances.

More standard lifestyle-orientated forms of youth segmentation do still have a place. One media practitioner talked about using labels such 'casuals', 'townies', 'goths', 'skates' to depict young people, in a similar vein to Cova's (1997) neo-tribes. Such tribes are however thought by post-modern researchers to be fluid, ever-changing social collectives (Greenwood 1994).

2.1.2 'Growing older younger'

One of the most talked-about youth trends has been termed 'KGOY': Kids Growing Older Younger (Cox 1998: 40, Lindstrom and Seybold 2003: 10). Although the latter authors relate this only to the marketing world of brands and information, others apply it to wider trends such as the adoption of more adult values (Richie 1995, Cox 1998). The practitioners in this research were fully cognisant of this trend:

" Drinks, sex, the usual. And looks which are increasingly important. All that is driving kids to grow up faster. There are some terrifying statistics. Onset of puberty at different ages... 17% percent of eight year old girls have started puberty compared to only 1% forty years ago, it's a nature vs. nurture argument"

Media Strategist, Media planning & buying agency

This media strategist voiced a commonly-held view that young people are "having" to grow up earlier than previous generations. The burgeoning of channels practitioners use to influence young people played critical roles in this speeding up process:

"As the stimulus around them changes, so does the behaviour. It was pointed out that previous generations did not have the 24 hour TV, the picture messaging and so on and hence much less choice. Greater choice has meant a need for better awareness, more selective interpretation and faster adoption/rejection".

Head of Planning, Youth marketing agency

The notion of "faster adoption/rejection" is in keeping with the views of Gleick (1999) who depicts a marketplace in which just about everything is speeding up, driven on by continual technological advances. This has implications for how practitioners attempt to keep up with this more dynamic environment. There was not however an automatic assumption that young people are capable of "keeping pace". One youth researcher suggested that 'KGOY' operates on a behavioural but not cognitive level. Aside from puberty, he argued that the child development process remains unchanged and fashion-orientated behaviour masks less well-developed cognitive development. This line of thinking questions recent (academic and practitioner) wisdom that young people are capable of understanding the commercial efforts targeted at them.

2.1.3   Multi- taskers

One consequence of the trend towards 'KGOY' was seen in young people's ability to multi-task. Practitioners associated this behavioural trait with an ever-more complex media environment:

"Something we noticed on S., one of our clients, is that kids interact with two or three things at a time. With adults, if you have got a computer game on then that's it. Unlike kids who can be doing that, and something else. Just naturally multi-tasking"

Media Strategist, Media planning & buying agency

Multi-tasking was seen to influence how practitioners approach media planning. Media were thought to be used "in combination" by young people, sometimes actively, sometimes passively. The multi-tasking ability of young people was mirrored in young people's' lifestyle interests. One practitioner painted an archetypal picture of contemporary youth lifestyles when he suggested that the eleven year olds he was talking to were "sitting playing Tony Hawks, listening to Slipknot whilst on their Playstation, waiting for their mates to text them about the next place to meet up". This suggests that practitioners attempting to study media use in isolation from context reveal only part of the picture.

2.2 Youth and consuming brands

Discussion moved on from 'understanding young people' to relationships young people are thought to have with branded products and services. Sociologists such as Veblen (1905) argued that consumption of products and services is intrinsically linked to lifestyles and ultimately the construction of self-identity. The word 'symbiotic' has been used by researchers (see Lannon and Cooper 1983, Osberby 1998) to describe this close relationship between youth culture and consumption. Practitioners highlighted three interlinked themes: brands are central to the youth vernacular, young people are brand experiencers and brands help define their self- identity. The centrality of brands presented here is hardly surprising given the motivations of practitioners.

2.2.1 Brands are part of the youth vernacular

Given their profession, it came as no surprise to learn that practitioners see brands as part and parcel of contemporary youth lifestyles. As the following example illustrates, brands are seen as 'facts of life' as children move into adolescence:

> "I think they have always been around in their lifetime. So they accept them as being part of their everyday communication and entertainment. They have assimilated brands into their worlds"
>
> *Researcher, Media Planning & Buying Agency*

This reflects not just practitioner experiences of young people but also the fact that practitioners have grown up in a 'marketed world'. Brands are part and parcel of their

worlds as much as the young people they seek to target. However it is not just the general assimilation of brands into young people's lives that concerns practitioners. It is also the dynamics of how that assimilation takes place.

2.2.2 Brand experiencers

There was a recognition amongst certain practitioners of a shift in consumer behaviour from the 'need to consume' to the 'desire to experience'. This echoes the concept of experience seeking (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982, Hirschman 1984, Pine and Gilmore 1999). From a marketing perspective, Schmitt (1999) defined experiential marketing as "how to get customers to sense, feel, think, act and relate to your company and brands". As one practitioner put it:

> "There is a need, rather than to consume, to experience. That's one of the biggest trends we have found. Rather than go and buy pair of shoes in a sports shop, they go to Niketown where they get the Nike experience. So you stand in that big tunnel where things are happening to you. Then you go out and perhaps buy. They have to go through that experience, understand through experience, what a brand is about"
> *Director, Youth research agency*

The desire for consumers to live for the moment and experience everything has been suggested as another defining feature of the post-modern landscape (Firat and Shultz 1997). The hosting of branded events such as Reebok's football experience on Brighton beach was cited as providing a more interactive version, involving young people through new forms of "experiential media". The idea that 'experience is everything' is also echoed in recent practitioner youth research studies such as R.O.A.R research (Griffiths and Watkins 2003) detailing 21st century youth.

2.2.3 Brands (still) define personality and identity

Despite the complexities in understanding adolescent lifestyles and identity, one factor was continually emphasised by practitioners. Brands in their minds continue to play a central role in defining youth culture, seemingly 'beacons in a sea of change'. Brands such as Nike, Sony and Nokia, for example, are believed to be crucial in fashioning young people's identities. One media strategist argued that:

"...brands are used to reflect an individual's character. They define who you [the consumers] are. So if you are wearing the latest AirMax, you stand out differently to someone who is wearing Reebok. So marketing people go 'Ah Nikeman' and it means he is into design or maybe richer. Reebok Classic perhaps because he is a casual or football boy or into cars'

Media Strategist, Media planning & buying agency

This raises the degree to which brands influence young people's lifestyles and identities and vice-versa. This is a central question that heavily influences the ways in which practitioners go about targeting young people. It has polarised viewpoints. For one advertising practitioner, young people remain the "hapless playthings" envisaged by Rattansi and Phoenix (1997: 137):

"...actually, teenagers are the biggest suckers for marketing and advertising. I don't care what anyone says. They are just walking billboards. They've got their Nike trainers, Nokia phones, everything is heavily branded. They buy into brands, into conformity. It is only when they reach adulthood that the picture changes"

Planning Director, Creative advertising agency

However, this was by no means the majority viewpoint. The alternative viewpoint envisaged young people adopting a more sophisticated approach to consuming brands. This in turn assumed young people to be the 'active agents of consumerism' rather than the 'victims' argued by some, including Nava (1992). This more active viewpoint depicted young people as capable of controlling the influence of brands on their identity:

"...they help define their subgroups, they get into those brands, they know who they are, they are more confident of themselves and therefore, they are looking for brands more actively, they think 'that's for me'"

Head of Planning, Youth marketing agency

Examples of a more sophisticated approach to young people's relationships with brands and practitioners' responses include concepts such as the lifestyle brand muji. This brand was assumed to recognise that young consumers have turned against 'over-marketed' brands and now look for more subtle forms of brand identity. The question remains however as to who is in control of this exchange. Are young consumers still victims of a more subtle but ultimately commercial branded offer?

One viewpoint consistent with the ideas of symbiosis was voiced by an advertising planner who painted a picture of brands influencing young people, and young people in return becoming more discerning, in a constantly evolving 'game'. As he put it:

> "It's harder than ever to stay ahead of the game and stay cool when a fifteen year old looks at the trainers his dad wears and they are from Nike. He doesn't want those; he wants the latest of the cool skate brands or a brand that appeals to him in a particular way. So it's more fragmented that it used to be. But the idea that brands themselves are not appealing to people anymore is fallacious. They are more popular than ever, more powerful than they have ever been"
>
> *Planning Director, Creative advertising agency*

The idea of circles of influence in which young people experience brands through advertising, and develop a 'lived-in' experience of those brands through purchase is comparable with the work of Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998).

2.3 Youth and approaches to marketing communications

Narrowing the focus, practitioners voiced strong and at times polarised viewpoints on how they thought young people might interact with their communication. Discussions centred on degrees of youth media sophistication.

2.3.1   Youth media sophistication

Sophistication in this context meant young people's understanding and interpretation of commercial mediated communication. The concept of sophisticated consumption, particularly advertising, has been familiar to practitioners since the 1980s (Meadows 1983, Lannon 1985). Academics are well versed in more theoretical assumptions of sophisticated media literacy/consumption (see Young 1990, Buckingham 1993). There was recognition by practitioners in this study that young people are well aware of their aims and intentions:

> "They know when they are being sold to, they know. Where previously, you had to put "advertisement" on the top or people wouldn't know, but now they know. Picking out 'that's an ad, that's a cartoon'. They like it"
>
> *Media Strategist, Media planning & buying agency*

It is also recognised that youth sophistication in dealing with marketing communication had consequences beyond the establishment of their own identity and consumption behaviour. In the following quotation, young people's decoding and then re-interpretation of the benefits of purchasing mobile phones was seen as highly pertinent by the practitioner concerned:

> "Kids are pretty savvy and will sell the benefits to their parents. Comments like 'But you will know where I am now' instead of 'give me a ten pence to call from the call box.... imagine how much safer you will feel when you contact me' show how manipulative they can be"
>
> *Head of Planning, Youth marketing agency*

The suggestion here was that the child concerned was a key influencer in the purchase decision process, reacting to the cues of mobile phone marketing. Practitioners were also keenly aware that young people's own motivations are quite different from those of their parents. In this case, this individual was thought to be sufficiently savvy to stress those benefits her parents wanted to hear. Practitioners were only too aware of the subtle cues needed to prompt such family discussions and careful to provide the right type of ammunition required. It was made clear that this level of sophistication extends down as far as primary school children.

Practitioners recognised that one of the main reasons for this increased sophistication was the environment young people have grown up in. Most families live in multi-media environments and advertising has, as one practitioner put it, become "social currency". It's known to be talked about, discussed, analysed at some length by young people in their immediate environment. In developing marketing communications plans, practitioners were therefore well aware of the perceived competition when targeting young people. As the following quotation highlights, practitioners believed young people actively look for and so receive vast amounts of mediated communication. Young people are therefore faced with decoding increasing amounts of communication, some of it welcome, some of it not, each with its own set of vested interests:

> " ...they are at a time in their lives where media has helped them form their worldview, helped them define who they are. Its always been true that soap operas have been incredibly popular with youth but nowadays it's Heat magazine, it's celebrity gossip, of every conceivable shape and size. That means that as an

advertiser, you've got a very difficult job to cut through. And what we find is that youth tend to be the most marketing literate, you have to engage with them on several levels"

Partner, Media planning agency

There was debate however challenging the assumption that engaging in a multi-media environment automatically meant more sophisticated interpretation of advertising messages. This is contrary to suggestions that practitioners automatically assume young people to be sophisticated consumers of advertising (see Bartholomew and O'Donohoe 2003: 451). Practitioners were able to identify with the more active depictions of youth media decoding (including 'competent consumers' and 'surrogate strategists') identified by O'Donohoe and Tynan (1998). As the following quotation highlights, however, some practitioners felt that fellow practitioner admiration, and therefore collusion with concepts of sophisticated advertising literacy, had gone too far:

"You read a lot about the teenage audience being incredibly astute and very very literate. I don't actually believe that on the one hand school levels of literacy are not necessarily increasing and yet media literacy is. I think that literacy is a form of comprehension. What they understand. If kids are struggling to have that at the base levels at schools, where people talk about literacy, they use it to loosely. I think a lot of kids struggle with advertising literacy. What they don't struggle with is blatant errors in marketing…It is not the teenager that is literate, it is the marketer that is illiterate"

Planning Director, Creative advertising agency

In line with the arguments of McDonald (1999), this viewpoint advocates that (some) young people are unable to fully understand the complexities of contemporary communications because of literacy deficiencies. This echoes the idea of a 'dumbing down' of media consumption commonly discussed on internet sites such as www.human-nature.com. The quote corroborates earlier comments on the gap between young people's consuming behaviour and their cognitive understanding in relation to media interpretation. Commercial media research by Day (2002) voiced similar viewpoints. The suggestion here was that 'fellow' practitioners are indeed overestimating the capacity of young people to engage with certain forms of contemporary marketing communications. It questions whether young people are capable of, or sufficiently interested in engaging with contemporary communications, despite their branded allegiances.

2.3.2   A matter of literacy or simply a lack of desire?

For one particular practitioner, young people are indeed the sophisticated decoders of advertising, their sophistication enabling them act as 'arbiters' of "good" and "bad" marketing. As shown in the following example, he clearly believed that young people are willing to engage, provided the brand "earns" their respect:

> "Sub standard communications and lacklustre advertising will always be a turn off but communications that impress will have a better chance of succeeding. Today's 16-24 year olds aren't necessarily anti-marketing. Just because they are used to it, doesn't mean they hate it. Even if they can see straight through it (which generally they can) they'll be the first to admit if it's well thought through. However, they'll be more critical if it's not up to scratch"   *Associate Director, Youth research agency*

This role as an 'arbiter' suggests a level of engagement consistent with the findings of Ritson and Elliott (1999) who claimed that interpretation of advertising was part of adolescent ritualistic interaction, particular viewpoints being wrapped up in social relations between peers. There were however suggestions in this research that youth attitudes have hardened, shifting back towards the disillusionment and cynicism that typified 'generation x' (Richie 1995). One youth marketing agency described how young people can:

> "...decipher codes, decipher brands, are much more aware of more subtle brand imagery. And they are also more cynical with more commercial experience. Even the younger kids are becoming incredibly cynical nowadays. Because they are so much more commercially aware, in terms of promotions they start to challenge the realities of certain promotions"   *Director, Youth marketing agency*

Practitioners recognised that contradictions do abound and differences do exist between what young people sometimes say and do. Nike was cited as a case in point. Young people may be aware and sometimes don't believe stories about their employment policies but it is also noticed that the brand is as popular as ever, often with the same people. It was felt that outright rejection may not happen until they become young adults in their twenties:

> " They can go on protests but they don't genuinely believe it. They can talk but they don't live it. They know it's out there but they don't live it. That said, they are very dependent on brands. Brands play a very important part in their lives. They give direction. But brands have to do more than in the past. A brand like Nike for example,

everyone wants Nike, so everyone wears Nike. So Nike becomes mainstream. So the next person coming up wants Nike but Nike is too mainstream. So Nike have to do something different." *Managing Director, Youth marketing agency*

The idea that young people continue to be cynical rejecters of marketing communications, unwilling to engage because of their beliefs and values, did not strike a cord with all, as the following practitioner argues:

> "I think they are not as cynical as they are presented. They are not as 'knowing', there is a lot of chat about kids filtering things about. I think they are just not that interested unless there is something specific in that ad; I think advertising is missing the mark if it tries to be too enigmatic like all that XBox stuff. They are not as naive, not as cynical, I think we over analyse their motivations"
>
> *Managing Director, Creative new media agency*

This viewpoint is consistent with practitioner research by R.O.A.R. (Carter 2001:10) which suggested that "unlike their predecessors, they're not cynical of marketing". The practitioner here did not believe that a lack of engagement was down to either falling literacy standards or a cynical audience. The suggestion here was that young people are unwilling to engage because of a genuine lack of interest. This idea reflects the findings of Day (2002) amongst 15-24 year olds. Day suggested that there are societal reasons why young people are unwilling to fully engage with advertising, arguing that a lack of engagement was a consequence of the increasingly pressurised lifestyles young people are exposed to and lead.

2.4 Youth and digital communications

2.4.1 Assimilation of new technologies

The majority of practitioners clearly believed that young people lived up to the notion of the 'electronic generation'. They emphasised that computers and the internet have been for some time an important part of adolescent lifestyles. One media planner described the assimilation into their everyday lives:

> "...in my experience, they just assimilate it. It's just the way things are and all kids are showing their parents how to use video recorders and stuff like that. I think it has been part and parcel of their lives since they can remember."
>
> *Partner, Media planning agency*

This reflects Livingstone and Bovill's (1999) findings that young people have historically displayed a high degree of enthusiasm for new technological trends. Because the current generation have grown up with mobiles, internet and now digital TV, they are used to a rapid rate of technological change, according to another youth researcher. He suggested that this allows young people to think more imaginatively about the convergence of digital media, happy to experiment with new things as they grow physically, mentally and socially (see Tapscott 1998).

Some practitioners saw a link between young people's abilities to use new forms of technology and the impact on consumption behaviour. According to one marketing agency planner, kids are increasingly doing the family information searching via the internet. They were thought to be processing that information, screening out brands not matching up to their (not their parents) criteria:

> "So it's a shift of influence. Kids are pretty savvy and if they were looking for the family car for instance, they wouldn't be surfing the sites of websites that they feel are a bit dorky. They will go to the ones that they would like the family to have. The balance of power is certainly shifting in terms of technology and capability"
>
> *Head of Planning: Youth marketing agency*

New forms of digital media were also thought to reflect deeper personal values, epitomised by mobile phones (see De Chenecey 2000). Those values included independence and personal freedom, a sense of peer community and/or status. In the words of one planner, the internet is important because:

> "...it touches all the right buttons in terms of empowerment, independence. It's the first media that they have been fully in control of.... for the internet, there is a bit of supervision but from 13 onwards, they are largely surfing on their own or with friends... so they can go where they want, when they want."
>
> *Planner, Youth creative advertising agency*

Practitioners rarely commented as to whether such benefits were ever compromised by their own actions.

2.4.2 Mutterings of discontent?

For a minority of practitioners, the idea of an entire generation of young people embracing technology was misplaced. A few recognised that being adept in using technology did not always translate into natural advocacy. This has parallels with signs of disillusionment with all forms of media talked about earlier. One practitioner described how enthusiasm can quickly shift to disappointment and even disillusionment:

> "...they are always looking for something new. I think there has been a problem with technology in the sense that there has been some disillusionment with WAP technology. That was supposed to be the next big thing and it didn't match realities".
> *Executive Director, Youth research agency*

This individual stressed that teenagers are more questioning, asking what's in it for them, rather than blindly accepting 'the latest thing'. This fits with the idea of the sophisticated but increasingly demanding consumer. Because young people are known to be heavier users of new technologies, they were also thought to be the ones most likely to be aware of weaknesses such as unsuitable content, intrusive e-mail and the first signs of text bullying. This might also be a further example, however, of practitioners' overestimation of young people's abilities to fully understand their relationship with new media channels.

Another negative aspect stressed was the image problems associated with excessive technology use:

> "...there is still a stigma attached to nerdishness. The anti-social elements of technology, spending too much time on your Playstations, too much time on the web, or worse, a computer programmer/hacker/cracker. Ultimately, it is not mainstream. It might be dangerous outside chic but not mainstream. Think of the cool role models. They are still music stars, sports stars that are not going to be associated with 'pale faced in your bedroom'"
> *Partner, Media planning agency*

One practitioner rationalised that young people were more aware of the downsides of new media because they had spent so much time using them. This was a rare case of a practitioner locating media experiences within the broader context of daily lives.

3. Considerations when creating communications

When conversations turned to how practitioners go about communicating with young people, three relevant themes emerged: the need for constant change, building trust and responsibilities.

3.1 Constant change

Practitioners confirmed the necessity to constantly adapt their efforts to reflect the changing trends evident amongst young people. There was recognition of the rapid, peer enhanced nature of consumption behaviour. Young people "wholeheartedly embracing something, even slavishly, if that is what the peer group requires". That total dedication was in turn seen as indicative of young people's intense but short lived interest in brands. The dangers apparent in this (according to one media planner) were that brands could be transformed from 'everything to nothing' in a very short period of time. The declining fortune of Tommy Hilfiger, one of the coolest brands in the UK according to Knobil (2002), was offered as testament to the fickleness of fashion and youth brands.

For one new media director however, this idea of transient popularity compromised any notion of trying to build up a relationship with young people:

> "There are so many things that are yesterday's news, you know, quite literally the day after. It's difficult for them to build up relationships with brands. Because they have to have the right kind of trainers, it does not necessarily follow that they have to be involved. They could have worn Nike all their lives until David Beckham suddenly pops up. They are not slaves to the brand in the way they are sometimes portrayed"
> *Director of Planning, Creative new media agency*

This poses an interesting dilemma for practitioners: is it worthwhile investing to build up relationships with such fickle consumers? Many of the newer media channels such as e-mail and direct marketing are based on the premise that relationships should be built up. Arguably however (if this practitioner is to be believed), it would be better to concentrate on transactional activity, maximising each possible contact rather than attempting to construct unrealistic ongoing dialogues. The key according to a second

planner is to retain core communication elements but to overlay them with a moving feast of tactics:

> "Just stick to your principles but keep updating how you translate, re-invent... what's a brand got to do to stay relevant. Don't just stick in one place. Your audience will go 'great' and move on. Do a George Michael and follow your audience"
>
> *Media Strategist, Media planning & buying agency*

These transitional aspects of youth culture are reflected in some of the tactics advocated by practitioners to reach their 'elusive' targets. Guerrilla marketing, stunt marketing and viral marketing were all seen as trying to establish contact in more innovative ways. Some practitioners hoped that offering more interactive elements would encourage a more embracing response:

> "What's more, if you do then start to build in elements of your marketing communications that people can pick up from the web, and start to take control of by themselves, then you are providing them with the materials to disseminate their word of mouth"
>
> *Partner, Media planning agency*

This idea is akin to Peter's (1998) notion of increased empowerment of consumers through new media. It can be interpreted as allowing consumers the freedom to take over commercial messages and add their own personal meaning and interpretation (which may be negative). Rapid communication through electronic word of mouth may however only quicken the speed at which brands rise and then fall from prominence, and may be symptomatic of a loosening of marketers' control over their brands' destinies. One conclusion implied is that gaining widespread penetration is more important than keeping individuals loyal.

3.2 Building trust

Trust was raised in terms of media used and content provided. For practitioners viewing young people as sophisticated consumers, branded content needed to be "transparent and honest". Anything other than this risked "being found out":

> "Transparency is critical. Working harder to stay two steps ahead of youth, as they're more than marketing savvy. This means a constant dialogue and admitting when you're getting it wrong"
>
> *Planner, Youth creative advertising agency*

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This quotation is in keeping with Hall's (2000:16) view that young people can now "see through the irony and self reverence of 90s marketing". He also suggested that this was a reaction against the post-modern complexities of contemporary communications. One media strategist echoed this desire for a return to uncluttered, uncomplicated and honest communications:

> "…if you make it unnecessarily complicated, a lot of London agencies like M. do incredibly clever work that really works for an urban 'ubertrendy' market. People of this age group get it but just don't care. They (ubertrendies) go 'stop, just tell me what you want, make me laugh, tell me what you are after, what you are selling and piss off'. They're like 'can't be bothered, park it' "
>
> *Media Strategist, Media planning & buying agency*

There is arguably a contradiction in trying to offer such trust-building transparency yet always needing to stay two steps ahead. Constant dialogue in this context meant both listening to young people, and then re-interpreting their needs in a way that could be interpreted as fresh and different. This may however re-inforce rather than alleviate youth scepticism. For one youth marketing practitioner, the only way forward was to let the consumer decide:

> "We do not dress up messages – people want to be informed. Especially when it comes to mobile phones and technology. People want to know what services there are. Don't dress them up … it's a balancing act of sales message with…something they are genuinely into"
>
> *Managing Director, Youth marketing agency*

It is difficult to judge how commonplace such consumer –friendly tactics are. The agency in question made a point of emphasising their strong moral philosophy which in turn, resulted in producing campaigns only when they believed consumers' interests were at heart. Interestingly, it was still the agency's decision as to what was, and what was not in the consumers' interests.

3.3 Responsibilities

The final practitioner consideration concerned the moral and ethical standards used to guide their efforts. Advertising ethics in particular has become a sensitive topic that practitioners are only too aware of (see Arens 2002: 64-65, Hanson 2000). In the

context of younger children, one practitioner viewed ethics from a behaviouralist perspective:

"I think people have to take a very responsible line because kids will vote with their feet. If you do anything that in any way upsets the pleasure of what they are doing, then you are going to be over-ruled. Every kids marketer has to act incredibly responsibly these days. Parents also have an incredibly important role with that and we will not do anything that will alienate them"

Head of Planning, Youth marketing agency

This raises the importance of concerns over media intrusion and personal annoyance. It also returns to issues of whether young people are controlling, active discriminators of marketing discourse or innocent victims as depicted by Nava and Nava (1990).

For one practitioner, the knock-on effects for consumption guided his actions:

"15 year olds will have complete belief that 'that is the way it is'. So you have some responsibility to guide. And that's the responsibility that brands have but few use. They become definers. …the latest jeans do define and separate you. And that's treated too lightly by people. You build up this image and this look and reputation. Avoiraz is the coolest jacket at present. It's got to be had, by hook or by crook. We have become increasingly sophisticated in our ability to convince young people. Where is the line to be drawn? Someone has to say 'that isn't responsible any more' "

Managing Director, Youth marketing agency

Some practitioners therefore did not perceive young people as 'competent consumers', capable of withstanding the powerful intervention of youth marketers. It suggests they had concerns over their actions and recognised their responsibilities. This was a view not always voiced by others.

4. 'Stances' when targeting a youth audience

This section pulls together many of the considerations identified so far and outlines a conceptualisation of practitioners' stances when targeting a youth audience. These are referred to as 'stances' as they suggest a position taken by practitioners, building on assumptions of youth attitudes, media literacy and relationships with brands. Four main stances have been abstracted from the interview texts. Since practitioners often talk from the point of view of 'the brand', the conceptualisation adopts this literary

style. 'Brand as beacon', 'brand as weaver', 'brand as host' and 'brand as co-creator' are discussed in turn.

4.1 'Brand as beacon'

> "It's about the brand providing credibility, assurance and acceptability....so from a brand point of view, it is very important to have a clear point of view, guidance. It's almost like 'what would Nike do if it was a person... it allows individuals to take on board personality from the brand, from how they perceive it"
> *Media Strategist, Media planning & buying agency*

In the first stance, the brand is seen to resemble a 'set of clothes', a persona that young people can adopt and display. The brand is concerned with ensuring that it sends out the right signals for adoption amongst young people and their peers.

The words "clear point of view" signal that the brand sets out to be a point of reference, deliberately offering direction, almost a route-map for young consumers to follow. One practitioner described how his brand should tell young people to be "proud to be regional so f..k Coke, we're British". Through his desired brand positioning, the practitioner is seen to be offering an uncompromising path to follow.

It was noticeable that certain brands were thought to have the "right" to lead, not earned by others:

> "Where Nike get it right, their way of touching consumers, to be part of their lives, is to put on events where you can come along and meet Cantona and so on... be part of the brand that way.. I think some brands have got more of a right to do stuff like that, lead consumers"
> *Researcher, Media planning & buying agency*

Because of their perceived influence, leading brands are therefore seen to be in a more privileged position to shape the attitudes and views of young people. SuperBrands (Knobil 2002: forward) define 'cool' brands such as Apple and Diesel as "extremely desirable amongst style leaders and influencers". More mainstream brands with a historic legacy are seen as having a privileged position which they exploit to influence fashion followers. In the case of Nike, such a position arguably allows the brand to overcome negative imagery and actively influence young people. Newall and Steele

(2002) attributed this to the fact that ethical issues still remain low in young people's priorities.

One advertising planner offered a definitive version of a 'brand as beacon'. In his mind, the remit of the brand is not merely to reflect back the lifestyles and attitudes of young people but to focus on what the brand has to offer the audience. In this sense, the brand is showing the way, helping to define and shape what young people should (rather than might) be interested in consuming:

> "The start point is not necessarily the audience. The start point is the brand and the reason why that audience buys that brand. One of the problems with a lot of teenage marketing is that clients gets focused on the audience and what they try to do is not start with the brand"   *Planning Director, Creative advertising agency*

This idea of brands helping young people navigate through their lifestyles is consistent with the ideas of Morgan (1999). Morgan argued that brands (seeking to challenge for market dominance) should adopt a 'lighthouse identity', projecting an intense vision of what they are all about, guiding and informing interested consumers. From a more culturally informed perspective, Ritson and Elliott (1995) described advertising as helping to shape consumers' existences.

4.2 'Brand as weaver'

One Amsterdam-based planning director provided the basis for identification of the second practitioner stance:

> "… a lot of the ways in which brands are weaved into the fabric of our lives are much more subtle than they used to be. It always used to be just a commercial break and it was obvious. If you look at something like Minority Report, the way that brands are weaved into the action…"   *Planning Director, creative advertising agency*

This stance adopts a much more intertextual approach to brands and marketing, a postmodern concept suggesting an interdependence between different types of texts such as films, writing and advertising (O'Donohoe 1997). The Director was of the belief that brands increasingly try to blend in with their surrounding cultural environment, weaving a subtle path, blurring the boundaries between the commercial and the noncommercial. The brand is assumed to operate on a more subtle, even subconscious

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level. It was described as seeping into young people's consciousness, a tacit acknowledgement of the arguments of Klein (2001). This kind of thinking acknowledges the continued existence of the 'cynical consumer', reached by practitioners only when their guard is down (Bond and Kirshenbaum 1998).

The stance can also be applied to new and traditional media consumption. One practitioner used the menacing descriptor "stealth marketing" firstly highlighted by Holt (2002). In his case, an electronic game was produced for a government agency to emphasise safety around the home. Rather than using the more obvious images (which were believed to be ignored by young people) and a more obvious traditional media option, an interactive game was developed to encourage young, underprivileged consumers to make the right safety choices. The planner involved explained that over time, he hoped intended messages would act on a more "subliminal level" to influence recipients.

A final example involves the more traditional channel of magazines, and specifically 'branded content'. The use of 'branded content' reflects a move away from 'advertorials', seen by practitioners as too obvious to savvy adolescent readers. As the media planner explained, 'branded content' looks to carefully weave their product into magazine content through a sophisticated version of consumer involvement:

> "...Sugar or Sneak magazine or whatever...it's not just a page that says advertising content at the top. Actually, you are Nokia and you are providing a free bunch of special edition mobile phones from a photo shoot where there is no explicit 'this is brought to you by Nokia'. You are dealing with an audience who will pick up a trend faster than anyone else, and drop faster than anyone else"
> *Partner, Media planning agency*

The example draws on earlier themes of audience sophistication and the need for constant change, but concludes that the best way forward is through manipulation rather than openness. Two issues emerge from this line of thought. First, is consumer sophistication keeping up with the increasingly complex commercial strategies being adopted to get 'under the radar' or is their level of comprehension over-estimated (as suggested earlier)? Secondly, do youth consumers still want to engage with such tactics or will they remain either sceptical or disinterested? O'Donohoe and Tynan (1998) suggested that young people were ambivalent because of their advertising

literacy. At what point does ambivalence turn into outright disillusionment and then rejection?

4.3 'Brand as host'

A third practitioner stance advocated the need to provide the right kind of forum for positive consumer appraisal. In this sense, the brand can be interpreted as taking a more passive position, encouraging consumer interest but never forcing it. In practitioners' eyes, this implied a less intrusive approach, encouraging dialogue with young consumers:

> "You can do stuff that surprises them, uses media in a new way. Try to find moments when they are going to be receptive... H. for example, we are thinking of sponsoring one of the big tents at the Big Chill festival .... H. is all about gardens, moments when you feel relaxed and enjoying your drink rather than ten pints and a club.. so it seemed like a good fit and so finding that brand in that environment ...it might feel surprising but never intrusive"
>
> *Planning Director, Creative advertising agency*

From the quotation above, the brand appears to take a more latent position, allowing consumers to discover and then experience as they come into contact. This stance builds on notions of experiential marketing discussed earlier. For this particular practitioner, experiential marketing gives consumers the time and space to form their own judgements, in an unpressurised environment. It also stresses the importance of time: communicating with them when they are in the right frame of mind, with their 'cynical' guard down. It assumes they are constantly on their guard and recognises that success can only be obtained when consumers' 'mental barriers' are down and they are more open to persuasion.

Another revealing word in the quotation is the idea of a 'moment'. Experiences were thought to be transitory and consumers' resultant identities "ever changing, ambiguous and unpredictable" (see Valentine and Gordon 2000). Brand strategies are therefore designed to create 'moments of experience', short-lived but intense in nature.

The idea of 'brand as host' poses some interesting questions for practitioners targeting young people. If young people are looking for a stream of fragmented experiences, to

what extent can practitioners rely on brand loyalty and repeat custom? The concept of the brand as a relationship (see de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley 1998: 423) is based on notions of developing strong bonds through repeat usage over time.

4.4 'Brand as co-creator'

"…it's very tricky… they take on what they think the brand is …the brand is frankly owned by them. It's how they perceive it ought to be. If Nike is assertive or cool, they take on part of that by spending on a pair of trainers. I bought that and so that means I am this"   *Media Strategist, Media planning & buying agency*

The final stance assumes that consumers take on more active, possessive roles in the marketing exchange. This is keeping with the concept of 'consumer as producer' (Firat *et al.* 1995: 52) in which consumption becomes a "productive process, goal orientated and purposeful". In this stance, the consumer is perceived to be highly active, a fully-fledged partner in the creation of marketed brands.

It postulates that brands are predominately mental associations in the minds of consumers and it is the individual who defines what brands stand for. De Chernatory and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998) suggested that brands are the result of a continuous process, finally redefined by consumers. The practitioner stance identified here goes one stage further, envisaging situations in which the consumer actually takes control and hence mental ownership of that brand. In doing so, the consumer not only re-defines the brand but helps create it in the first place. More 'enlightened' practitioners also envisaged scenarios which took the process beyond mere mental abstractions and towards the creation of physical entities. Such scenarios involved the tailoring of individuals' desires, offering personally customised products and services such as those offered by Levi's and Sony. In such examples, it is the consumer who is thought to be co-creating, with mental if not financial ownership of that brand. However, the final say on brand creation was always deemed to be the preserve of the practitioner.

Examples of increased consumer control were most readily drawn from digital marketing environments. Because of the increased ease of interactivity, consumers can control not only the contact but also increasingly the content that brand owners offer (Peters 1998). A new media practitioner offered one such example:

"It's for MTVHits 7-12 year old girls. We presented this virtual character to the channel manager. Using the TV channel, having the audience define the personality, look and feel of the character, we would continually bring in new characters to reflect what young girls wanted. So it is the audience who basically define the presentation. They define the content as well, through sms voting."

Director of Planning, Creative new media agency

Such examples were said to be the result of consumers' increased desire to be treated as individuals but also to be more involved and even creative in the brand creation process. This of course relies on the assumption that consumers want to engage and become involved.

5. Implications for new media communications

5.1 The relevance of new media

There is little doubt that practitioners saw new media as a source of much potential:

"...I personally believe that new technologies are the way forward with that particular age group. Be it sms or e-mail. Because every single teenager has a mobile and they are inseparable from it...it's very powerful"

Creative Director, Creative media neutral agency

The increasing levels of access to the internet and personal ownership of mobile phones in particular were seen to offer significant opportunities for practitioners. They were very aware in particular of how important mobile phones were to adolescent lifestyles. It was also evident that practitioners were conscious of certain barriers, preventing the establishment of more idealised relationships. The consensus was that new media should only be considered if it was right for the overall communications idea. Using new media to target young people simply because of rising usage levels was scorned, even by new media planners.

Instead, most practitioners advocated a more integrated approach, consistent with the theory of integrated marketing communications (Schultz *et al.* 1992). One quotation from a creative planner summed up the benefits of integration:

"Often as not, you end up doing something that works across a variety of media. It's richer to do it that way. Online, as a poster, as a mailshot say, works better than three posters in the same way as steak, peas and chips work better than three steaks"

Planning Director, Creative advertising agency

Different media were seen to play different roles in the overall integrated campaign. In the example that follows, the website acted as the information source, the text messaging service as the viral element spreading the word and other mobile phones as the recipient. It was also likely that sponsorship raised initial levels of awareness of the event:

"With T., one of the ways we tried to address the needs of youth groups was to integrate sms as the communication channel so if you go to their site, you can find the gig happening in Dundee tonight and then text your buddy through the website for free as long as you register. You provide all the information, your list of mates and their mobile phones and they will text you with details about the gig. We got 300-400 hits a day"
Managing Director, Creative new media agency

This particular quotation also raises issues of the exchange of personal details in return for 'useful' information. The integration of two digital channels, mobile phones and internet, was described by one new media practitioner as creating a more holistic experience for young people, enhancing their gaming experience:

"One of the things that we are doing at present is a piece of networking where kids with mobile phones, because of location services, you can create a universe of characters. Its almost like Top Trumps. They can be fighting over bluetooth or instant messenger with kids in the playground or with kids in other playgrounds or out of the country. Engaging in combat...That's all come up with using mobile as a device, as radar if you like, for knowing 'who's in your area' "
Director of Planning, Creative new media agency

In this case, the characters were developed on the internet and then transferred to personal mobiles, ready for combat. Such scenarios assume that young people want to engage with such tactics and are of sufficient media sophistication to adopt them. Such tactics may however also cause unintended consequences, particularly for those not able to access such services. The danger is that peer pressure creates a new range of desirable 'must have' brands, thereby creating new forms of the digital divide beyond those highlighted by Holloway and Valentine (2003).

The widening access to the internet made it a less novel media option, sometimes just another channel to choose from. This more downbeat assessment is in sharp contrast to the excitement and evangelistic fervour of academics such as Hoffman *et al.* (1995) and Peters (1998).

> "As internet grows towards 90% in the west, it becomes more of a non-issue. Then it becomes part of the world surrounding young people, something they have never been without"   *Planning Director, Creative advertising agency*

There was also recognition from all perspectives that traditional media (television and radio in particular) still play important roles. For example, new media options were thought unable to produce the emotional qualities of TV advertising. One planning director remembers how a number of successful youth brands used TV as their 'emotional powerhouse':

> "I think TV advertising is very status driven. The Tango Orangeman showed what could be achieved when you create a strong identity and manage your advertising. I do think that Nike and people like that do have a lot of kudos with teenagers because they have such high profile, spectacular TV presence. I do believe great TV advertising which wins over their affections, is something that can work very very successfully for brands"
> *Planning Director, Creative advertising agency*

In this practitioner's mind, TV in general and TV advertising specifically still play powerful roles in the lives of adolescents, an observation backed up by research into their time use and lifestyles (Svennevig 2000:655). The practitioner went on to pose an interesting question which goes to the root of the reported failings of new media advertising to date (Hargrave 2003); do teenagers have anything like the affection for their favourite TV commercial when it comes to a text or internet banner? There was also a feeling amongst the more creatively-driven practitioners that the race to use new media represents a form of desperation to cut through the media clutter.

Even the most ardent TV evangelists recognised that trends such as competition for time, increased leisure choice and media clutter signalled a reduction in dominance of if not the demise of TV. The (almost resigned) conclusion was that "television doesn't have the grip it used to have". It is arguable (in light of some of the earlier comments) whether the distinction between traditional and new media is a useful one. All forms

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of media have now become part of the normal lives of young people (Buckingham 2000). Perhaps what should be more important from a practitioner perspective is what contextual role each of the media plays in the lives of young people, so that efforts to integrate are seen as credible.

5.2 Consequences for youth relationships with new media

Although there may be significant benefits to practitioners from new media opportunities, there was also unified recognition that new media produce negative consequences for their youth targets. Two such consequences generated the most discussion: intrusion and exploitation.

5.2.1 Intrusion

Two examples offer an insight into sensitivity towards marketing intrusion. First, one head of planning related intrusion to mobile phone use:

> "...the core problem is the intrusion that goes with it. It's an incredible medium but it's a medium that is very personal to them. So therefore any brand incursion, any commercial intrusion, is largely resisted by adults, kids, whatever. ....then it's a form of social currency, it's a dialogue with friends. It's in their control, and therefore unsolicited text messages from whoever really bug them... this can start to affect big brands in a bad way"   *Head of Planning, Youth marketing agency*

A second practitioner felt that she could empathise with the feelings of adolescents when faced by mounting e-mail spam, of variable quality:

> "I think some of it makes them feel used. And I think it is definitely a turn-off for them as much as it is for us older people. It is a worry"
> *Researcher, Media planning & buying agency*

With mobile phones (and the internet to a lesser extent), there was recognition amongst more 'consumer-empathetic' practitioners that control over the medium rests with the recipient, not the messenger. Practitioners have come to realise that because of the 'peer –to-peer' status of mobile phones, commercial intervention is often not wanted. As one practitioner candidly stated:

"It's like me having a conversation and some brand owner coming along and saying 'Buy Stella' – f..k off – I don't see how you can intervene in a sort of intimate medium ... I just despise these people and teenagers are no different"

Planning Director, Creative advertising agency

Some practitioners were highly cynical about what they saw as the unprofessional and naïve practices of others in their business, who use channels such as mobile phones without more sensitive thought:

"It's just another case of marketers getting excited about 'here's another channel that we can push messages down' – consumers will resist irrespective of age. That is not what the channel is for – it is for either if people want to phone or for others to communicate using video messaging, sms messaging. Sponsorship, embedded advertising, sponsorship content, I don't think they have a problem with them. They actually expect that"

Director of Planning, Creative new media agency

The quotation does suggest a tiering of acceptable new media intrusion. It is not clear what the criteria might be for demarcating between acceptability and unacceptability. Unwanted sms messages were clearly not welcome in the eyes of this new media practitioner but more subtle forms of communication such as embedded content were. What is interesting about this comment is that such subtle tactics (a la *'brand as weaver'* or *'brand as host'*) may have more chance of getting "under the radar" (Bond and Kirshenbaum 1998) and influencing the receiver. It is arguably in practitioners' interests for more sophisticated and subtle techniques to have the desired effect. Another separation suggested was between the negative "intrusive" tactics and more consumer- friendly "surprising" tactics. The distinction (in this case for guerrilla and viral communications) can be interpreted as tactics expected to be welcomed by the recipient, even if not fully anticipated. Street stunts and viral e-mails were such examples. The difficulty however might come if such activities target a mass audience, within which there is a spectrum of viewpoints on what constitutes intrusion.

A few practitioners thought that certain kinds of media were perceived by young people as appropriate (for commercial advertised content) whilst others weren't. Young people were thought to be used to, and so more accepting of, adverts on TV, billboards and so on. For more interactive media such as mobile phones however, that expectation of commercial content was not thought to exist. For this minority, commercial content did not always have 'the right' to co-exist alongside personal

communication and therefore could be construed as unwarranted intrusion. If such intrusion grows, the danger for practitioners is that it causes friction with other media contact such as 'peer-to-peer' communication.

Location-based texting provided a final example of practitioner sensitivities to new media intrusion, even if the message was relevant:

> "The whole sort of location based thing, the thing marketers get excited about. Kids walking past a shop and they get a promotional offer and all the rest. It's not going to happen. Instead, it's really going to piss people off. You get beep, beep, beep just because you walk past a shop. Imagine what it's going to be like walking down your high street. Your whole memory fills up with promotional messages, then there are the video ones, taking up memory"
> *Director of Planning, Creative new media agency*

Again, note the link to the practitioners' own personal experiences. If it is perceived as being intrusive to them, then it certainly will be for the public at large.

5.2.2 Exploitation

Amongst some (but not all) practitioners, there was recognition of some of the fears and dangers that new media practices present to young people. In following example, the practitioner believed that young people are indeed questioning what practitioners do with the information collected through new media practices:

> "They are more than aware that anything they say or do online is running through a server somewhere. That somebody is aware of what is going on. They know all about the fact that their messages are contained in strings. The fact that the brand they are communicating with is gathering information hand over fist. They are not clear as to whether that information is being attributed to them as individuals. They get really nervous about that, quite cynical really"
> *Director of Planning, Creative new media agency*

For this practitioner, young people are only too aware that mobile phone networks process personal information, although there is little in the literature to confirm this degree of media sophistication amongst youth audiences. Some of the practitioners were also cognisant of the fears and concerns of young people towards their parents, in a similar vein to the findings of Grant and Waite (2003):

"They absolutely feel that on the internet, they are being watched. So privacy is a big issue for them, not just being watched on the internet but by their parents. So they are aware that their mums and dads will at the very least be checking their history folder and at worst, possibly have installed something that doesn't put that information in the history folder. The suspicion is definitely there"

Director of Planning, Creative new media agency

Practitioners believed that technological expertise of young people meant they knew what to look out for and acted accordingly. Another consequence of this 'big brother' syndrome was a perception that young people are only willing to communicate with certain kinds of brands online. Although the internet may seem like the natural place for adolescent females to discuss sensitive issues such as pregnancy for example, the fear of confidentiality being broken was said to be uppermost in their minds. Another practitioner with healthcare experience cited the example of a Merck 'peer-to-peer' chatroom as a good example of a confidential place for discussion. For another youth researcher, fears of privacy infringement were only symptomatic of the contradictions that technology represents for young people:

"Everybody over the age of ten can access a sense of two things. One aspect is that technology can be wonderful, exciting, so much more. But the flipside of this is that it has speeded up life, life is more tense, more difficult, more dangerous, they have more information on us....they are starting to have more of a sense of insecurity nowadays"

Associate Director, Youth research agency

The findings suggest that practitioners do believe many young people to be aware of the dangers of online exploitation. For one youth marketing director however, young people were not sufficiently interested to engage with such privacy infringement issues. As in earlier discussions about advertising, he believed that:

"The young rarely bother about such things. They just press the delete button"

Director, Youth marketing agency

5.3 Overcoming negative consequences

In response to the concerns over intrusion, one solution offered was to shift from 'brand as beacon' to 'brand as host' or even 'brand as co-creator'. This recognised that with all permission-based marketing, the goals of the user are most important:

"Because it is opt-in, self-selecting, user in the driving seat. You can't force it. You can't say 'I'm going to buy 400 ratings and they will not see any competitive messages because I know for a fact I have bought these slots in this break'. There is no guarantee of that. Even using the internet with rich media and eye blasters which can pop up on your screen. That's not the same as running TV commercials in certain slots because we don't go to the web to watch things passively. You do things on the web, not lay back and let things come over you"

Partner, Media planning agency

Another media-orientated practitioner argued that new media should be seen in a different light as a consequence. He advocated that the digital revolution did indeed imply a "paradigm shift in marketing" because of the more active user role, as argued by Hoffman and Novak (1996b). The fact that it is a 'peer-to-peer' medium, disseminating information quickly on a world-wide basis, was used to substantiate the argument. This is in sharp contrast to earlier comments about new media as 'just another media channel'.

There was also a collective perception that practitioners who rely exclusively on traditional models of communication to establish contact with young people are causing some of the intrusion. In the words of one new media planner:

"It's like people trying to use the internet as a broadcast medium, rather than a communication medium. Instead of saying 'open up and come in if you want to', it's more of 'here we are, take notice'. Very intrusive if you are dialling on a 56k modem and some rich media is downloading. You would be pretty fcuked off'

Director of Planning, Creative new media agency

Allowing the consumer greater control over the communication process, in line with the stance that brands are increasingly owned by consumers, presents both opportunities and problems for practitioners. By allowing greater control, they hope that a more honest, open and transparent dialogue can be achieved. In turn, much of the mistrust can be reduced and a mutually-beneficial relationship may ensue. They will also be hoping that more immediate communication will help them to more efficiently satisfy the constantly- changing needs that typify youth culture.

6. Conclusions

The practitioners in this study were far from the homogenous body of experts as depicted in the literature. They held a diverse range of viewpoints on the means and methods for targeting young people.

Most adopted what academics refer to as a post-modern perspective, subscribing to the view that understanding youth culture involved getting to grips with a fragmented and dynamic marketplace, full of contradictory experiences. This was believed to be consistent with a rapidly maturing generation, for whom new media consumption was a fact of life.

One indication of their lack of uniformity came from how brands were thought to influence lifestyles. Young people were either seen as naïve victims, sophisticated agents or symbiotic partners in their consumption of 'brands'. In turn, practitioners had differing viewpoints on levels of youth media literacy and willingness to engage with marketing communications. Most young people were thought to be cognisant of commercial practices, but with varying degrees of sophistication. A minority advocated that the 'gospel' of advertising sophistication had been taken too far, overcomplicating communication and losing young people in its wake. There was also considerable debate on whether young people were willing to engage with much of contemporary communication. More optimistic practitioners believed that young people were happy to embrace most of their efforts, fully conscious of their aims and intentions. However, the idea that young people continue to be cynical rejecters, ambivalent or simply disinterested struck a cord with the less optimistic.

As a consequence, practitioners adopted one of a range of stances, a function of their implicit assumptions on youth media literacy, attitudes towards commercialism and contemporary communications. Each stance implied differing consequences for the consumers involved. 'Brand as beacon' for example assumed that all that was needed was a clear path for young people to follow. The practitioner role was therefore to shape a malleable, receptive audience. The 'Brand as weaver' acknowledged more cynical attitudes. Rather than attempt to appease this however, it sought to circumvent

and mislead through more subtle forms of communication. Finally, practitioners who recognised young people as sophisticated and potentially enthusiastic partners adopted either 'Brand as host' or 'Brand as co-creator' stances. Both stances indicated a greater willingness to engage in mutual dialogue. 'Brand as host' encouraged young people to 'experience' before committing to their branded offering. The diversity of new media channels such as customised websites, fanzines and chat rooms was seen as offering consumers greater opportunities for discussion and involvement.

The bravest tactic deployed by practitioners was to pass over aspects of the brand to the consumer. This assumed that young people were both willing and able to play a co-creative part in brand planning and executions. New media channels were again seen as the natural home for such tactics, based on the premise that consumers want to get more involved in the dialogue. This final stance implied a loss of control by the practitioner. The final two stances raise issues of whether young people are ready and willing to engage in meaningful dialogue and if so, are practitioners able to facilitate their needs? Post-modern thinking suggests that such desires are contradictory and fleeting. The questions it raises are whether young people's willingness to engage with marketing communication practices remains elusive and prospects for building lasting relationships are tenuous at best.

New media for practitioners represented a valuable addition to their armoury, encouraging ease of integration with traditional channels and specific advantages such as time- and location-dependent communication and content enhancement. However, some practitioners showed considerable awareness of the downsides of new media communication, in particular issues of intrusion and exploitation. A more trusting, mutual relationship was seen by the more enlightened as the way forward.

CHAPTER EIGHT

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEDIA ACCESS AND USE

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1. Introducing the quantitative research findings

Once the practitioner research was complete, attention turned to the consumer perspective. The next three chapters will outline findings from the quantitative research conducted in schools. This chapter will introduce the sample characteristics before analysing young people's media access and use. It outlines demographic and attitudinal influences on media use before focusing on internet use. Chapter Nine will look in more detail at time-related lifestyle patterns using diary data. Patterns of media use will also be covered, measuring media time use by media category. Chapter Ten will return to the self-completion questionnaire data, focusing on media uses and gratifications and finally barriers to internet use.

2. Describing the sample

The first stage in any exploratory data analysis is to provide insights into the characteristics of the research sample. In this case, there were effectively three sub-samples, one from each of the three school types. Where samples sizes allow, differences between schools are commented on and comparisons drawn for discriminators of age and gender.

2.1 Demographic characteristics

In advocating the use of non-random purposive sampling for interpretive research, the need to establish the representativeness of a research sample is not a pre-requisite (Black 1993). Comparison with the national population does however provide a sense of how this sample differs.

2.2 Age, gender, ethnicity and country of birth indicators

The overall sample was a balanced one in terms of gender, ethnic group and country of birth, in comparison to the national averages for Scotland (GROS 2005a based on 2001 census data). It did exhibit a marginal male bias (see Table 18) and was more ethnically diverse. The latter observation reflected the higher non-white intake into the *fee-paying* school included in the survey. By UK standards however, participants were of a white background, largely born in Scotland and therefore brought up and influenced by a very Scottish educational, cultural and social way of life. The overall sample characteristics do however mask important characteristics at school type level. In gender for example, Figure 4 illustrates that the *state rural* school sample was biased towards females in contrast to the other two schools.

As discussed earlier, participants were recruited from the senior class levels (S4-S6). There was not always a direct correlation between age of pupil and class level. As a result, 84.6% of the participants came from the dominant age groups of 14-17 but this varied by school type. Over a third of participants from the *state rural* school were under the age of 15 yet a third of participants from the *fee-paying urban* school were 16 or over. These skews were largely dictated by a combination of the consent rates and levels of teacher enthusiasm. There was no evidence to suggest that age skews were school-wide age skews, merely the consequence of the data collection process. It was decided to use three age groups for analysis purposes: under 15 (34.9%), 15 (29.1%), and finally over 15 year olds (36.1%), to help overcome small sample sizes.

Table 18: Demographic status of sample

Demographic indicator	% of sample	% of Scotland's population (2001 census)*
Gender		
Male	52.6	48.1
Female	47.4	51.9
Ethnic Group		
White: British	94.3	98.0 (incl. Other White)
White: Other	1.7	
Non white	4.0	2.0
Age		
13	6.3	not comparable
14	28.6	
15	29.1	
16	26.9	
17	8.6	
18	0.6	
Country of Birth		
Scotland	81.7	87.1
Rest of UK	16.1	9.1
Beyond UK	2.3	3.8

* http://www.gro-scotland/gov.uk

Figure 4: Key demographic indicators by gender

Gender: by school type

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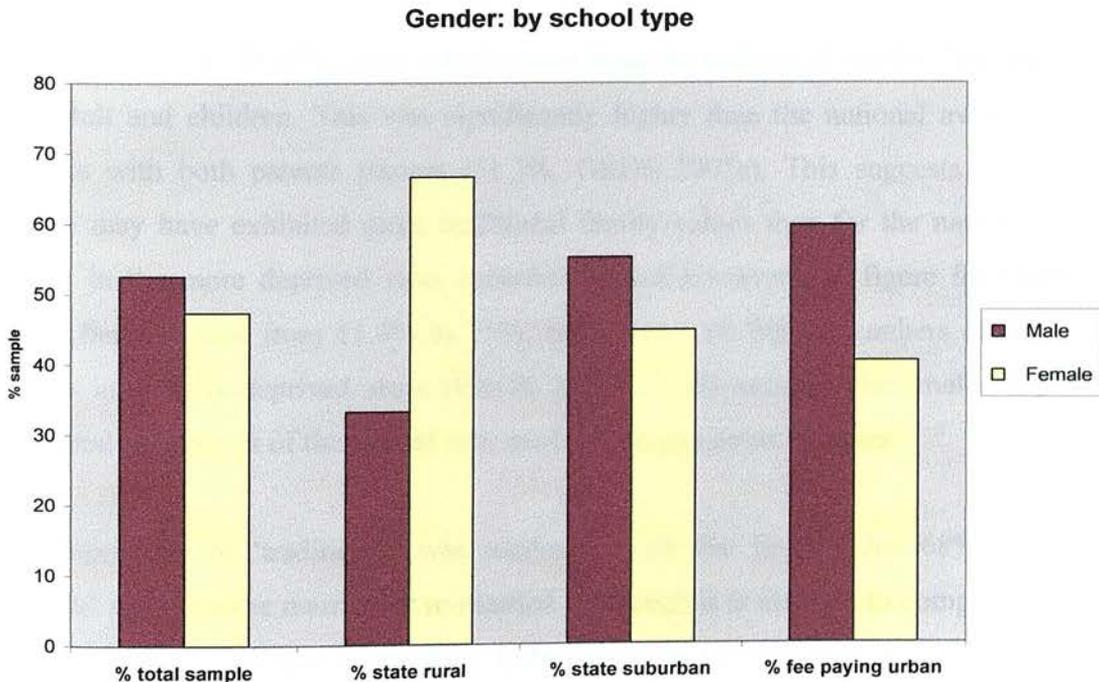
Figure 5: Key demographic indicators by school type

Age: by school type
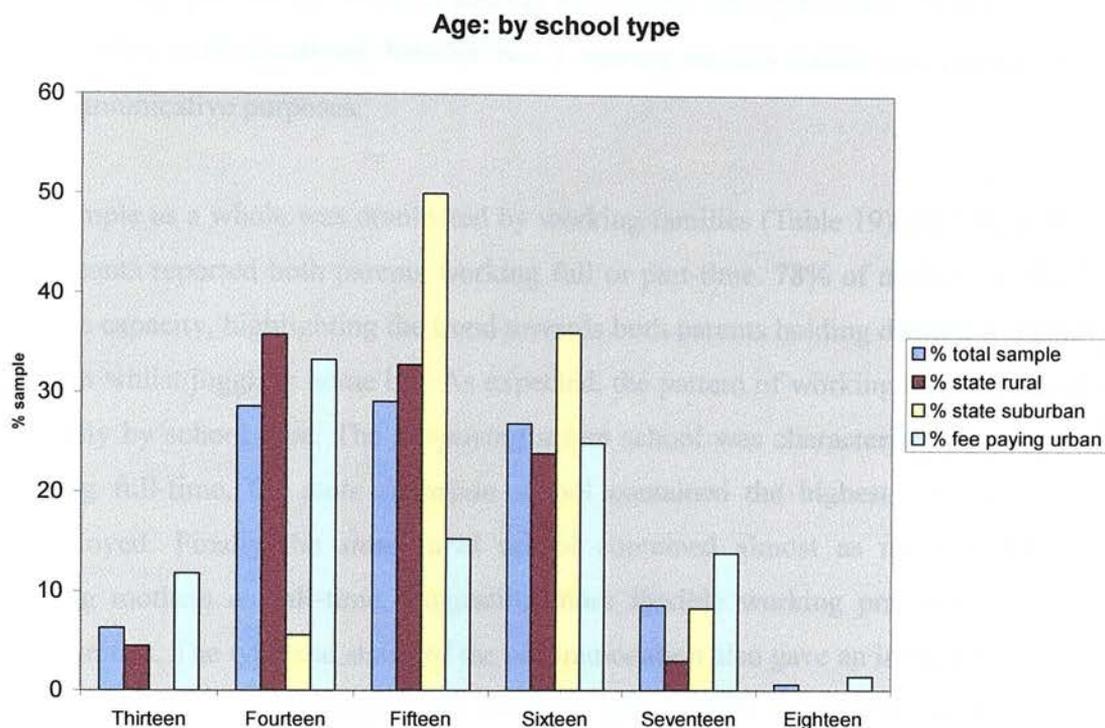
2.3 Household and family indicators

Across the sample, 71.4 % of the sample came from the traditional 'nuclear' family of two adult and children. This was significantly higher than the national average of families with both parents present (51.3%, GROS 2005a). This suggests that the sample may have exhibited more traditional family values than for the nation as a whole. In the more deprived *state suburban* school however, the figure for single parent families rose from 11.4% to 25%, consistent with higher numbers of single parents in socially-deprived areas (GROS 2005a). Unfortunately, the small sample prevented an analysis of the uses of new media in single-parent families.

The impression of 'traditional' was reinforced with the finding that 68% of the samples' parents were married or re-married. Although it is difficult to compare with national figures[1], this figure was likely to be above the national average for families. Almost a quarter of the sample was however from fragmented homes with parents

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[1] GROS does not split out single parents, with and without children

either separated or divorced. Although the literature offers little evidence of marital status significantly influencing media use (Lenhart and Rainie's 2001 study of teenage instant messenging in the US is a notable exception), one question to bear in mind was whether multi-locational families had a bearing on new media use, particularly for communicative purposes.

The sample as a whole was dominated by working families (Table 19); 78.5 % of the participants reported both parents working full or part-time. 78% of mothers worked in some capacity, highlighting the trend towards both parents holding down a working position whilst juggling home life. As expected, the pattern of working status differed markedly by school type. The *fee-paying urban* school was characterised by parents working full-time, the *state suburban* school contained the highest percentage of unemployed. Finally the *state rural* school contained almost as many part-time working mothers as full-time, suggesting more flexible working practices in rural communities. The type and status of the accommodation also gave an indication of the relative affluence of the sample. For example, almost 75% owned their own homes compared the national average of 65.8%. This figure again masked huge differences between schools; only 42.8% of households in the *state urban* school owned their own property.

Table 19: Household, marital, working, and accommodation status of sample

Demographic indicator	% of sample	% of Scotland population (2001 census)*
Adults 18+ in household		
1	11.4	21.5
2	71.4	51.3
3+	17.2	27.2
Marital status of adults		
Single (never married)	4.0	31.0
Married (first & subsequent)	68.0	50.0
Widowed	4.6	9.0
Separated (but legally married)	9.7	4.0
Divorced	12.6	7.0
Other/not sure	1.1	0.0
Working status of adults (sample 163)		
Working full time (30+ hrs)	40.5	47.7
Working part time (8-29 hrs)	38.0	13.2
Not working/unemployed	16.6	13.9
Student	1.8	3.1
Long term sick	1.8	7.5
Retired	2.0	14.6
Status of accommodation		
Owns outright	33.7	20.0
Owns with mortgage/loan	41.1	45.8
Pays part rent/part mortgage	1.1	0.5
Rents	18.9	30.8
Lives rent free	2.3	2.9
Don't know	2.3	0.0

* http://www.gro-scotland/gov.uk

2.4 Attitudinal indicators

Although the literature review offers a sense of young people's broad lifestyles, attitudes and underlying value systems, the uniqueness of this sample suggested that a psychographic understanding might aid understanding of media use.

Participants were asked for their level of agreement with thirty-nine attitudinal questions. For illustrative purposes, attitudes are categorised under four main headings: 'interests', 'tastes', 'convictions' and principles'. All 175 participants satisfactorily completed this section of the questionnaire. Two partially completed questionnaires were returned to the participants for full completion. Mean scores and standard deviations are presented in Table 20. Mean scores of *below 2.50* or *above*

3.50 are highlighted in bold. Note that sample sizes were too small for any meaningful breakdown of attitudes by gender, age or school type. Young people's levels of agreement were highly specific to each statement; the statements most strongly agreed and disagreed with cut across category level. Six main themes arose from analysis of the figures.

Firstly, the importance of music and entertainment in a convenient format was emphasised by the lowest mean score of *1.46* across all 39 statements (and hence highest level of agreement). This desire for convenience might be expected to influence young people's uses and gratifications of both traditional and new media. Secondly, a mean score of *2.03* for 'I like to stay in touch with new trends' suggested that many saw themselves as either opinion formers or in touch with opinion formers. This was most marked amongst those from the more affluent *fee-paying* school. Thirdly, a mean figure of *1.86* for 'computers and the internet are now an important part of everyday lives' illustrated their growing importance in youth lifestyles. Young people also disagreed with the statement that 'computers are anti-social and take away interaction with others'. Fourthly, the importance of close peers was highlighted by low mean scores of *2.08* for 'It's more important to have one or two close friends than many acquaintances' and *2.1* for 'It's important for me to fit in with my friends and others like me'. This re-inforces previous research highlighting the importance of peer influence and fitting in (Lashbrook 2000; Csikzentmihalyi and Larson 1984).

Fifthly, statements concerning the subjects of careers, money and personal futures offered contradictory signals. On the one hand, the low mean score of *1.53* for 'you have to work to get what you want in life' suggested young people take responsible attitudes to education and their future careers. This might reflect in the young people's devotion to their studies and career seeking. However, this was counterbalanced by an almost equally low mean score of *2.35* for 'I try to have fun as I can and let the future take care of itself'. This offers several interpretations. It could be a sign of the ever-changing priorities of youth lifestyles as they continue to develop before settling down intellectually and developmentally. It could also be interpreted as a classic indication of the post-modern phenomenon of contradictory behaviour typifying youth behaviour and attitudes, or simply a 'work-hard, play-hard' mentality. Finally, young people in this sample showed little interest in religion/faith.

One area young people appeared quite indifferent towards was advertising. Although mean scores can smooth out polarity in attitudes, the sample as a whole did not appear to reveal strong attitudes towards advertising, as enjoyable or as manipulative.

Table 20: Attitudes about interests, tastes, principles and convictions

Attitude Statement: Interests	Mean	S.D.
I enjoy having lots of music and entertainment available to me at the touch of a button	**1.46**	**0.684**
I am increasingly concerned about keeping healthy	**2.13**	**0.956**
I do not have as much time as I would like to pursue leisure activities	2.50	1.152
I'm often the first to try something new	2.53	1.024
I tend to arrange my nights out at the last minute	2.70	1.198
I feel I have plenty of money to spend on leisure	2.72	1.176
I like to spend a year or more in foreign countries	2.78	1.267
I really enjoy current advertising	2.90	0.992
In my leisure time, I am very happy to stay at home and watch TV or videos rather than go out	3.11	1.281
I like to learn about art, culture and history	3.37	1.252
I would rather make something than buy it	**3.82**	**1.067**

Attitude Statement: Taste	Mean	S.D.
I like to stay in touch with new trends	**2.03**	**1.000**
It's not how much money you spend but how you spend it that matters	**2.21**	**1.033**
I care a lot about whether my clothes are "in style"	**2.40**	**1.150**
I like outrageous people and things	2.75	1.222
I dress more fashionably than most people	2.85	1.026
I prefer to spend money on durable things that I can keep, rather than on things that give me temporary enjoyment like holidays	3.05	1.205
I buy clothes for comfort not style	3.06	1.186
I wish I were more popular. I watch the young people who are more popular and wish I was more like them	**3.70**	**1.291**

Attitude Statement: Convictions	Mean	S.D.
Computers and the internet are now an important part of everyday lives	1.86	0.970
It's more important to have one or two close friends than many acquaintances	2.08	1.061
It's important for me to "fit in" with my friends and others like me	2.10	1.049
I think I will earn more money than my parents as my career progresses	2.44	1.045
Scientific breakthroughs and new technology are our main hopes for a better life	2.59	1.091
I have more ability than most people	2.70	1.057
Advertising just manipulates your views and attitudes to products and brands	2.74	0.981
I worry about the amount of personal information that could be held on computers about me	2.79	1.143
I consider myself and intellectual	2.91	1.071
Most people who know me or just see me think I am cool	2.92	1.031
I find advertising highly intrusive	3.06	0.989
I believe most of what I read, watch or listen to	3.12	0.975
The more money you spend, the more fun you have	3.13	1.258
Computers are anti social and take away interaction with other people	3.68	1.271

Attitude Statement: Principles	Mean	S.D.
You have to work to get what you want in life	1.53	0.801
I try to have as much fun as I can and let the future take care of itself	2.06	1.071
It's important to get involved in things that help make the world better, even it it's not important to others my age	2.35	0.873
It's important to avoid buying things that will harm the environment	2.75	1.125
Success in life means making a lot of money	2.79	1.274
My religion/faith is one of the most important aspects of my life	4.05	1.234

3. Media access and use

3.1 Household access

Participants were asked to select the range of media types they had access to, within their household and own bedrooms. Unsurprisingly, popular media options such as television, video and now mobile phones were almost universally accessed in family households. Mobile phones were available to 90.9% of young people illustrating their

rampant popularity.

Cable and satellite access levels were more complex to understand as they were linked to levels of supply in each geographic area. In the *state rural* school for example, cable was not yet available to most households and so satellite access was significantly higher (17.9% vs. 55.2%). The reverse was the case for the *state urban* school with easy access to cable, where satellite was less popular (52.8% vs. 33.3%). It was clear from this example that factors of supply as well as demand factors influenced certain categories of media access and use. Some of the screen based 'add-ons' such as DVDs were also widely accessible to young people, highlighting the increasing breadth of media choices now open to them and the speed at which new media technologies are diffused. This is consistent with the 'deepening of in-home entertainment' (The Henley Centre 1999).

Gaining domestic access to the internet appears unproblematic for young people based on these figures: 83.4 % of households had internet access (although a single internet connection may have meant a shared family medium). This was higher than the Youth TGI figures of 75% of 11-14 years and 76% of 15-19 years for autumn 2003 (BMRB 2004). This may again reflect the relatively affluent nature of the sample. Issues of internet access are more complex than mere access figures suggest, as later chapters will reveal.

3.2 Bedroom access to media

The deepening of 'in home' entertainment extended to young people's bedrooms. Bedrooms contained far more than the 'portable television in the corner' defining previous generations (Livingstone 1990). Over two-thirds of this sample had access to some form of television in their bedrooms, almost 10% had Sky satellite and 7% cable access. This widening of access to broadcast media beyond terrestrial channels may ensure that overall screen time watched by young people does not dramatically decline, as was once anticipated. The figures also highlighted the growing dispersal of screen 'add-ons' such as VHS and now DVD players into the bedroom.

Other media choices had a more marked demographic bias, such as the popularity of

games consoles amongst younger boys.

Figure 6: Levels of media access within household and participants' bedrooms

Media access: household and personal bedroom
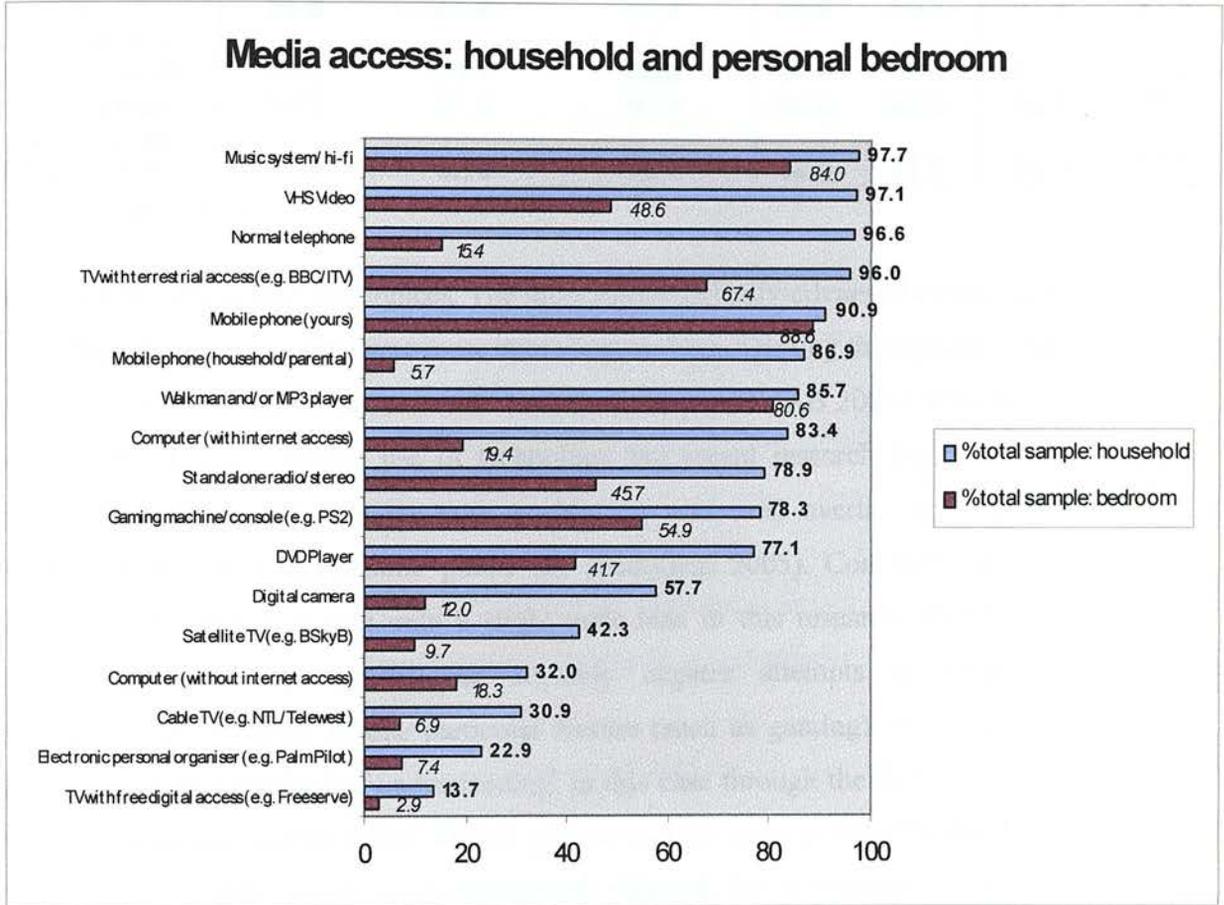
The internet however remained a minority bedroom activity with fewer than 20% of the sample having direct access through computers. It is anticipated that this figure will rise and mirror those for more commonplace, traditional media in the bedroom. One factor that may encourage this trend is the cross-over use of the internet for education and entertainment.

3.3 Media access by school type, gender and age

Analysing media access at the 'macro' level masked a number of patterns within the sample. A selection of media types with data skews is presented in Table 21. Several factors could explain these.

Table 21: Media access by school type, gender and age

Media type	% state rural	% state - suburban	% fee-paying - urban	% male	% female	% 13-14	% 16-18
DVD Player	68.7	91.7	77.8	83.7	69.9	98.4	71.4
Computer (internet access)	91.0	41.7	97.2	85.9	80.7	93.4	87.3
Games console	71.6	86.1	80.6	87.0	68.7	82.0	76.2
Mobile phones (participants' own)	80.6	97.2	97.2	88.0	94.0	95.1	88.9
Digital camera	44.8	52.8	72.2	62.0	53.0	59.0	57.1

Sample: 175 participants

Firstly, there were gender differences. The most technologically-advanced media such as DVDs and digital cameras were more appealing for boys. Gaming through consoles such as Playstation2 had a marked male bias, for example (BMRB 2004). Boys have traditionally favoured greater use of technology but recent research from the US suggests that adolescent girls are now catching up and even overtaking boys for digital camera, DVD and mobile phone use (Schofield 2005). Computer internet access on the other hand had only a slight male bias in this research. The multi-dimensional nature of internet use arguably negates attempts at simplistic explanations on the basis of one particular feature (such as gaming). It demands a more sophisticated method of understanding, in this case through the factor analysis of internet uses and gratifications. Mobile phones had the most marked female bias. The reasons for this remain under-researched although the popularity of internet amongst females for intra-personal communication offers a parallel (Maltby *et al* 2002).

Secondly, the figures suggest that stated access to certain media choices decreased amongst older adolescents. Stated access to DVD's, computers with internet access and even mobile phones showed a slight reduction from 13/14 to 16/18 year olds. One explanation may be that adolescents from more affluent backgrounds have negotiated access to the more desirable gadgets (especially mobile phones) at a younger age. The relatively high access figures for the younger participants at the *fee-paying* school would seem to bear this out. A second possible explanation comes from the diary and qualitative research phases. Both indicate that less time spent at home and more time spent out with friends socialising lessens the reliance on home media for entertainment purposes. Analysis of media frequency data showed that the frequency

of watching TV dropped substantially between the youngest and oldest age groups. Finally, there may also have been a sibling effect, of not wanting to be associated with media heavily used by younger brothers or sisters such as gaming and internet use.

The differences between school types also suggest that different social backgrounds may influence media choice. Popular media choices such as terrestrial TV and VHS showed little variation because of their almost universal use. Mobile phones were also characterised as a universal medium, differing little by school type (apart from at the younger end of the age spectrum with a small sample size). It was more surprising to discover that DVD's, a relatively new phenomenon, was more popular amongst those from the less affluent school. This might be a mirroring of the satellite trend of the early nineties in which satellite popularity grew quickest in less affluent areas (Ofcom 2004). For other media types however, affluence clearly played a part. The technologically expensive digital cameras and picture mobiles had much higher levels of access and use in the *fee-paying urban* school. This may simply be an affluence effect and the intertwined influence of opinion-forming individuals. Those from the *fee-paying* school had a higher score for individuals claiming they wanted to be 'the first to try new things and stay in touch with new trends'.

The most significant difference in media access by school type was connected to internet access. Only 41.7% of the sample from the less affluent school type claimed to have access, falling to 11.1% (small sample) for bedroom access. This compared to 97.2% for the *fee-paying* and 91.0% for *state rural* school. The figures for media use showed a similar dip highlighting that issues of 'digital divide' access still remain. What was not clear from these figures is the interaction between lower levels of access, issues of affluence, education and indeed motivation.

3.4 Frequency of media use

One of the conclusions from the pilot study was the need to understand how media use is influenced by frequency of use. Therefore, participants were asked how frequently they used different media choices.

Figure 7: Frequency of media use by media type

Frequency of media use
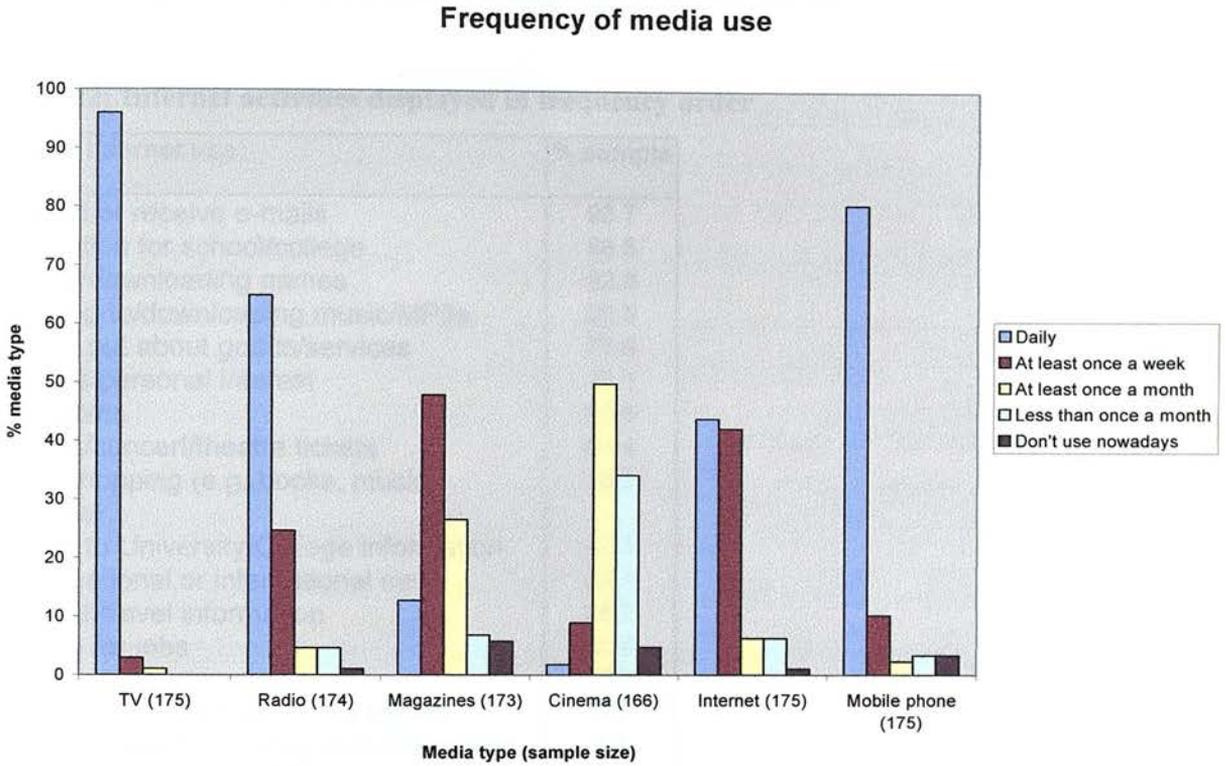
From Figure 7, television and mobile phones were the only two media used on a *daily* basis, for the vast majority of the sample. Radio appeared a less frequent activity with a significant minority only listening *at least once a week*. Internet use was polarised between *daily* use and the less frequent *at least once a week* figure. Magazines, a once hugely popular medium amongst young people, were read relatively infrequently; *at least once a month or less* by almost 40% of the sample, reflecting their continual struggle to maintain popularity. Finally, cinema remained very much an occasional *weekly* or *fortnightly* treat for young people rather than a more habitual occurrence.

3.5 Types of internet use

Given the importance of the internet to new media consumption, participants were asked to give additional information on the range of activities for the internet. Table 22 illustrates that sending and receiving e-mails was the most commonplace internet activity. This contrasts with the ONS (2005) figures for adults which highlighted the overall importance of information searching for goods and services For young people,

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searching for information for further education was more popular than finding out about goods and services, particularly amongst girls (see Table 24).

Table 22: Internet activities displayed in frequency order

Type of internet use	% sample
To send or receive e-mails	93.7
Information for school/college	88.5
Playing/downloading games	82.8
Listening to/downloading music/MP3s	80.5
Finding out about goods/services	77.6
Hobbies/personal interest	70.1
Chatrooms	65.5
Cinema/concert/theatre tickets	64.4
Other shopping (e.g. books, music, clothes)	55.2
Access to University/College information	47.1
Local, national or international news	35.1
Weather/travel information	28.2
Looking for jobs	25.9
Other	16.7
Personal banking and money issues	9.8
Access to health services and information	9.2
Helping with grocery shopping	8.0
Access to local or government services	8.0
Learning new skills for employment	7.5

Sample size: 175

Over three-quarters of the sample participated in 'playing/downloading games' and 'listening/downloading of music/MP3 players'. This illustrates the ease with which young people were comfortable accessing different forms of content-based entertainment, sometimes without concern for legal implications. Downloading of music had a school and age bias. Given the affluence associated with *fee-paying* schools and the costs involved in gaining broadband access, it is not surprising that downloading was more prevalent in the *urban fee-paying* school. Downloading was also more popular amongst older participants. This could be because of a number of inter-linked factors: increased internet skills, confidence in downloading, more advanced musical interests or simply an indirect sign of adolescent independence, operating on the bounds of illegality.

The appeal of internet use appears more diverse with age. Although over 70.1% of the sample claimed to use the internet for 'hobbies/personal' use, that figure was substantially higher for participants aged 16+. Indeed, the 16+ age bracket accounted

for the largest amount of variation in type of activity. A high percentage of older adolescents claimed to use the internet for a wide range of the activities listed in Table 25. Some of those were associated with preparing to leave home ('going to university/college' and/or 'looking for jobs'), others suggesting that the internet facilitates a widening of horizons ('access to news information'). The one activity showing little variation across age, gender or school type was the desire to 'access chatrooms'. This appeared to be a phenomenon free of demographic variation. The diary and qualitative research suggested that much of this access was out of novelty value with two thirds having visited but few doing so on a regular basis.

Table 24 reveals a number of gender differences. Internet use for boys for example was skewed towards entertainment activities such as 'playing/downloading games' and 'hobbies/personal interest'. Using the internet to get cinema/concert/theatre tickets was the exception to this, earlier figures suggesting that visiting the cinema and the theatre were more likely to be female pursuits, perhaps because of their social dimensions.

Finally, it is clear from Table 22 that certain internet services such as 'access to personal banking' and 'helping with grocery shopping' held little interest for young people. Access to 'health services and information' might have been expected to receive a higher figure than the 9.2% of participants, given the number of high profile advertising campaigns aimed at young people. Many websites such as www.teenagehealthfreak.org offer confidential, impartial advice to teenagers on a range of health and welfare issues. However, there was little evidence to suggest that the privacy and impartiality that teenage health websites claim translated into widespread and more frequent use.

Table 23: Variation in internet activity by school type

Type of internet use	total sample %	% state rural % +/- total**	% state suburban % +/- total**	% fee-paying urban % +/- total**
Listening to/downloading music/MP3s	80.5	-10.4	-3.4	11.2 *
Finding out about goods/services	77.6	1.5	-26.2	11.3
Cinema/concert/theatre tickets	64.4	-4.7	7.0	0.9
Other shopping (e.g. books, music, clothes)	55.2	3.0	-26.6	10.1
Information for school/ college	47.1	8.1	-10.0	-2.7
Local, national or international news	35.1	-8.2	4.9	5.2

* very small sample size (< ten participants)

** % +/- total = % total sample - % school type

Table 24: Variation in internet activity by gender

Type of internet use	total sample %	% male % +/- total**	% female % +/- total**
Information for school/ college	88.5	-7	7.8
Playing/downloading games	82.8	9.6	-10.8
Hobbies/personal interest	70.1	7.1	-7.9
Cinema/concert/theatre tickets	64.4	-6.8	7.6
Other shopping (e.g. books, music, clothes)	55.2	4.6 *	-5.2

* very small sample size (< ten participants)

** % +/- total = % total sample - % school type

Table 25: Variation in internet activity by age

Type of internet use	total sample %	% 13-14 % +/- total**	% 15 % +/- total**	% 16+ % +/- total**
Playing/downloading games	82.8	5.7	-8.8	1.3
Listening to/downloading music/MP3s	80.5	3.1	-14.5	8.4
Hobbies/personal interest	70.1	-11.1	-6.1	15.6
Cinema/concert/theatre tickets	64.4	6.1	-16.4	7.0
Other shopping (e.g. books, music, clothes)	55.2	-1.1	-9.2	8.3
Information for school/ college	47.1	-30.7	-5.1	33.9
Local, national or international news	35.1	-10.5	-1.1	10.9
Weather/travel information	28.2	-5.2	-6.2	9.9
Looking for jobs	25.9	-19.3 *	6.1	13.8

*: very small sample size (< ten participants)
** % +/- total = % total sample - % school type

4. Conclusions

This chapter has outlined the demographic and attitudinal characteristics of the sample of 175 participants. It depicts a balanced sample with minor variations by gender and ethnic groupings. This overall picture masks diversity at household and school level. Participants from the more affluent *fee-paying* school for example had higher numbers of working parents but lower levels of marital break-ups. The *rural* school was characterised by more part-time working, perhaps reflecting the need to balance quality of life with financial consideration. Such differences ensured a rich and diverse environment for studying contextualised media use.

The attitudes outlined in this chapter gave key indicators of young people's interests, tastes, convictions and principles. Although such attitudes did not always have an obvious relationship with media use, they offered a key sense of what young people considered important in their daily lives. Six key themes were identified, each one impacting on later discussions of contemporary media use. They were the importance of music & entertainment, the influence of opinion formers and peers, contradictory views on careers and wealth, the centrality of computers & the internet, and finally the rejection of religion.

From the households in this study, it was evident that 'media' operated across ever more diverse points of access. Television and mobile phones had almost universal access whilst recent innovations such as DVD's and digital cameras were rapidly being adopted. The internet was a recognised and accepted facet of the domestic media landscape with over eight in ten households claiming some sort of access. It had not however entered the majority of adolescents' bedrooms, giving a first indication that its influence on the lives and lifestyles of young people might be over-hyped.

Internet use by young people was frequent, crossing the boundaries between school and home, in contrast to other media choices. The internet therefore represented an important if complex media phenomenon, confirming the need to build up a more detailed picture of its role in everyday lifestyles. An important first step was to assess the diversity of internet activities. This study has found a mix of social, educational and consumption uses all competing for attention. It also highlighted that such use varied widely with context. It was unlikely to be a coincidence that music downloading for example was more popular amongst those from a more affluent background, with increased access to expensive high-speed internet services. The study also found that diversity of use increased with age, aiding and influencing the transition from adolescence into adulthood.

CHAPTER NINE

PATTERNS OF EVERYDAY MEDIA USE

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1. Completion of the diary

Although the questionnaires offered a 'macro' overview of media use, it provided little in the way of detailed patterns of media use. Location, social composition and length of media session are all important considerations impacting on everyday media choice. Participants were therefore asked to monitor and record their lifestyle and media use patterns over a seven day period.

A total of 119 participants partially or fully completed the diary component, accounting for a cumulative total of 775 daily records (560 week-day, 215 week-end). This elicited a response rate of 68% from the 175 diaries handed out. To be considered for analysis purposes, partially completed diaries had to contain at least five out of the seven completed daily records. Partially completed diaries accounted for 9 out of the 119 diaries. Reasons for partial completion were never fully understood because conducting follow-up questionnaires/individual feedback sessions was considered inappropriate by the teacher(s) concerned. However, informal verbal feedback from teachers and participants, and participant notes made in the diaries suggested three possible reasons. Firstly, participant boredom was an influence given the week long recording period and repetition therein. Secondly, a very small number of diaries were lost and then recovered later in the week by participant or parent. The author unfortunately was not made aware of such occasions. Finally, there were a couple of occasions of participants spending time away from the immediate home environment including school trips, leading to misunderstandings as to whether these should have been included in the diary.

2. Alternative methods of measuring media use

Two sets of data were compiled from the diaries. All 119 participants provided at least a tick to indicate their hourly media use, cumulating in 775 daily records; a smaller sub-sample of 44 participants (37% of completed diaries) providing a more detailed five-minute time estimate for media use within each hour. Although this was a smaller number than hoped for, the 294 daily records within these diaries were deemed sufficient to proceed with data analysis.

There were benefits and limitations to the two sets of measurement. The less detailed hourly patterns gave an overview of media time-use for the larger sample, comparable with the remainder of the diary. An assumption however of equal weight for each hour ticked has its reliability limitations. A five-minute texting record, for example, would be given equal weighting to an hourly TV record. Similarly, one activity may have taken precedence over the other during that hour but both were given equal weighting. A separate analysis of the sub-sample of participants, estimating media use to the nearest five minutes offered an accurate assessment of the length of each session within each hour. There were however two reliability issues with the smaller sample. Firstly, a smaller sample has inherently a higher margin for error. Secondly, it is assumed participants were willing and capable of accurately recording their own media use, for each of the seven days. As participants were given the option of ticking or estimating, it was however hoped that those completing the detailed estimation felt under no duress to record their media use.

As a consequence, the compilation and inclusion of both sets of figures allows for illustration and comment on the comparative methods and scores obtained.

3. Patterns of everyday life

A key component in understanding patterns of media consumption was the desire to locate within the context of young people's everyday lives.

Livingstone (2002: 77-78) argued that:

> "First and foremost, an explanation for the central place which media occupy in children's lives should be sought not in the nature of media themselves – their inherent features, attractions or contents – but in the contexts of daily life into which they have been introduced, and specifically in relation to the alternative leisure opportunities available to them"

To accomplish this contextual understanding, participants were initially asked where they spent their 'out of school' time. For each hourly segment, participants noted down 'where they spent their time' against a pre-selected list. The normal weekday schools' hours of 0900-1600 were excluded from the task, to ensure the data remained focused on non-school lifestyles. Figure 8 illustrates the patterns of 'where daily time was spent', during weekdays and then across weekends. From a total of 11,773 individual entries spanning the three schools, the percentage of time spent by location of activity is shown.

3.1 Where was time spent?

First and foremost, Figure 8 re-inforces the overwhelming importance of time spent in teenage bedrooms. Time spent in their 'own bedroom' averaged 33.3% of all time spent during week-days, dropping to just over 30% at week-ends. In the more ruralised state school, the week-day figure rose to 36.2%. If figures for 'after 1100' at night are excluded, that overall figure falls back to 26.5%, but time spent in the bedroom remained the most popular use of time.

In seeking an understanding for why teenagers spend so much of their time in their bedrooms, comparable European evidence has suggested that young people in Britain experience a lack of leisure facilities beyond the home whilst enjoying more varied and richer access to media indoors (Bovill and Livingstone 2001; d'Haenens 2001). These researchers have suggested that spending large amounts of time in the bedroom may be a consequence of parental fears over children's safety outdoors. Given this study was conducted amongst 13-17 year olds (comparative studies covered all child ages), this explanation holds less attraction with the possible exception of certain inner city areas, amongst some younger girls. The nature of risk may however change as children develop into adolescents.

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Figure 8: Time spent by location

Where daily time spent

Locations (top to bottom): Family living room, Own bedroom, Somewhere/own house, Someone else's house, Travelling, School/college, Social/after school club, Work, Pub/bar/café/restaurant, Night club, Theatre/concert/cinema, Sporting, Shops, Other

Legend: ■ % weekend time, □ % weekday time

X-axis: % time spent (0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35)
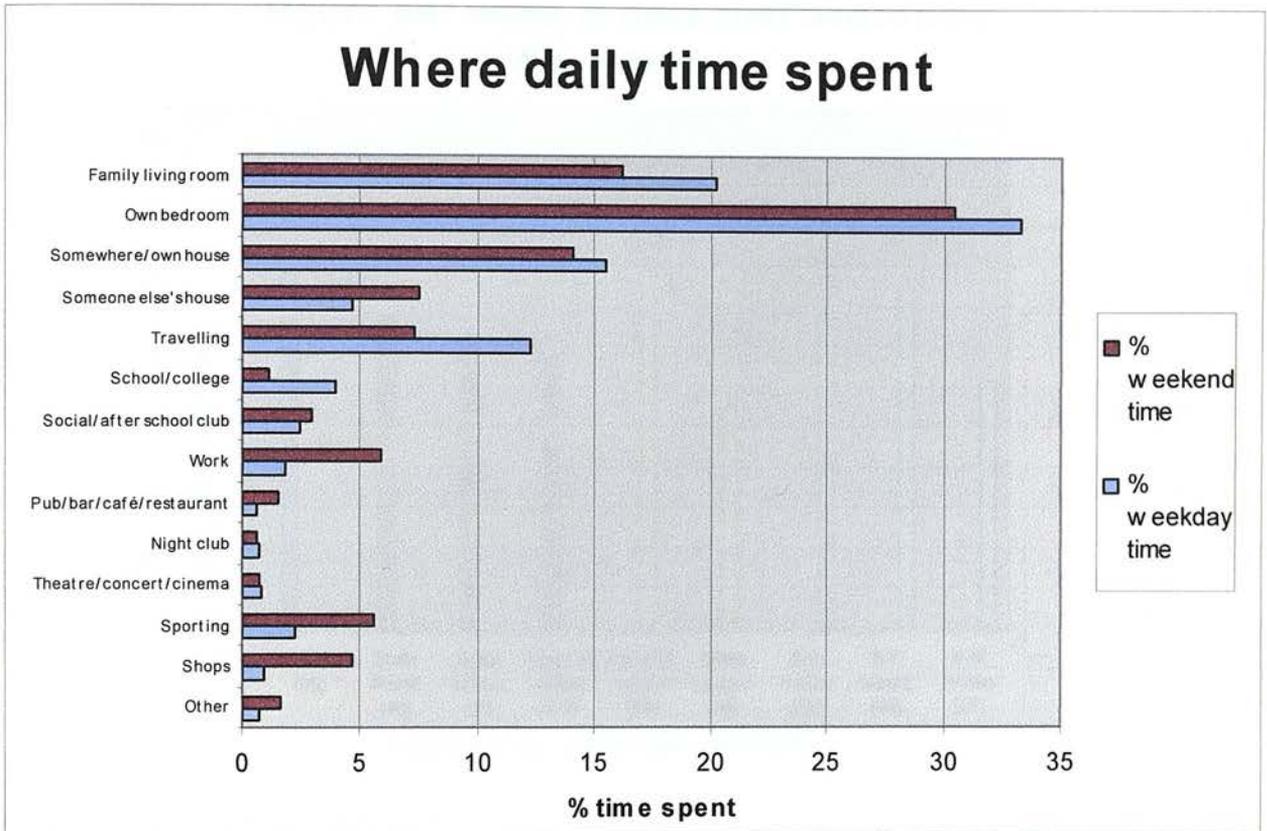
Sample size: 119 participants, 775 daily records

Large amounts of time spent in bedrooms also represented time away from the nucleus of the family. Luke (1989: 39) referred to the separation of families as the "privatisation of families from each other and the individualisation of members within families". It is argued that marital separation was been one of the root causes, and spending more time in bedrooms, one of the outcomes. In this study, there was little evidence such trends. Indeed, Figure 9 (using relatively small samples over one week's data) indicated that participants from backgrounds where the parents were currently married actually spent more time in their bedrooms. One interpretation to be drawn is that family breakdowns, blamed for increases in time spent in the 'bedroom culture environment', is too simplistic an explanation. Hill and Tisdall (1997) noted that numerous social factors including lone parents, higher divorce rates, remarriages and reconstituted families all contribute to changing young people's lives.

Figure 9: 'Bedroom culture': average hours spent by key indicators
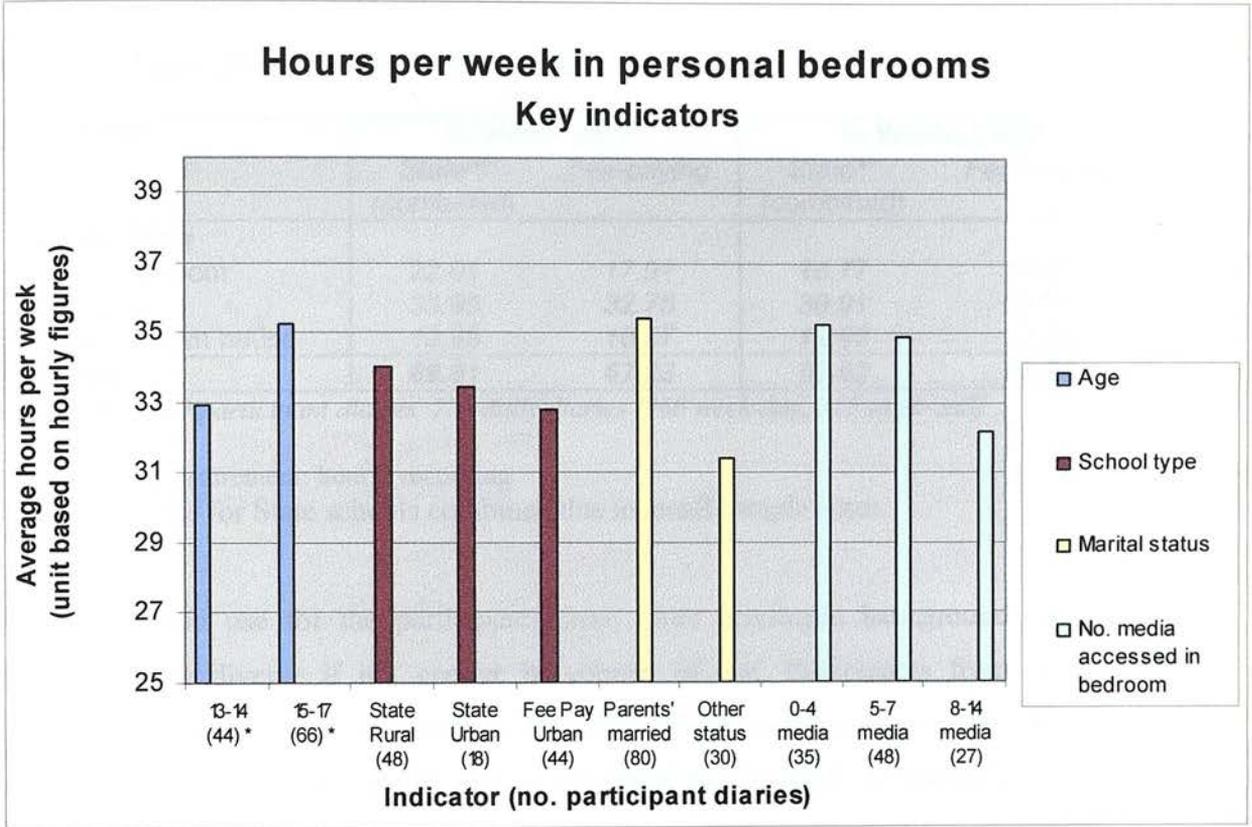
Sample size: marked under each column

* Note that for the diary analysis, two (*13-14, 15-17*) rather than three age breaks were chosen because of the smaller sample sizes.

As the self-completion questionnaires highlighted, bedrooms can often be the natural place to consume a range of media. Livingstone (2002) estimated that almost a quarter of childrens' bedrooms contained a mix of old and new media including higher ownership of screen entertainment, music, books and computers. In this study, 'media rich' bedrooms were more likely to be found in the more affluent households of participants attending the *fee-paying* school. Participants with 'media-rich' bedrooms did not however spend disproportionately more time in their bedrooms. The reverse appeared to be the case with individuals with (more privileged) access to '8-14' different media types spending less time in their bedrooms than those with less choice. One conclusion might be that those from more privileged backgrounds, with 'rich media' bedrooms, also had greater access to other activities and leisure pursuits. Table 26 highlights that participants from the *fee-paying* school spent disproportionately more of their time 'out of the home, both during the week and at

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week-ends.

Table 26: Time spent at home by school type

LOCATION	% WEEK DAY*		% WEEK-END*	
	*State** (combined)*	*Fee-paying*	*State** (combined)*	*Fee-paying*
'At home' time				
Family living room	*22.01*	*17.91*	*18.77*	*12.21*
Own bedroom	*33.95*	*32.75*	*30.91*	*29.64*
Somewhere/own house	*13.95*	*16.57*	*12.95*	*15.85*
Sub total	**69.91**	**67.23**	**62.63**	**57.70**

Sample size: 119 participant diaries, 775 daily diaries (560 week-day, 215 week-end)

* Method of measurement: hourly recording
** Sample sizes for State schools combined due to small sample sizes

Bedroom media use for the participants from more privileged backgrounds was therefore more diverse if not greater in volume of use. Participants from rural backgrounds, with fewer opportunities for other leisure pursuits, conversely spent more time in their bedrooms. The diaries suggested that as much as half of overall time spent in bedrooms was spent consuming media.

An important aspect of home media consumption was time spent in privacy of bedrooms versus in shared locations, with parents or siblings (Table 26). Traditionally, teenagers spend less time with their parents as they grow older and their motivations change. Figure 9 confirms this, showing older 15-17 year olds spending more 'at home' away from family space, in their bedrooms. Beyond maturity and the desire for greater independence, one important practical reason influenced this trend. During the period of the research, many 15-17 year olds were studying for exams, often spending 3-4 hours studying in the privacy of their bedrooms. Such time was not always free of media influences. The qualitative discussions highlighted that participants were still listening to the radio, sending e-mails, even watching cable TV whilst studying.

To conclude, the research did not provide evidence of participants from 'media-rich' bedrooms spending more hours consuming media. Conversely, it indicated that those from more rural and deprived backgrounds, and older children spent more time in

their bedrooms, consuming personal media. It was also likely that bedroom media consumption varied hugely by a number of other factors highlighted in later sections.

3.2 Patterns of time spent 'at home'

Assessing overall time-based figures can mask a more complex picture. The analysis of 'hour-by-hour' figures provided a better understanding of the fluctuations in time spent at home. Looking at Figure 10, it was evident that time spent in the bedroom was highest in the early morning up until 1100 (for weekends) and then after 2200 at night. However, between the hours of 1900-2100, time spent in the family living room (during weekdays and weekends) became more popular.

For certain times of the day therefore, the skew towards 'bedroom culture' did not overshadow time spent in family living spaces. Indeed, during weekdays, time spent in the shared 'family living room' still accounted for over 20% of all non-school time. Television has traditionally been the activity uniting households through shared activity in the living room (Silverstone and Hirsch 1992). Screen based entertainment located in the living room has now extended to include videos, DVD's and for many, computers. It would be wrong however to conclude that time spent in the communal living room automatically equated to shared activities. Livingstone (2002: 150) makes two pertinent observations. Firstly, older teenagers like to use the space and facilities of the living room when parents are not around, offering private access to family media. Secondly, the constraints of limited points of access, rather than a deeper desire to interact with other members of the family, bring the family together in one room. The qualitative photographs confirmed that the standard of screen based entertainment was still higher in the living room than any other room, particularly from *suburban state* school households, with adolescent bedrooms becoming the natural home for outdated 'cast-offs'. Therefore, time spent in family space should not automatically be interpreted as a desire for shared family experiences.

Figure 10: Patterns of weekend time spent by location

PATTERNS OF 'WHERE TIME SPENT'
Week-ends
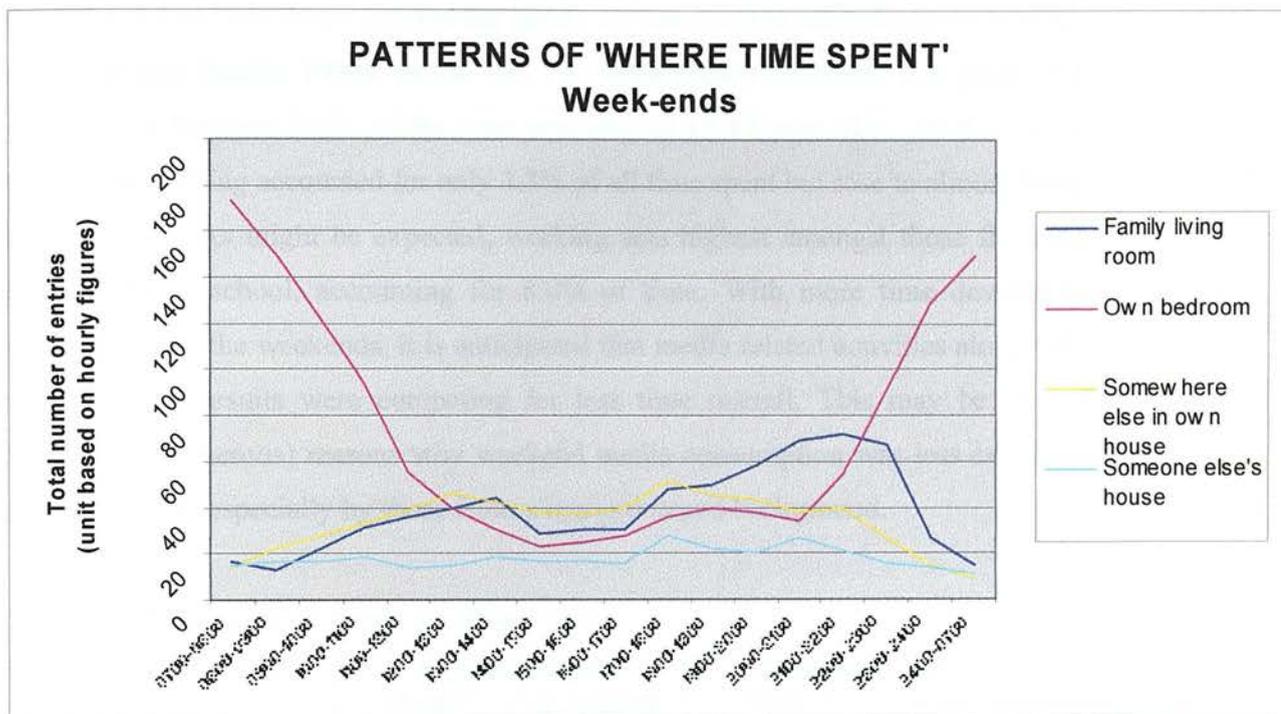
Sample size: 119 participant diaries, 225 daily entries

3.3 Patterns of time spent 'out of the home'

Travelling to and from schools played the most important part of 'out of home' lifestyles, particularly during week-days (Table 27). It accounted for 12.3% of all weekday time, and 14.8% for the *fee-paying* school where pupils travelled up to 20 miles to reach the school. The patterns of media use during travelling times confirmed the popularity of mobile forms of media, especially texting. During this time, mobile phones were frequently used, maintaining text-based communication between peers and occasionally family. Very occasionally, mobiles were used for accessing information services such as the world-wide-web whilst travelling. Participants in the qualitative interviews spontaneously discussed the kinds of commercial media they passed when travelling such as poster sites and bus shelter advertising.

Work on the other hand played a more important role at the weekends. Dustmann et al. (1997) found that 52.1% of UK sixteen year olds have a part-time job, 13.5% working more than nine hours per week. Many teenagers are balancing school,

friends, family and increasingly work. American studies have shown that up to 85% of adolescents have obtained some sort of paid work outside the home, relating this to the desire for independence beyond the family environment as adolescence intensifies (Kablaoui and Pautler 1991). In the UK, the ONS (2002) estimated that paid work accounts for between 5-6% of the time available to 15-17 year olds. In this study, time spent working accounted for only 3.3% of all time spent but rose to almost 6% at the weekends. As might be expected, working was highest amongst those from the more deprived school, accounting for 8.0% of time. With more time devoted to working during the weekends, it is anticipated that media related activities along with other leisure pursuits were competing for less time overall. This may be one of (potentially numerous) reasons why weekend media consumption was less extensive and less varied, especially by those from a less privileged background.

Table 27: Time spent at home by school type

LOCATION	% WEEK-DAY*		% WEEK-END*	
	State** (combined)	Fee-paying	State** (combined)	Fee-paying
'Out of home' time				
Someone else's house	5.28	3.75	7.77	7.04
Travelling	10.60	14.81	7.32	7.22
School/college	3.42	4.76	0.54	2.05
Social	1.93	3.20	2.53	3.52
Work	2.41	0.95	7.97	2.70
Pub/bar/café/restaurant	0.55	0.62	0.92	2.35
Night club	1.01	0.36	0.08	1.53
Theatre/concert/cinema	1.01	0.62	0.57	0.88
Sporting	2.52	1.83	4.75	6.87
Shops	0.73	1.14	3.68	6.04
Other	0.62	0.75	1.26	2.11

Sample size: 119 participant diaries, 775 daily diaries (560 week-day, 215 week-end)

* Method of measurement: hourly recording
** Sample sizes for State schools combined due to small sample sizes

It was surprising to discover how little time was spent on 'out of the home' entertainment. Given parental and legal concerns of under age drinking, only 0.9% reported time spent in pubs, bars and café bars. The qualitative photographs suggest that adolescent drinking was conducted on street corners and out of parental and institutional view. It may also be however that participants were not willing to admit to spending time 'illegally' in such establishments. For nightclubs, the percentage of time recorded was even lower (0.7%). This is in sharp contrast to claims by The

Henley Centre (1999: 42) that 71% of the older 15-24s go to a disco or nightclub at least once a quarter. Beyond a younger age band in this study, other reasons for this might include the absence of nightclubs in rural locations, the timing of the research, and under-estimation for privacy reasons. There is also evidence to suggest that visiting clubs in the UK is declining (TGI Youth 15-17 year olds; 1999 vs. 2003 – see BMRB 2004). One factor attributed to this has been a rise of a less hedonistic generation, more interested in personal development than carefree hedonistic living (TRBI Maritz 2003). The evidence from the attitudinal statements in this study was somewhat contradictory with participants indicating both the importance of a carefree lifestyle but also the desire to work hard to achieve success.

One aspect of lifestyle rarely measured is time spent not actually doing anything purposefully, sometimes referred to as 'wasting time' or 'hanging around'. In this study, socialising including the more purposeful time spent at 'after school' clubs accounted for 2.6% of all time. Although this is a comparatively small figure, such time may be hugely influential given the impact of peers on product and media consumption. Sueiss *et al.* (1998: 526) argued that although much of youth media use takes place at home, it is highly influential on peer relationships out of the home. Adolescents are known to have endless discussions about television, videos and games with their friends, wherever they might be (Ritson and Elliott 1999). Therefore, the influence of media consumption spreads from the home to the playground, street corner and beyond. An issue to explore in the qualitative research was how this less structured time influenced media use.

4. Patterns of media time use

4.1 Categorising media time use

An assessment of media consumption would not be complete without incorporating the length and pattern of media used by young people. Different media can be categorised under four functional types, distinguishing between traditional screen-based entertainment, music & reading, telephonic based communication and computer-based communication. This typology is based on media functions (rather

than media use as later in the study), offering the reader a comparison of media frequently grouped together in the literature.

- **Screen-based entertainment**: TV, cable, satellite, video, DVD and cinema,
- **Music and reading**: music (CD/tape/MP3 digital), radio, newspapers, magazines, book
- **Telephonic-based communication**: talk-telephone, talk-mobile, text-mobile
- **Computer-based communication**: gaming (computer/console), e-mail (computer), surf internet (computer), schoolwork/other (computer)

Some of the media types arguably fall between different assigned categories. Mobile texting for example can also be accomplished using a computer. This merely illustrates the difficulties in grouping media types together when the lines of demarcation are blurred and converging. In this particular case, discussions from the qualitative interviews suggested that young people tend to associate texting more closely with forms of telephonic rather than computer dominated communication such as e-mail.

For a more detailed sample of 44 participants, Table 28 compares each media within category by minutes/person/day. Table 29 then calculates the minutes per individual media session.

Table 28: Media use by average minutes per day

Media Type	Method 1 Unit = minutes recorded	
	Minutes/person /day	% total minutes
Screen-based entertainment	**122.64**	**46.46**
Terrestrial TV	77.31	22.87
Satellite	15.15	7.97
Video	12.74	5.61
Cable	9.07	3.94
DVD	7.04	4.79
Cinema	1.33	1.28
Music and reading	**77.06**	**32.37**
Music (CD/Tapes/MP3)	37.47	15.41
Radio (ex Internet)	24.36	10.51
Book	8.54	3.48
Magazines	3.59	2.09
Newspapers	3.10	0.88
Telephonic -based communications	**19.90**	**5.66**
Texting	10.09	2.57
Talk – telephone	6.79	1.91
Talk – mobile	3.02	1.18
Computer-based communication	**38.17**	**15.48**
Gaming (computer/console)	18.08	9.55
Computer – schoolwork/other	7.81	2.39
Computer – surfing internet	6.72	2.08
Computer – e-mailing	5.56	1.46
Other	**0.52**	**0.02**
TOTAL	**258.28**	**100.00**

Sample size: 44 participants, 294 daily diaries
Smaller sample size prevents further breakdown (e.g. week-end versus week-day use)

Table 29: Minutes spent per daily media session

Media type	Number of daily sessions	Minutes/daily session*
Screen-based entertainment		
Terrestrial TV	215	105.72
Cable	29	91.93
DVD	24	86.25
Video	45	83.22
Satellite	62	71.85
Cinema	6	65.00
Music and reading		
Music	138	79.83
Radio	157	45.62
Book	63	39.84
Magazines	44	23.98
Newspapers	46	19.78
Telephonic-based communications		
Texting	103	28.81
Talking – telephone	70	28.53
Talking – mobile	43	20.67
Computer-based communications		
Gaming (computer/console)	58	91.64
Computer – schoolwork/other	50	45.90
Computer – surfing internet	53	37.26
Computer – e-mailing	56	29.20

Sample size: 44 participants, 294 daily diaries. Smaller sample size prevents further breakdown (e.g. week-end versus week-day use)

* Excludes participants who did not use that media

4.2 Media time use by each category

Using the figures from Tables 28 and 29, patterns of media use will now be discussed for each media category in turn.

4.2.1 Screen-based entertainment

'Terrestrial television' still dominated media use with an average of 77.31 minutes viewing per person per day. This concurs with an assessment of youth related media studies conducted across Europe and the US (Beentjes *et al.* 2001). For those who accessed 'screen based' media, the average number of minutes watching 'terrestrial television' exceeded any other media choice. On average, television was watched for 4.8 days a week compared to only 1.4 days for satellite and 0.7 days for cable.

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'Terrestrial' TV also accounted for more than double the number of daily sessions recorded of any other media choice with the exception of radio. Although a small sample, the figures highlight that new media consumption still falls behind screen based consumption in this context. It could be argued that time of year might have influenced the figures; if conducted during summer time, hours may have fallen re-emphasising the importance of context.

It is possible to compare television viewing figures with other contemporary media studies amongst teenagers. Van der Voort *et al.* (1998) found that British 12-17 year olds watched 157 minutes of television a day six years ago, Livingstone and Bovill (1999) 162 minutes a day for 12-17 year olds. Both studies however included cable and satellite. Combining the three methods of accessing programmes, the viewing figures become somewhat closer (1.69 hours in this survey compared to Livingstone and Bovill's 2.7 hours per day). In conclusion, the closeness of the comparable studies does suggest that the greatest value from figures in this study lies in patterns between media types. Any consideration of the absolute figures out of context should be treated with caution.

Figure 11 highlights similarities and differences in hourly patterns of screen based entertainment media. For this piece of analysis, figures were taken from the hourly *method 2* calculations as the more detailed five-minute estimations were less relevant. The chart combines weekday and weekend figures, offering an overall sense of comparative media use.

The chart confirms the universal popularity of 'terrestrial' television across most hours of the day with the exception of frequent satellite viewing on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Viewing was evidently very popular before going to school in the mornings and consistent throughout the evening until 2300, indicating its integral part in adolescents' daily lives at home. Previous studies such as Gunter and McAleer (1997:7) using 1995 BARB/AGB data have suggested that peak viewing for British children aged 4-15 was between 5.00 p.m. and 8.00 p.m.. This much smaller study almost 10 years later amongst older adolescents, found that the peak continues now until at least 2100, prolonging the viewing experience. The number of hours each day, frequency of use and universal usage figures all point towards a very established,

acceptable and well liked form of media. They do not show a media firmly eclipsed by newer and potentially more exciting forms of new media. It also suggests that television viewing contains a strong and enduring habitual element. Rosenstein and Grant (1997:324) similarly found that habit plays a "significant role" in television viewing behaviour across weekdays and weekends.

Figure 11: Hourly patterns of screen based entertainment media
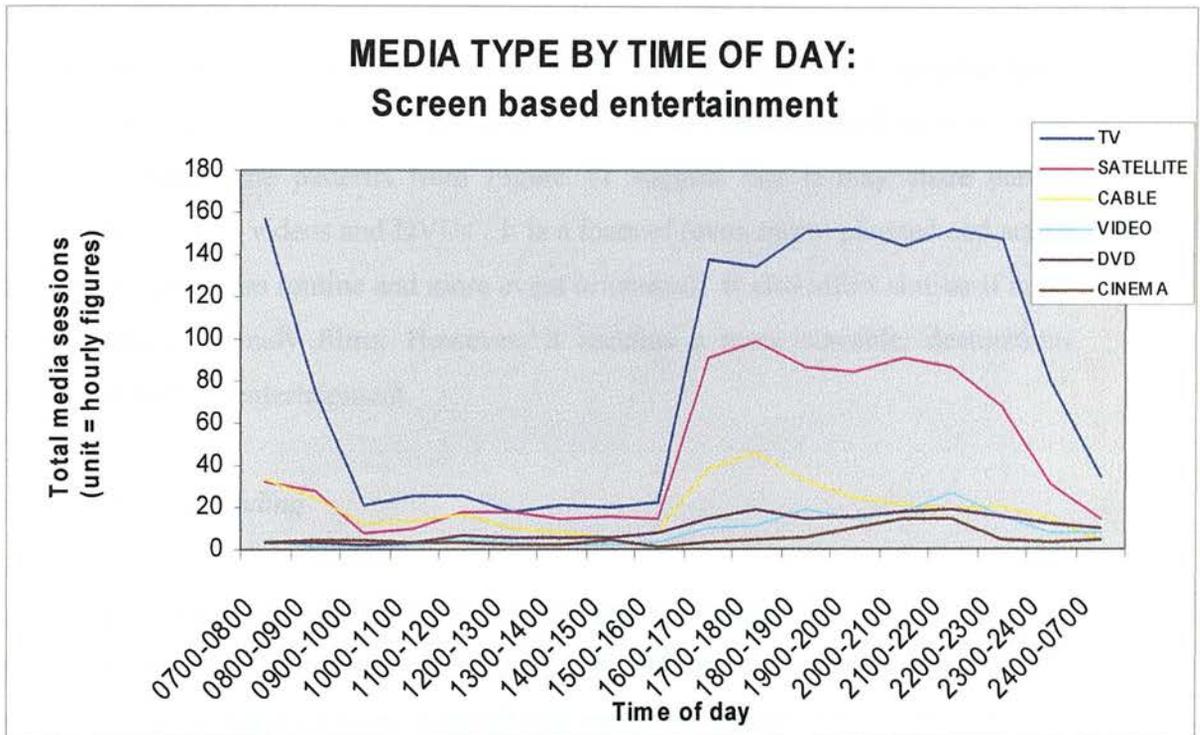
Sample size: 119 daily diaries, 775 participants

Satellite and cable both peaked during the hours of 1700-1800, suggesting popularity before, during or just after meal times. This may be co-incidental but it is likely that given the variable quality of these formats, most effort is put into programming when schedulers know they can reach large audiences around meal times. Perhaps surprisingly, both forms of media then showed steady falls in usage levels as the evening progresses, particularly cable. Given that average length of viewing times was lower than TV, there may have been more of a dipping 'in and out' of these newer forms of screen entertainment, consistent with more selective channel choice and specific programme watching. Channels such as *Trouble* and *Rapture TV* are dedicated to adolescent audiences, so benefit from them dipping in to see what's on.

Figure 11 also shows a marked difference in usage of secondary forms of screen entertainment such as videos and DVD's. Earlier figures highlighted that levels of access to videos (and increasingly DVDs) were very high. The patterns of usage in individual diaries however suggested that both were used more sporadically than television. More occasional viewing patterns could be a result of the need for 'something different', to escape from the mundane routine of terrestrial viewing.

As will be detailed in the later uses and gratifications Chapter 11, cinema has a distinct set of user motivation, frequented less often and characterised as more of an occasional treat. The patterns from Figure 11 suggest that it may share certain characteristics with videos and DVDs'. It is a form of (even more) planned and active decision making, less routine and more event orientated. It also offers similar if more recent content, namely films. However, it remains a more sociable, destination-orientated form of entertainment.

4.2.2 Music and reading

Listening to music whether via the radio or using CDs/tapes/MP3 players (and now mobiles) was almost universal with virtually all participants accessing some form of music during the survey period. Listening to music has always been a very popular form of entertainment amongst teenagers (Hebdige 1979); Beentjes *et al.* 2001 even suggested that it sometimes overtakes television to become older adolescents' primary leisure activity. This study underlines its unique place in the lives of young people. Pattern of usage varied widely depending on format chosen and time of day.

Radio was the most frequently used medium after television, accounting for 157 daily sessions. The ease of access to radio, now enhanced through the internet makes it a highly convenient form of media use. However, its very convenience may make it a less involving form of media. Average minutes per session of 45.62 minutes were lower than the 79.83 minutes for pre-recorded music formats. As a result, Table 29 shows that pre- recorded music did in fact take up more of young people's overall time than radio playing.

Figure 12 illustrates that patterns of listening to music varied according to time of day. Radio was more frequently used as an early morning form of entertainment, switched on and consumed before going to school or out at weekends. RAB (2005) refers to this as 'habitual breakfast listening'. Although radio had some popularity later in the day, it was at a much lower level, steadily falling off after 0900.

Figure 12: Hourly patterns of music and reading media
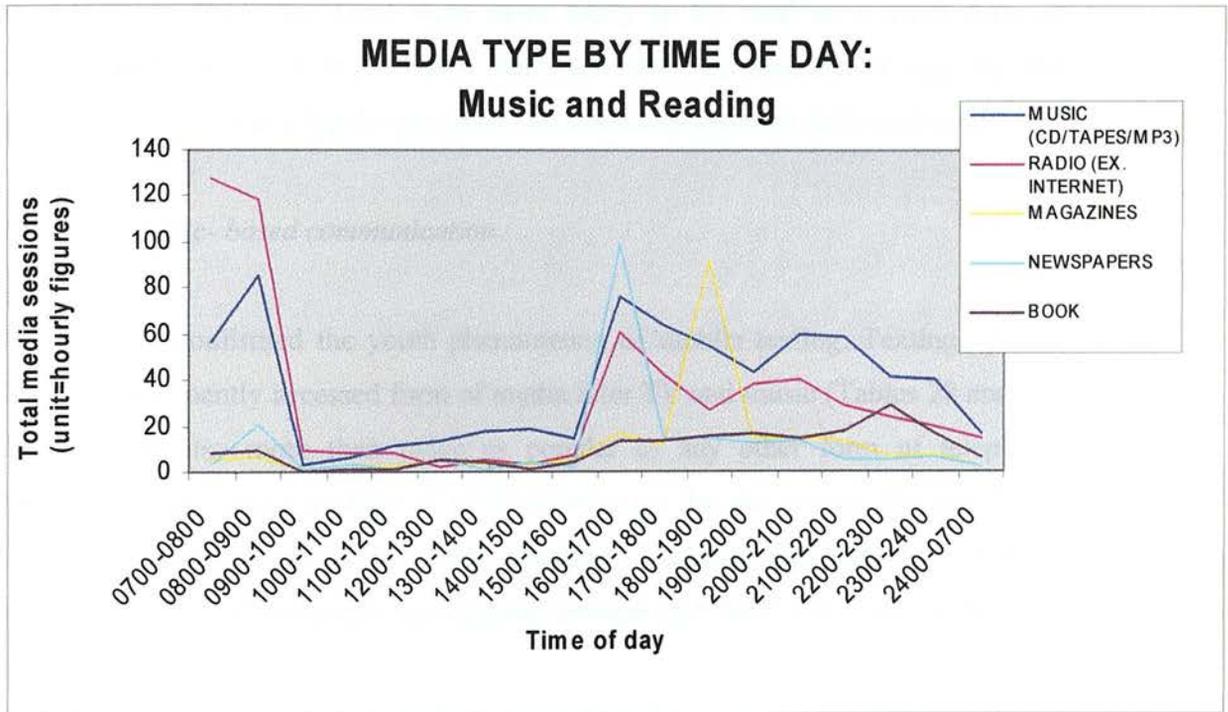
Sample size: 119 participants, 294 daily diaries

The other major characteristic of radio revealed by individual diaries was that it was often consumed in combination with other forms of media. This included playing the radio whilst doing homework, surfing the internet and texting. Although this may depict radio as a passive form of consumption, the later gratification section suggests otherwise. Indeed, a study on radio listening (The Henley Centre 2004) suggested a trusted, involving emotional attachment to radio by its devotees.

Reading was found to be a less frequent and less habitual activity. The number and length of daily sessions were significantly lower than for screen-based and music forms of media. Shorter session lengths of between twenty to forty minutes a day, suggest that traditional text based media have more in common with other electronic

forms of text based entertainment such as the computer than the more visually oriented screen entertainment.

Book reading did have distinct patterns of usage that distinguished it from newspapers and magazines. The popularity of books rose sharply between the hours of 2200 and 2300, unlike any other medium. Given that this was the time before sleep, particularly during weeknights, this might indicate that books were read as a form of relaxation. Magazines on the other hand were more likely to be used as a swift form of stimulation between other activities. Although short in duration, it may be that magazine reading was a highly involving form of escapism from daily routines.

4.2.3 Telephonic- based communication

The research confirmed the youth phenomenon of mobile texting. Texting was the third most frequently accessed form of media after TV and music (Tables 28 and 29). Texting was also more than twice as popular as any other form of telephonic communication with an average of 10.09 minutes per day per person. The number of minutes recorded for texting was often between 3-5 minutes per hour although there were examples of almost continuous texting through each hour of the waking day.

Figure 13 shows that during weekdays, a surprising amount of texting was conducted first thing in the morning. This indicates that young people enjoyed communicating with friends almost as soon as they woke up. This trend continued throughout the day, on the way, outside and undoubtedly inside school hours although the figures for weekend use showed a small dip from 1400-1700. In common with television, texting continued at a high level throughout the evening until after 2100.

Figure 13: Hourly patterns of telephonic-based media

MEDIA TYPE BY TIME OF DAY:
Telephony communication
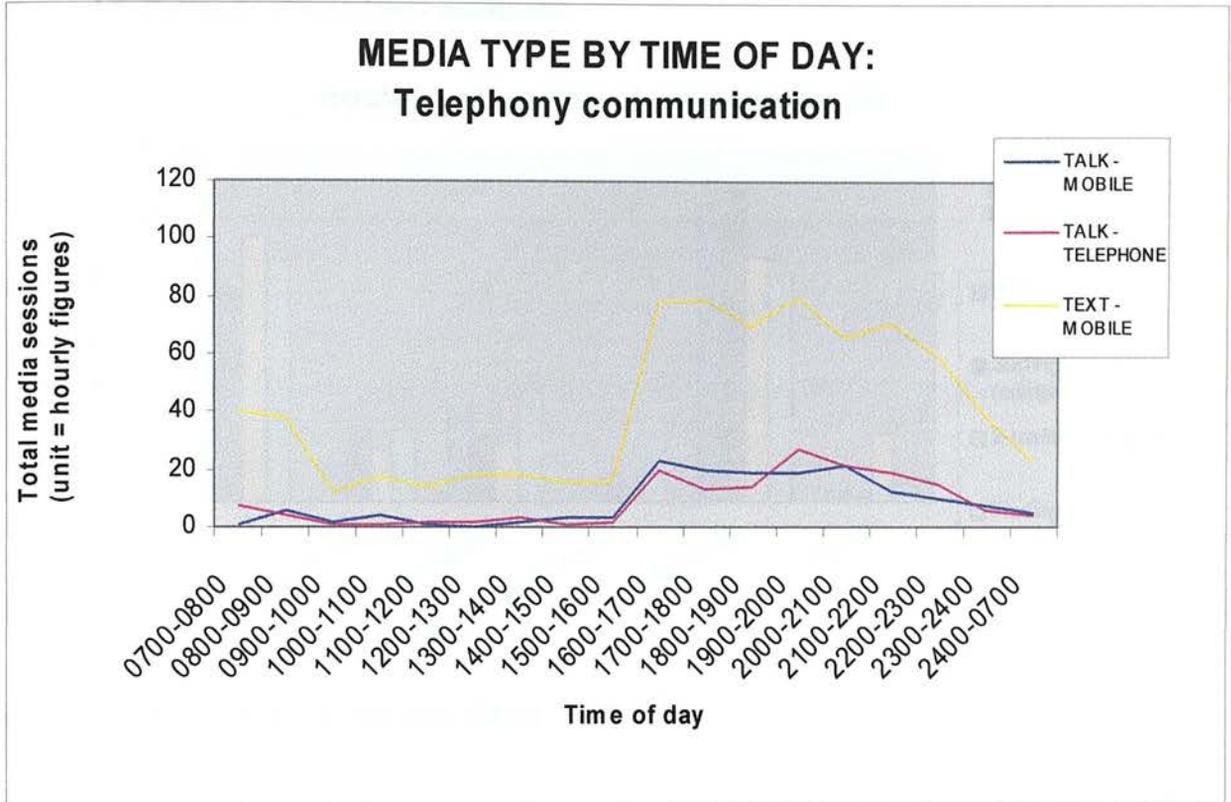
Sample size: 119 participants, 294 daily diaries

Individual diary entries also showed that the nature of texting was markedly different from other forms of media. Texting often took the form of very short but frequent bursts of communication. Instances of young people texting up to 50 times a day were not uncommon, sometimes almost continuously throughout the day. Such occasional patterns might indicate addictive aspects to texting. This pattern of continuous but short sharp communication demands high levels of attention to receive and then respond to each piece of communication. It also has similarities to e-mailing in so far as it is asynchronous and so texters can pick and choose their time to reply. It may also indicate that concentration tasks can be easily broken by texting.

The peer aspect of texting is highlighted by analysing the social composition of media use. Figure 14 illustrates the percentage of time spent using different forms of 'new' media by social composition, compiled using the larger sample of hourly calculations. It shows that although 'new' media use was most popular when in the company of family, texting was more popular with 'best of friends' /'group of friends'.

Figure 14: Patterns of social new media use

Social composition of 'new' media use
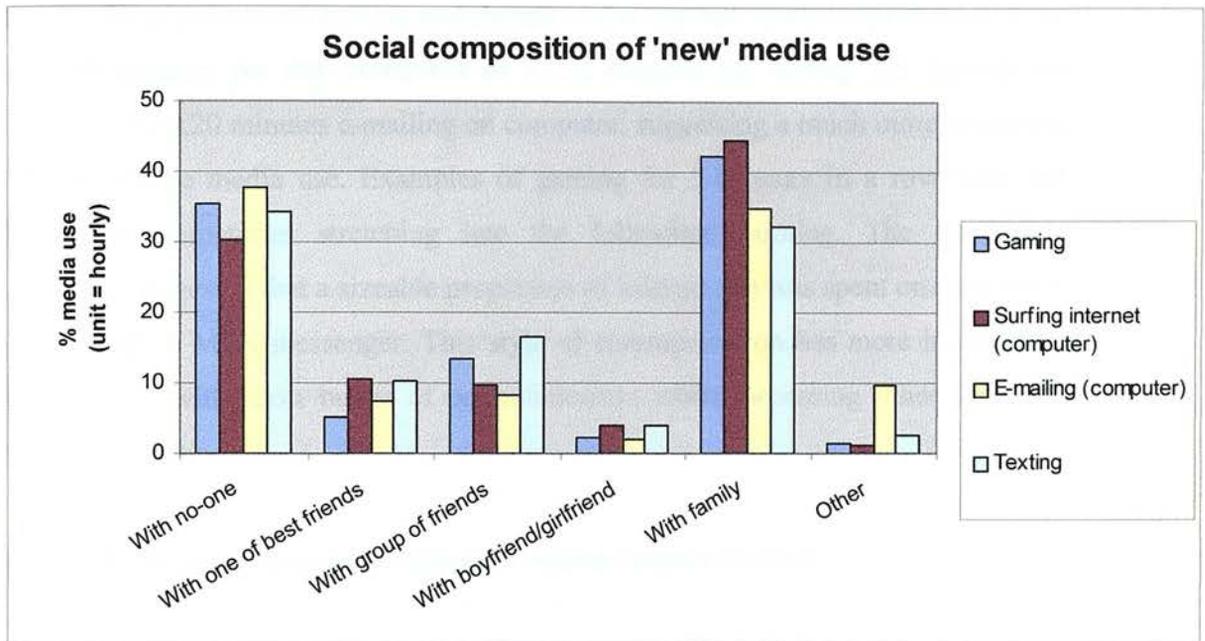
Sample size: 119 participants, 294 daily diaries

4.2.4 Computer-based communication

The section brings together a number of electronic based forms of communication. Virtually all e-mailing and surfing the internet was done whilst accessing a computer. Examples of internet surfing or e-mailing using mobile phones were few and far between. The qualitative interviews suggested that exchanging images and photographs using mobile phones was starting to accelerate although the diary was not able to confirm this trend.

The diaries found little evidence for the dominating use of the internet predicted by Tapscott (1998) and Papert (1996). E-mailing and surfing the internet both accounted for 56 and 53 recorded sessions with each session lasting on average 29 and 37 minutes respectively. The combined average time spent e-mailing or surfing the internet (12.8 minutes per day) was less than texting, music, radio, and screen based entertainment. If one adds in other computer time (excluding gaming), then the figure for computer based media rises to 20.61 minutes per day, still significantly less than the time spent watching different forms of screen based entertainment.

These figures confirm that the internet is neither used as frequently nor for as long as comparable media choices. Furthermore, the diaries suggest a marked difference between the popularity of gaming and the use of the internet. Gamers spent an average of 91.64 minutes per day compared to 37.26 minutes for surfing the internet on computer or 29.20 minutes e-mailing on computer, suggesting a much more involving and compulsive media use. Examples of gaming for 5-6 hours in a row were not uncommon, sometimes stretching into the following morning. The qualitative interviews suggested that a sizeable proportion of internet use was spent on messenger boards such as MSN messenger. This style of communication has more in common with texting, with short bursts of communication whilst accessing other forms of media or activity.

Figure 15: Hourly patterns of computer-based communication
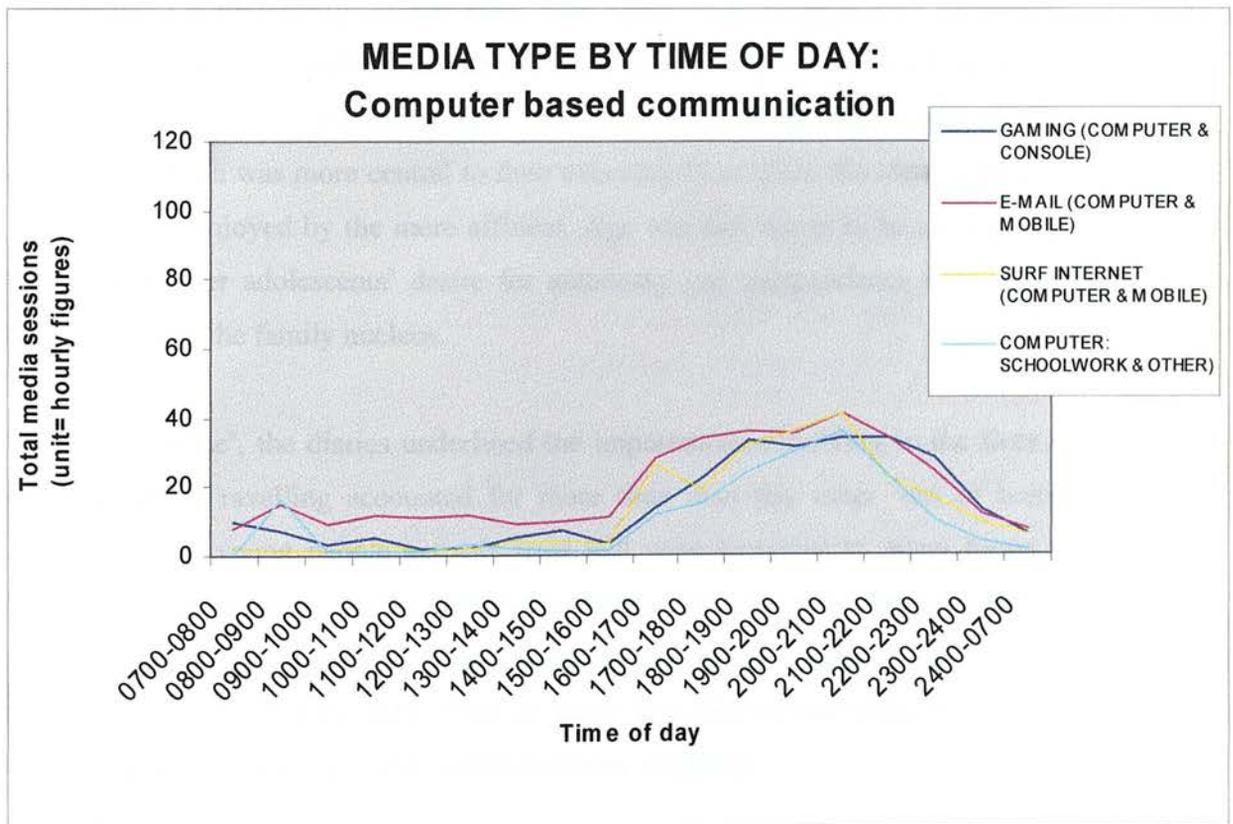
Sample size: 119 participants, 294 daily diaries

There were however subtle differences in the relative popularity of each form of electronic media. E-mailing using the computer had a more marked popularity at the weekends when young people were at home. One reason for this might have been that

during week-ends, young people have more spare time to e-mail friends and family. It was also more popular in the early part of the evening, indicating a desire to get in touch with friends and family before going out. A similar peak late in the evening might indicate the desire to communicate when other more pressing things have been done.

5. Conclusions

This chapter has provided a more detailed picture of media use contextualised through young people's daily time use. It highlights how dominant time spent in bedrooms was, often resulting in time spent away from the family and surrounded by a plethora of media choices. The findings did not support the notion that the more 'media-rich' bedrooms (more commonly associated with adolescents from more affluent backgrounds) automatically meant more time spent consuming media; conversely, those from more rural, and less affluent backgrounds were found to spend more time consuming media in their bedrooms. One interpretation of this might be that consuming media was more central to their everyday lives given the relative absence of alternatives enjoyed by the more affluent. Age was also found to be an important factor, with older adolescents' desire for autonomy and independence encouraging time away from the family nucleus.

'Out of the home', the diaries underlined the importance of mobility in the lives of young people. Travelling accounted for more time than any other 'out of home' activity; a time young people actively used and were receptive to many forms of mediated communication. Time spent in the presence of peers was also an important consideration, either at someone else's house or just spent 'hanging around'. This contrasted with the limited time spent on more formalised entertainment activities such as nightclubs, entertainment venues and even shopping.

Young people's media time use can be categorised into four main headings: screen-based entertainment, music and reading, telephonic based communication and finally computer based communication. Four key themes can be interpreted from this. Firstly, television in its many forms continues to be the medium of choice for most young people. Secondly, listening to music remains a hugely popular way to spent time, its

popularity re-inforced by easier access to music online and easier ways to play music digitally. Thirdly, mobile texting has emerged as a media phenomenon with its own distinct pattern of use, characterised by short and sometimes continuous bursts of communication quite unlike any other form of communication. Of all the new media uses, texting was the most orientated towards friends and the least orientated towards family. Finally, the findings confirmed that the internet has not (yet) become the dominant influence on these young people's lifestyles. Individual sessions tended to be shorter and less frequent in comparison to other new forms of media such as gaming.

CHAPTER TEN

LEISURE, LIFESTYLE AND MEDIA

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1. Introduction

The previous two chapters profiled the study participants, described their underlying attitudes and patterns of media use, and provided a framework for assessing selection of media use. The following qualitative chapters now seek to enter into the 'lives' of young people, exploring the meanings they attach to contemporary media. Chapter Ten will contextualise media use within 'out of home' and 'in home' lifestyles, assessing how young people's everyday lives shape and influence traditional and new media use.

Discussion sessions (stimulated by the introduction of photographs and then psycho-drawings) provided an ideal lens through which to observe and discuss participants' daily lives. Initial discussions were dominated by participants' enthusiasm for exchanging and showing off their photographs. At times, emotions swung from amazement to embarrassment depending on the contents revealed. Because participants selected each other on the basis of their friendships, some photographs showed combinations of participants in shared activities. Others revealed a more personal side to participants of which other group members might not have been aware. Prior participant editing of photographs tried to ensure that uncomfortable images were not exposed to unwanted peer scrutiny.

Participants were asked to sort photographs into themed piles. Each group had its own method for doing this although end results were remarkably similar. Themes emerging included going out, socialising with friends, hobbies and sports, school life, part-time jobs, relationships with immediate family, personal bedrooms & favoured living spaces and of course consuming media. A few participants brought up the subject of their encounters with marketing and commercialism as they went

about their daily lives.

2. 'Going Out': leisure alternatives and media consumption

Time spent out of the home has been theorised into formal activity/play and informal or free play (Buckingham 2000). Social researchers have highlighted a steady movement in child lifestyles, from public informal spaces such as the street to either supervised activity or into the privacy of the bedroom (Ward 1994). This has been viewed as a response to the perceived 'risk-society' influencing contemporary parental attitudes (Hood *et al.* 1996). As diary analysis however highlighted, leisure time spent out of the home still forms an important part of these adolescents' lifestyles.

Young people's time spent out of the home was at times influenced by events beyond their control. Combinations of time of the year, weekday or weekend, neighbourhood location and even daily weather patterns all shaped decisions about what to do each day. These influences were 'givens', unfettered by mediated concerns.

> IG: "Do you prefer to spend more time in or out of the house?"
> L: "Well, at weekends, I am more outdoor but in the nights and during weekdays during the winter I am inside. In the summer I go out and play football"
> *(female, S4, state rural)*

> S: "It depends on the weather. Summer time, I went out a lot because I live near the beach and used to go down to the beach a lot and stay out quite late. But I'm not outside now so much. I quite like going for walks and jogging but the weather is not really up to it" *(female, S6, fee-paying urban)*

For L. for example, the choice of spending time on the computer at home was not always a positive one. It was an acceptance that often in the winter, she was trapped in her home, distanced from her friends; the computer represented the best way of combating the inevitable boredom experienced.

2.1 Rural lifestyles

2.1.1 The 'idyllic'

For some young people, living in a rural environment was close to what they considered the 'ideal', an outdoor way of life unfettered by location, domestic or institutional restrictions. In one sense, this way of life offered considerable freedoms. For one group of friends, week-end trips to a secret rural hideout represented a throw-back to an age of innocent teenage adventures:

> S: "This is the 'eggie'. It is a really cool place…this is where we go down and swim in the river and jump off the cliff. That is E. who just jumped from up here. That's quite scary. It is surprisingly deep down there….We go rock climbing there too. It's good for climbing…And this is called the beach. It's another part of the 'eggie'. It has a waterfall and a suspension bridge, which is quite high up. E. hangs off it. There are lots of rocks and stuff and a little waterfall. We do a bit of boldering which is climbing without a harness…we swam there almost every day this summer"
>
> *(female, S6, state rural)*

Plate 1: Idyllic rural lifestyles
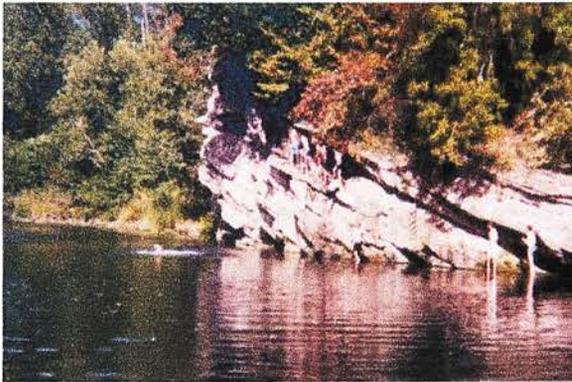
(mixed group, S5/S6, state rural)

Looking back on the personal profiles of the group involved, one contributing factor was their combined lack of interest in ICT technologies. Although not disinterested in internet and mobile use, it became clear in early sessions that this group did not feel beholden to attractions of digital media. Indeed, they took great pleasure during later sessions in explaining why they did not subscribe to a lifestyle dominated by mediated communication. By expressing such views they proudly depicted

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themselves as the 'exception rather than the rule', abiding by a different set of group norms. Watching satellite TV or exchanging gossip on online messenger boards was not their ideal way of spending leisure time.

The rationale for selecting diverse groups of young people from each school was vindicated by hearing a range of stories about rural lifestyles outside the home. It became evident that factors such as geographic (and its related social) background at times played more important roles than the external factors highlighted earlier. For one fourteen year old living in a rural coastal village, going out for organised activity and sports was simply an escape from his depressing locale:

> D: "I live in E.. It's not as bad as H. because H. is just a hole. I don't live in it, I just live outside it. It's just basically a fishing town, and it reeks of fish. The only good thing is the swimming and I go there three times a week"
>
> *(male, S4, state rural)*

For these boys and their friends, indoor play involving gaming such as PS2 offered greater attractions, providing their 'idyllic' forum for escape.

2.1.2. 'Hanging out on street corners'

In marked contrast to the first group mentioned, a second group of friends living nearby did not subscribe to the 'healthy pursuits' of the idyllic outdoor existence. For this group living in the more deprived village, going out on week-days or at week-ends meant hanging out with large groups of friends, on local street corners and bus shelters.

> IG: "Tell me about this photo then?"
> A: "That is the bus shelter, usually packed with people. Writing on the walls. Everyone signs their names on the walls"
> IG: "How many people get together?"
> A: "It depends on what night it is really. I mean like Friday night, everyone just heads out, so about twenty of us. Week-days, usually about ten. A lot of older people, just sort of work days and go out at nights. Eighteen year olds"
> IG: "So why there then?"
> S: "I think just because it is the centre of town"
> A: "I mean we hang around at the park and just sit there as well"
>
> *(two females, S5, state rural)*

Alcohol and smoking were essential elements of such nights out, group members happy to discuss the merits of such classic teenage pastimes:

> A: "A. was a bit drunk so he looks funny in all the photos. It was about half past ten or maybe later. I had to work till ten and go home and get changed. And get back out again"
> S: "We go along the hill and park but the police normally move us on so we go down the pub with the lads and that for a bit. Drunk by the time we meet up with them. So the police move us along…sometimes we get complaints from the neighbours, about making too much noise and stuff. The police all know us… they come along at week-ends and pour away everyone's drinks and that. Even the ones that are eighteen"
>
> *(two females, S5, state rural)*

Plates 2 & 3: Hanging out on street corners
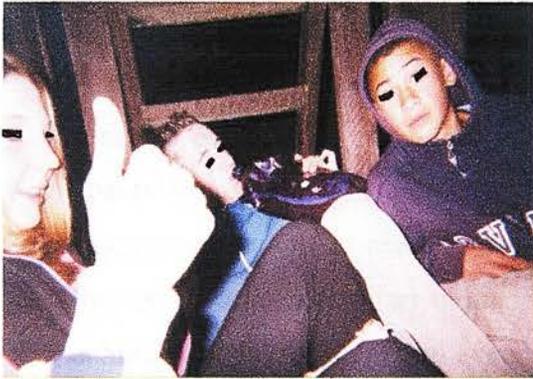
(two females, S5, state rural; mixed group, S5, state rural)

This mode of behaviour was also found in the less affluent *suburban state* school. The participants however, from this more urbanised school, did have the nearby attractions of café, bar and club life of Edinburgh to enjoy if funds allowed.

It is tempting to compare this more rebellious behaviour with the teenage angst typified by descriptions of Generation x in the early 1990s (Coupland 1992, Richie 1995). There was no sign however of the anger and despair at the lack of prospects and opportunities Coupland described. Halstead's (1999) description of a generation of "slackers, cynics, whiners, drifters and even malcontents" is again a step too far. Later conversations suggested that the ritualised drinking and downbeat socialising were as much a reaction against boredom and lack of local excitement as any deeper rebellion against parents, institionalised education or the state. Indeed, one of the girls involved suggested that she was as happy on other occasions to have a friend

round for a coffee with her mum as she was to join the crowd.

This group of older girls were neither new media advocates nor new media rejecters. In organising such get togethers, texting and to a lesser degree MSN chatting was used to look forward to and organise events. In one instance, text messaging was used as early warning to avoid police detection. There was however no obvious desire on their part to migrate towards the internet as an online alternative to 'hanging out' with their friends. Online bulletin and chat rooms were never perceived as replacements for such get togethers. Instead they acted as facilitators for the main event.

2.2. Experiencing music beyond the home

The desire to go to clubs and music venues was more commonly associated with participants from the two urban-based schools. Given the range of licensed and unlicensed premises within reach of these teenagers, this was not surprising. There was little evidence in either diary or qualitative findings to suggest that clubbing and rave culture were "pivotal cultural experiences" in lives of these young people (see Thornton 1995, Miles 2000). There were however indications that the classic 'rites of passage' characteristics, from adolescence to adulthood noted by Thornton, did occur. In the following example clear distinction was made between different types of clubs based on the age required for entry:

IG: "What about stuff like clubs?"
C: "We go to the under fifteens"
N: "I used to go there all the time but not so much now, some in there are really really young…about thirteen"
C: "Thirteen and fourteen still get in. Aye, lots of people don't really go to those places"
IG: "Are there under eighteen clubs?"
N: "Naw, just the eighteen and overs which we try to get into.
N: "Under eighteen's – there's no point"   *(two females, S4, state suburban)*

No stories were told however about the anti-social strategies of staying out late and waking up late to avoid parental scrutiny found in other cultural and sociological studies (eg Catan 2002 in disadvantaged circumstances). Musical styles and the 'subcultural' crowd following differing genres did play a part in the choice of venue

visited on nights "down the town". Youth subcultures have historically been characterised as musical subcultures and this set of young people were little different:

> D: "The Honeycomb and the Venue are always packed and you can really move about. But Ignition is all about rap music and all that. It's like you can do break dancing. Some people do that there. And the Rev., everyone goes to the Rev [under eighteen's]" *(female, S4, state suburban)*

It is important however to gain a sense of perspective of this 'out of home' music consumption. Far more discussions revolved around music consumed in the home or on the move. These often revolved around downloading, on to an array of digital devices or simply listening to radio whilst doing something else.

There were a few instances of young people enjoying the heightened, live experience of a night out at a concert or music gig during the research period. One older girl boasted about an invite to the 'after MTV awards party' featuring Justin Timberlake. This elicited much discussion and some envy on the part of other group members. As illustrated in Plate 4, she was able to take close-up digital pictures and then distribute them swiftly to her friends through e-mail connections.

Plate 4: Dissemination of cultural experiences

(female, S6, fee-paying urban)

This example shows vividly how new forms of media were used to quickly disseminate cultural experiences. It was likely her efforts gained peer approval and jealously in equal measure. It also demonstrates how digital media fluidly moved

between the 'out of the home' and 'at home' experiences of these young people.

2.3 Forms of self-expression

The desire amongst older adolescents to express themselves individually through play, especially personalised sports, were examples of activities crossing the boundaries of rural and urban lifestyles. Such expression sessions were conducted in social settings, with members of loose 'subcultural' or tribal groupings (Maffesoli 1996), bonded together by common interests. Sometimes, groups could be half a dozen, other times almost one hundred people strong, depending on formality of arrangement and chosen location. Self-expression came in a number of forms, from doing tricks on giant trampolines to break dancing in public spaces and free-running over and through urban objects. It was predominately a boys' activity with girls on occasion taking part or looking on.

> E: "That is my trampoline. And we have a new sport on these photos, that's me doing a back flip on her trampoline"
> IG: "What is the new sport?"
> E: "Free running....I have been doing handstands and cartwheels, this one is a hand stand. It was getting dark. That's me walking down a rail. You just go into town and do it"
> IG: "What's good about it?"
> E: "You don't need anything, you just go out and express yourself...I am beginning to learn to cartwheel along the wall. You have to watch your ankles. I have not quite managed it yet"
>
> *(male, S6, state rural)*

Plates 5, 6 & 7: Forms of self expression
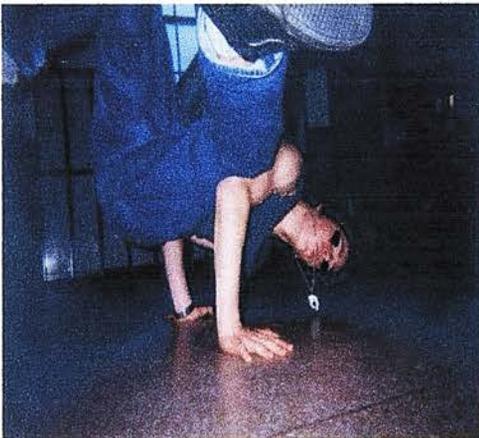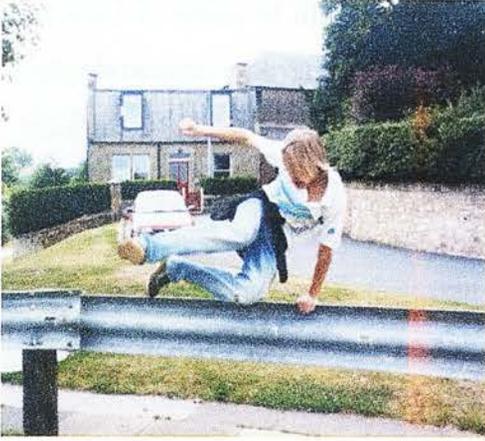
In another example, one fifth year boy from the *fee-paying school* was passionate about snowboarding at his local dry ski slope. Friday nights involved up to twenty of his friends getting together for an "expression session" with points given for the most radical moves. Socialising and partying amongst the 'snowboard crew' also formed an integral party of the sessions.

> D: "This is us on snowboards, we hike the jump at Hillend, getting the toll, to hike up three hundred meters up the slope and jump"
> IG: "Tell about who goes to these sessions?"
> D: "Anything up to fifty people really. I mean there's a lot of people you don't know as well who come up for it. Maybe twenty you know by name. We go on a Friday night after school"   *(male, S5, free paying urban)*

Examples of these outlets for self-expression in group settings can be interpreted as manifestations of the ongoing shift in youth culture towards a culture of socialised individualism (Reimer 1988). Cox (1998) described youth culture as 'tribal', a vast spectrum of expressions. Such 'shared experiences' in which individuality is demonstrated collectively can also be found in Bourdieu's (1984) concept of the 'class habitus'. These examples illustrate young people's need to express to an audience, to gain peer group approval and continue to develop their own personal identities as depicted by Brown (2000). They also demonstrate life beyond the 'media rich' home for groups of young people.

A further interpretation can be accessed through the concept of risk-taking. Jessor (1992) argued that risk-taking amongst adolescents is a way of asserting independence and striving for adult status. For many young people, this has been

couched in terms of illegal activities such as drinking, smoking and drugs. In this study however, a physical variant achieved similar aims whilst within the bounds of legality.

Traditional and new media played multiple roles, even in such evidently non - mediated activities. Before the event, media was used to learn, discuss and anticipate experiences. After, media was again used to debate and dissect outcomes. In case of the 'free-running' of boys from the *rural* school, E. was inspired by watching a documentary about the sport's origins on the terrestrial television programme, Transworld Sport. E. subsequently searched for more information using websites such as www.worldwidewords.org before trying out moves in urban environments with his friends. Subsequently, messages were posted on MSN bulletin boards discussing the next get-together for participants. Again, these experiences corroborate the findings of Sueiss *et al.* (1998) who argued that 'at home' media can influence and shape 'out of home' peer relationships.

2.4 Formalised sports and hobbies

Livingstone and Bovill (1999: 83) found that up to 30% of 12-14 year olds attended a sports club at least once a week, dropping to 19% for the older 15-17 year age group. In this qualitative study, formalised sports and hobbies were a significant part of most participants' lifestyles. There were many examples of the kinds of activity young people participated in out of the home: aerobics, athletics, football, hockey, horse riding, rugby, swimming, trial biking, water polo, weight lifting.

It was clear however from the diary entries that participants from the *fee-paying* school had access to a greater choice of formalised sports and hobbies. These were arranged on school premises, usually after school hours. The consequence of this was to extend the number of hours spent within school jurisdiction. For participants from the two *state* schools, such activities (if desired) were often restricted to local clubs and leisure centres.

Plates 8 & 9: Formalised sporting pastimes

(females, S5, state suburban; female, S6, state rural)

It was clear that sports and hobbies such as playing music played important roles in the lives of some participants. There were examples of classic school traditions of teenagers going to football training or hockey practice three or four times a week in advance of week-end matches. The majority of participants did discuss sports or hobbies and many photos featured their favoured sports or hobbies.

Borrowing from the work of Erikson (1987), the transition from Erikson's 'school age into adolescence' can be viewed as moving from a culture of 'competence building' to one of 'identity formation and confusion'. Blos (1962) distinguished late adolescence as a time with a "greater sense of individuality" through personal identity development. This has resonance with earlier participants' desires for self-expression but was also found in the pursuit of more formalised sports and hobbies. The bedroom walls of young people were often covered with posters and memorability associated with their chosen sport or hobbies. Role models were elevated to cult status in the same manner as musical stars. Football scarves were signifiers of sports' elevated social status.

Another trait of older adolescents' lifestyles apparent through the discussions was the increasing pressure on spare time, with participation in sport sometimes the losing activity:

IG: "Any sports or hobbies that you enjoy?"
K: "Not at the moment"
N: "I used to play football"
K: "Yeah, and I used to do a lot of dancing and water sports"

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IG: "Why no more?"

K: "I was finding I had less and less time so that's why I quit my dancing"

N: "Cause now that I have work, it's difficult to find the time"

(two females, S6, state suburban)

The combined pressures of homework, needing to earn money (in the case of these girls from a less affluent background) and occasionally a loss of interest in competition/physical activity all contributed. A loss of participation however did not always mean a loss in interest in the identity and cultural significance of that sport. N.'s wall was still covered in football posters whilst she actively followed her favourite teams on satellite television and through internet websites and chatrooms. In this case, outdoor activity was replaced by indoor mediated experiences.

2.5 Socialising with friends

In most of the activities highlighted so far, socialisation with peers played an integral role. One justification was the need to escape the confines of boredom. Before the advent of online media but at the height of television's popularity, a study by Argyle (see Peterson 1996) found that teenagers spent up to three hours a day in 'face to face' interaction with friends plus extra contact on the telephone. Throughout the discussions with participants in this study, the influence of friends and peers was all pervasive. This research did not strive to delve deeply into the nature of friendship. By the very nature however of the friendship-based methods used, the importance of friendships and their interdependent relationships with media became apparent.

Socialising with friends was evident in two distinct forms: 'best friend (s)' (usually but not always with same sex friends) and 'groups of mates'.

2.5.1 Best friend (s)

During early adolescent years, best friendships can assume greater importance than any other relationship (Peterson 1996). Best friends have replaced parents as confidantes, agony aunt, soul mate, game for a laugh. The girls in particular in this study took great pleasure in taking shots of their best friend (s) in many situations; having a cup of tea at home, chumming up on the way to school, sneaking out for a

"fag-break", eyeing up the boys or just hanging out at Pizza Hut. In Lever's (1978) study of younger girls aged 10-11, girls often played in smaller, closer knit groups than boys.

Time spent with best friends was not always defined by a particular event or sporting activity; it was just about enjoying time together. Time was spent in and out of each other's homes midweek rather than "going out on the town". In such circumstances, the use of media became a naturalised part of the relationship, providing friends with an easy form of entertainment and escape from boredom. In the following case, the chosen medium was video:

> IG: "What would your average day be like after school on a week-day?"
> D: "Me and my best pal would kind of chum Ga. home and both go home and depending on what day it was, we'd either go to basketball or stay in the house"
> IG: "Do you spend much time in each other's houses?"
> D: "I go round to Gi.'s a lot, or sometimes a spend a bit of time at Ga's house. Sometimes we just stay in and watch a video"
>
> *(female, S4, state suburban)*

Plates 10, 11 & 12: Best friends
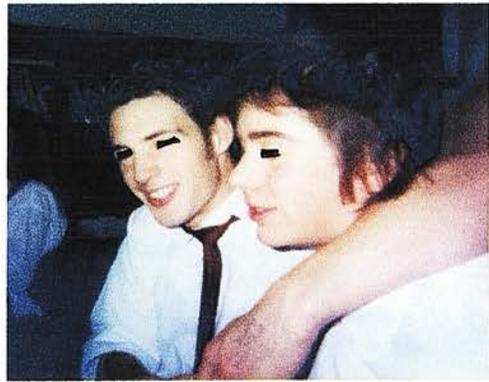
(two females, S4, state suburban; two males, S6, fee-paying urban; two females, S5, state suburban)

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A second example was fairly typical of the kinds of informal get-togethers best friends enjoyed, with no particular agenda apart from time spent together. This did not mean trying to escape the confines of parents and home, merely finding a convenient place to hang out. Mobile phones in this case were the essential aid to such experiences:

> S: "That is just like, well most nights when I go out, I usually go down to A.'s for a cup of tea. I usually go to her house for a cup of tea and then into her back garden for a fag basically, most nights, because no-one in her house smokes like….sometimes we go into the kitchen and get the chocolate biscuits out when I'm starving"
> IG: "And the phone?"
> S: "I don't go anywhere without my phone, it's always next to me"
> *(female, S5, state rural)*

S. could not conceive spending anytime away from home without her mobile phone as this provided her with her virtual link to a wider network of friends, and if needed, parents. This suggests that although best friends are most important, it does not preclude the need to keep in contact with a wider circle of 'others'. The fear of "missing out" was stated as her rationale for always carrying a phone.

In a third example, digital media was seen to take a more pivotal role, providing a vehicle for interactive entertainment and fun for some older girls hanging out in C's bedroom:

> F: "That's Claire, she's one of my best friends. This is Claire's room, I was there with Anna, Stacey and Claire. We were just watching films and ended just sitting and having a laugh and me taking pictures. We were messing about with Claire's digital camera so there were two cameras on the go and so you were just trying to dodge them" *(female, S5, state suburban)*

Broderick (in Petersen 1996) suggested that after the age of sixteen, 'best friend' is as likely to be of the opposite sex. The need for constant communication using new media emerged as an important aspect of such relationships. The intensity of such relationships manifested themselves through the need for immediate and lengthy discussions when not together. Two participants (one boy, one girl) talked about spending hours on the phone because their partner did not live nearby. Texting in this case was insufficient because it did not allow for the kind of intense conversation they both craved. Historically, social researchers have stressed the

emotional blandness of early teenage dating (Mead 1949, Douvan and Adleson 1966). Given trends such as 'getting older younger' (Cox 1998) however, the more mature and emotionally charged discussions suggest that media plays an important, intimate role in fostering sexual relationships.

2.5.2 Groups of mates

Smith *et al.* (1998) distinguished between best friends and the emergence of 'cliques' or 'gangs' in early adolescence. In this research, there was a clear distinction between groups of friends ("mates" as they were referred to), all on intimate terms and then 'gangs' consisting of friends, and friends of friends; teenagers bonded together by a common interest. Informal gatherings tended to contain between three and ten in number, sometimes taking place out of the home at a pre-agreed venue. In one such example, a coffee house served at the weekly meeting point:

> S: "These are all of the 'MCB'"
> B: "MCB is the Monday coffee bar"
> IG: "Can you tell me more about what goes on?"
> B: "When we go in, everyone turns up at my house for half an hour before we go, we sit around we go along, stop at the co-op and get some food, then come along here and drink tea, coffee, hot chocolate or anything. It's a good laugh and we sometimes talk for hours"   *(mixed group, S6, state rural)*

In another example, a group of girls called the 'Tuesday babes' got together once a week or fortnight for a "bit of a laugh". It was apparent from the transcriptions that larger sized groups tended to be popular amongst older participants. For the boys, there seemed to be the need for a more distinct activity or rationale for all getting together. There was less sense of getting together "just for the sake of it". Socialising after football, going out on the bikes and examples of 'self expression' highlighted earlier epitomised reasons for get-togethers. The boys were particularly keen to boast about forms of 'messing about', involving their best friends. E. tells us affectionately about times spend mucking about with toy guns:

> IG: "Why did you take this shot?"
> E: "Well, Peter uses toy guns, BB guns and we thought we would stalk his house with them"
> B: "I have BB guns because sometime we have 'air soft' clubs where we go in

to her house, run around in the woods and shoot at each other. I think this one was a model Berretta"
                                                                    (two males, S6, state rural)

It seems likely that in both (and perhaps other) occasions, the boys were playing up for the camera. The girls were more disdainful of such practice, dismissive of what was seen as childlike practices, inappropriate for fifteen or sixteen year olds.

Given that larger groups of friends tended to congregate out of the home, media played a relatively insignificant role in the proceedings. At times, participants would talk about returning to one of the boys' homes to watch a "scary video" but media only re-entered once they returned to their (or a best friend's) home. Virtual forms of communication such texting and messenger boards provided a catalyst for such get-togethers.

Plate 13: Groups of boys "having a laugh"
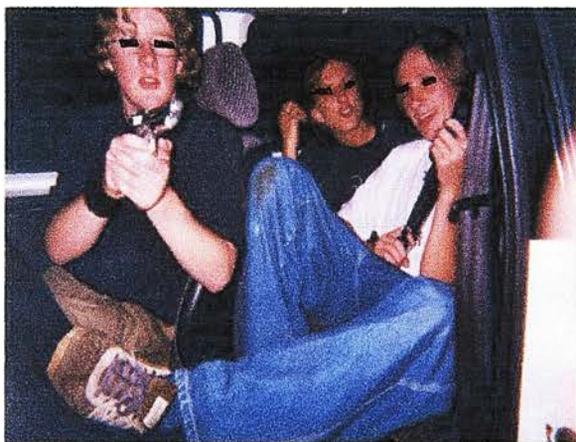
(group of males, S5/S6, state rural)

A final reason for get-togethers was the more formalised celebrating, either in or out of the house (Plates 14 & 15). Birthday parties, passing exams or even passing a driving test were reasons given to throw a party. In one interview, it was simply that the boy's parents were away on holiday. Sometimes these were hosted with groups or mates of in the case of parties, expanded to include larger groups of friends of friends. Such gatherings were varied in character, from the birthday party at a local ice cream parlour to an alcohol infused house party amongst the older teenagers from the *fee-paying* school.

Plates 14 & 15: Contrasting house parties
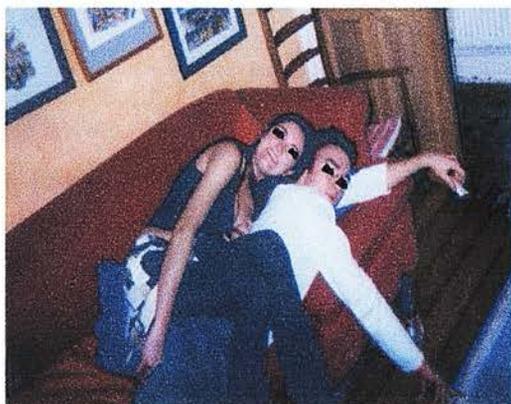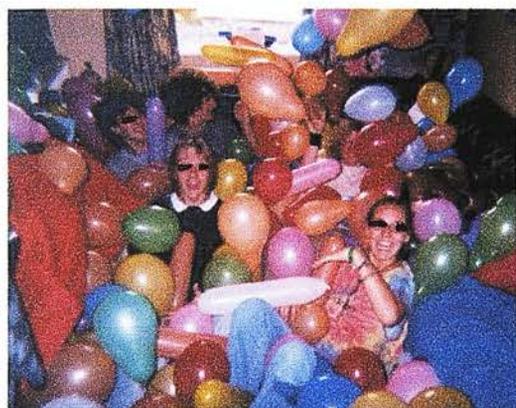
(mixed group, S5/S6, state rural; mixed group, S6, fee-paying urban)

Media tended to play a very minimal role in such events, with little need or desire to "resort" to mediated forms of entertainment and information.

3. 'Staying in': domestic lifestyles

Even for the older adolescents in this study, the diary findings showed that time spent 'at home' still represented the bulk of leisure hours available. Findings might have been different had the study taken place during the summer holidays but summertime would have been far less representative of the year as a whole.

Time spent 'at home' can be thought of as a microcosm of the transitional process adolescents undertake in their journeys towards adulthood. The slow but continual shift from bedroom to other more public spaces, in and beyond the home, has started. But the bedroom remains the arena of greatest significance, both in time spent and cultural meanings attained.

3.1 The significance of bedroom culture

As Chapter 2 has highlighted, bedrooms have long been thought of as privatised spaces, "mediating devices" (Vygotsky 1978) in the lives of adolescents. Mediation in this context extends well beyond conventional media choices to include anything that helps define young people's self -identities (Brown *et al.* 1994).

From this study, the photographs collected showed a rich and diverse range of images and objects adorning the walls and floor spaces of participants. These can be categorised using several of the "meanings and identity configurations" classification advocated by Brown *et al.* (1994). In many of the examples, the content manifest in such mediating images played an interdependent role in identity formation.

3.1.1 Appropriation (using a cultural image in a personal way)

> L: "This is mine. This is my Ainslie wall, Ainslie Henderson from Fame Academy, the poster is signed top and bottom and that is my special Ainslie box that I put a lot of stuff in…and there's the picture I took of him the first time I saw him in HMV"   *(female, S4, state rural)*

Plate 16: Celebrity appropriation in the bedroom
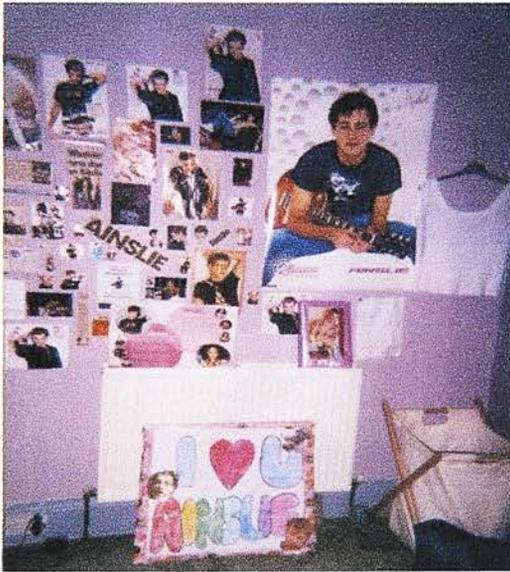
(female, S4, state rural)

For L., Ainslie Henderson of TV reality show fame (Plate 16) had become a celebrity obsession. Most of her spare time was devoted to following the many forms of Ainslie, through listening to music, reading books, writing letters and designing artwork. This 'celebrity obsession' offered insights into how new and traditional media fed and re-inforced L's celebrity obsession. L. had developed her own website from her bedroom computer in homage to Ainslie. Personal photos and letters were posted from her bedroom, a chat room created and managed in Ainslie's honour and

links to official and unofficial websites recommended on the site. Bedroom culture for L. meant complete immersion in the cultural forms of Ainslie. She had appropriated mediated forms of Ainslie and re-produced them in her own inimitable style.

Cultural images, items and personal possessions were evident to some degree in all teenage bedrooms, sometimes few and far between, at other times overflowing to the point of "organised chaos". In the case of M., the poster of the alcoholic drink Tequila signified an 'out of bounds' item, experimented with at parties, but disliked because of its taste. However, the imagery of Tequila (Plate 17), symbolising risk and danger, remained attractive to M:

> M: "I nicked that from a building site [police cone]. That one is for Tequila. This is a car I definitely want to get into. It doesn't actually say what it is but it is so cool. I want it done up" *(male, S4, fee-paying urban)*

Plate 17: Imagery symbolising 'risk'

(male, S4, fee-paying urban)

The stolen police cone also had overtones of danger and illegality in the manner of its appropriation, a timeless 'rites of passage' prank favoured by teenage boys and students. Similarly, the attraction of the desirable car can be interpreted as symbolic of future status and the need for peer approval rather than merely for personal transport. In this example, both objects and mediated imagery combined to foster a distinct self-identity. Common themes included risk-taking, teenage rebellion and having fun. Personal identity was formed through the appropriation of cultural items

and followed up through the use of new media channels.

3.1.2 Social connections (maintaining ties with loved one or friends)

> S: "My wall is always covered in hundreds of photos. Because I have an obsession
> with photos. My favourite photo is of E. Because he does crazy stuff and dresses
> in woman's clothes" *(female, S4, state suburban)*

In this example, S's wall was covered in photographs of personal significance. Each photograph was taken by herself, favoured ones given pride of place. The photographs formed a mosaic of images, giving her room a distinctive style all of its own. Such examples offer multiple interpretations, evidence of Brown *et al.'s* categories of *differentiation* and *aesthetic expression.* Most of the photos were taken by digital camera allowing her the ability to develop creatively and produce the images. This was one of the few examples where an individual used digital media to produce creative forms of self-expression as predicted by Tapscott (1998) and Willis (1990) (for more traditional media).

3.1.3 Social differentiation/integration (being different from, or similar to, someone)

Several bedrooms showed signs of the desire to integrate into the cultural norms of a tribe or sub-culture. Post-modern cultural theorists have suggested that membership of such tribes is fragmented, overlapping and temporal (Maffesoli 1995). Membership has also become a global phenomenon, in part due to the influence of traditional and now new media sources. In one boy's bedroom, a Hibernian football strip was found pinned up below a Forza Italian football scarve. Using sports as an example, multiple overlapping memberships involving football teams, skateboard companies and surfing brands were very common especially amongst the boys. Girls were found to have more eclectic tastes, with aesthetic expression such as carefully designed collections of art postcards on bedroom walls replacing such sports tribalism.

For another boy M., attachment to his favoured football brand Manchester United pervaded his personal living space. There was little in the bedroom without red and

white associations; from posters to toys to bedside lights, in keeping with Maffesoli's concept of neo- tribal paraphernalia. As with the previous example of Ainslie Henderson, M.'s interest moved seamlessly from bedroom walls to a multitude of media formats nearby. He received monthly team magazines, followed his team through his bedroom satellite TV and received e-mails advising on future matches and travel plans. Both examples were indications that multiple (new) media use intensifies when adolescents develop a deeper sense of belonging and membership.

Plate 18: Neo tribal paraphernalia in the bedroom
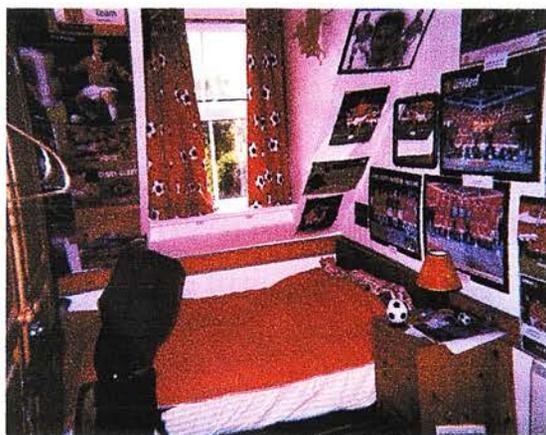
(male, S6, state rural)

Another signifier of social integration was the proliferation of personal collectables in the bedrooms of some girls. Collectables are signifiers of 'special objects', most likely located in the bedroom and essential for the creation of self-meaning and identity (Rochberg-Halton 1984). Collectables are thought to go out of fashion as pre-teens approach adolescence (Olmstead 1991). Porcelain dolls were however still proudly displayed in the bedrooms of some younger girls. For one girl, the dolls represented an affectionate reminder of a time passed. For another girl, her collection was the source of much pride with each of seventeen dolls on display above her bed. Such collections were signifiers of the membership of an 'in crowd' which had passed, a personal collection representing past status and social standing (Cova 1997). Livingtone (2002: 150) noted that "children's bedrooms house evidence of not only current enthusiasm but also previous enthusiasms".

Other forms of social membership such as clothing fashions, musical styles and celebrities appeared to be replacing collectables as signifiers of integration. The shift towards these more temporal signifiers has been conceptualised as:

> "…marking the transition from having personal stuff and so needing somewhere safe to put it to being a distinct individual and so needing somewhere private to express this".
> Livingstone (2002: 153)

As we shall discover later, privacy and the need to escape to a world of mediated influences was a characteristic of adolescence bedroom culture.

3.1.4 Aesthetic expression (personal art)

A few of the more creatively minded teenagers decorated their bedroom walls in a style befitting Brown et al.'s (1994) concept of aesthetic art. In one girl's bedroom, a wall was carefully constructed from art postcards, Japanese collectables, personal drawings & stylised toys. In another, the bedroom was decorated in 60's style surrounded by flower power imagery and icons. A final example came from a girl who decorated an entire wall using old CDs, creating an unusual and distinctive feature. In general however, bedrooms tended to be more mundane, reflecting mass marketed celebrities and sports stars rather than signifiers of personal expression and imagination.

Perhaps the most evident symbol of aesthetic expression came through adoption of certain fashionable possessions in teenage bedrooms. Lava lamps for example were seen as the epitome of personal 'cool', with chosen colours and design the source of animated conversations. Such trends or fads transcended the social boundaries of class, gender, and geography, although more commonly found in the bedrooms of older teens.

Plates 19 & 20: Aesthetic expression in the bedroom

(female, S4, fee-paying urban; female, S4, fee-paying urban)

3.1.5 Bricolage (compilation of disparate images and items)

Sometimes on purpose, at other times a reflection of their busy lifestyles and priorities, *bricolage* is a good way of summing up the collective environment of many teenage bedrooms. The phrase "organised chaos" was used several times to describe photographs in which images, objects, clothing, toys and media devices all collided in a seemingly random manner ...to all but the owners of that room!

> D: "Umm, that shot shows more skate and snowboarding on the walls, a notice with a stick, absolutely everything on it. There's a kind of organised mess to my walls and room...a few bits of random stuff, some fossils, it's like a bombsite, it's kind of hard to balance things because there's so much stuff, my favourite Tintin poster" *(male, S5, fee-paying urban)*

> S: "That is my room, what a mess. I just have everything in it that I use, my TV, CD player, my video, and then all my toiletries and my perfumes and everything. All my photographs, there is quite a lot of them, they are just around here. Cut bits and stick them on, all around ...I love the fact that everything is just crammed in, my room is quite small" *(female, S5, state rural)*

In such rooms, media can be viewed as an integral, almost taken-for-granted part of the bedroom landscape. TVs, videos and now computers blended in, very much part and parcel of daily routines and cultural norms of teenage bedroom life.

3.2. Bedrooms as places of escape

Participants were asked to describe the kinds of occasions when they might spend leisure time in their bedrooms. Beyond a place to sleep and do their homework, the bedroom represented a place for 'personal refuge' away from the pressures of living at home and the frenetic pace of daily lifestyles:

> B: "That's me lying on my bed, listening to music. That is my hammock which I love. That's my lamp and the light bulb I painted. I just enjoying chilling out up there from time to time"   *(male, S6, state rural)*

> IG: "What's the big attraction to your bedroom?"
> F: "It's quiet, I can just escape and get away from my mum and dad"
> L: "It's the one place I can scream when I get annoyed"
> *(two females, S5, state suburban)*

Such feelings do not appear to conform to the negative feelings of loneliness and depression sometimes associated with spending time alone in bedrooms. Rather, it was closer to the desire to be alone reported by Freeman *et al.* (1986), to unwind and "purify the mood state". Previous studies have also found that spending time alone, with the privacy it entails, can be psychologically healthy (Larson and Csikszentmihalyi 1978). The following quote highlighted the need for personal escape linked to the use of different forms of media:

> J: "Sometimes I like just getting away from everybody, and sitting alone, watching TV or spending time on my games console on my own or something like that"   *(male, S5, state suburban)*

These findings support Larson's (1995: 541) argument that solitude in bedrooms, particularly for younger adolescents, provides for emotional escape value, helping to stabilise and "cultivate the private self". There were however signs amongst a few older adolescents of less need to retreat to their 'bedroom refuges'. One sixteen year old suggested that he went through phases spending time listening to music in his room but more recently was as happy "just in the living room hanging out and stuff".

3.3 Media rich bedrooms

There is little doubt from the examples highlighted that teenage bedrooms did

provide places where media and identities intersect, as argued by Steel and Brown (1995). The posters on walls and bedroom possessions offered evidence of influences on identity development. Livingstone (2002: 134) argued however that it is the more direct forms of media use, especially "rich-media" that now allow for the "expression of individualised lifestyles on the part of young people".

Photographs taken by participants (Plate 21) support the diary findings of the prevalence of 'screen based media' in teenage bedrooms. Televisions, gaming consoles and recording devices were close at hand, centres for communication or 'electronic' refuges to combat loneliness and boredom:

> C: "I spend all my time there (in bedroom) because of the TV, video, Playstation and the digital box." *(male, S4, fee-paying school)*

> D: "Sometimes I like just getting away from them and sitting alone , watching my Tv or spending time on my games consoles or something like that" *(male, S6, state suburban)*

Musical systems also played a central part in the majority of these 'refuges', with music either the dominant mode of use or used in conjunction with other media and non-media activities. Such examples highlighted the intertwined nature of contemporary media choices, in media use and through bedroom location. Watching television, listening to music, gaming, and for a few, using the computer were sequential, sometimes simultaneous, bedroom experiences.

Plate 21: Multi-media in the bedroom

(male, S5, state suburban)

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3.3.1 Computers in the bedroom

The diary findings suggested that computers were located in about one in five bedrooms. It is important to assess how computer use fits into the context of bedroom culture. Apart from e-mailing and surfing the web, there were examples of computers becoming the focal point for communication, shifting the emphasis away from more traditional media sources. For two friends (both from more privileged backgrounds), computers had become the focal point for differing media reasons:

> D: "My computer holds hundreds and thousands of MP3's on it, so I guess it now acts as my radio and source of music"   *(male, S5, fee-paying urban)*

> P: "When I watch the TV, I quite often watch it on the internet in my bedroom…a wee window at the top right and corner with Friends or whatever program I'm watching, with maybe a DVD on and I don't need to watch the big TV downstairs"   *(male, S5, fee-paying urban)*

In both cases, the digital enthusiasm and expertise of the users contributed towards that 'media-rich' environment. In neither case was the media shared with other family members hence access was in the individual's favoured domestic location, the bedroom.

Plates 22 & 23: Computers assimilated into bedrooms

(male, S4, fee-paying urban, female, S5, fee-paying urban)

For a number of other participants, the computer was accessed in the bedroom for

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more functional reasons. The computer represented a means of either researching the internet for homework and/or completing homework using word processing packages. The bedroom was the perfect place to do this, offering peace and privacy. In such examples, the computer was seen more as a "necessary evil" than a pleasurable source entertainment and identity creation.

3.3.2 Media dispersion

Media access (in terms of number of media devices) did not automatically translate into media use in teenage bedrooms. Sometimes, the more state of the art television downstairs overcame any desire to watch TV upstairs in private:

> K: "I spend a lot of time downstairs as my tele in this room is too wee. I use the downstairs one as the main tele's down there and we have got two to choose from"
> *(female, S6, state suburban)*

The advent of satellite and digital television for teenagers such as D. meant happily trading the privacy of his bedroom for a better television viewing experience downstairs in the living room. Films and movies for example were cited as reasons for watching the downstairs television.

> D: "I've got my video and the PS2 there, I don't use my video but I use my PS2 a lot. We haven't linked the TV to all the rooms and I can't watch TV in my bedroom. So I spend more time downstairs than I do in my bedroom"
> *(male, S5, fee-paying urban)*

For individuals such as D., this did not necessarily translate into a time of sharing viewing and bonding with his parents. Indeed, it gave new meaning to the term 'living together separately', with parents and children negotiating to use the favoured family TV for their preferred programmes. There were a couple of examples of boys from more privileged backgrounds enjoying the benefits of digital television in their own bedrooms. For one particular boy, this was the source of considerable personal satisfaction and presumably peer group status. He boasted about being able to watch Champions League football in the luxury of his own bedroom using his new surround-sound speakers. His experiences were very much in the minority.

Locating computers in the bedroom did not always transform the bedroom into a rich

media environment. In a number of cases, computers were simply 'hand me downs':

> A: "That is the corner of my room. The computer is an old computer that the whole family has used, which is now relegated to my room, and my mum and dad were talking about being chucked out because no-one really used it. It doesn't get really used at all" *(male, S6, state rural)*

In the case of A., the computer was located in the bedroom as a way of pacifying his parents. The original motivation for locating the computer in the bedroom was education based and A. was happy to keep the computer in the bedroom on the pretence that it was being used for homework purposes.

3.4 Listening to music at home

When asked what would be the ideal way to spend an hour of free time, music was always high up the list of favoured pastimes. Listening to music (especially popular music) is known to increase substantially with the onset of adolescence (Larson *et al.* 1989, Hogg and Banister 2000). The range and styles of music talked about in the groups, from pop to R&B, ethnic to house, grunge to gothic rock highlighted the 'tribal' nature of music listening amongst a clearly passionate audience. The posters on the bedroom walls were testament to this.

Listening to music often combined with other leisure activities as Larson and Richards (1994) observed. The advent of music access through computer downloading has however accentuated this trend. One boy from the *fee-paying* school described how he was able to do his homework, chat to friends online, and listen to music all at once. He referred to this practice as "multi-tasking", illustrating how well known this concept has become. Listening to online radio stations or playing downloading tracks through the computer was a popular activity.

Since Larson's studies in the early nineties, the face of music has changed rapidly with the onset of the 'downloading culture'. The desire to download music from the internet, store on the computer, burn it onto a CD or copy it to an mp3 player was discussed across diverse backgrounds, age groups and lifestyles. The ability to shift systematically to this digitised way of music consumption varied widely depending

on background and access to suitable technology. Downloading for example was only effective if the participants had access to fast download speeds through broadband connections. Downloading also required confidence in manipulating online file-sharing programmes such as KaZaA or WinMX. Participants from less privileged backgrounds tended to have poorer access to electronic playing devices such as mp3 players and computers in their bedrooms. As such, they remained a distant but desirable device. The most extreme example of this was the i-pod, universally desirable amongst music listeners but accessible to a select few at the time of this study.

The move towards a 'downloading culture' was another contributing factor in the deepening of 'at home' entertainment. Music is now accessible at (some) young people's fingertips through the assimilation of computers and electronic devices into daily lives. This increasingly digital nature of mobile music machines such as the i-pod is gathering pace, enabling the smooth transition from 'at home' listening to 'out of home' listening. As with many other facets of online media however, downloading music has its share of problems to overcome.

4. Conclusions

This chapter has moved beyond measuring time spent to exploring the socio-cultural settings for media use.

Four key themes emerged helping to contextualise youth lifestyles 'out of the home'. Firstly, two very contrasting rural lifestyles were explored, illustrating that diversity operated within, as well as beyond, geographical boundaries. Linking the 'rural ideal' and 'hanging out on street corners' was ambivalence towards the use of new forms of media. Mobiles and the internet were used on occasion to facilitate or discuss such activities but remained very much on the periphery. They acted as a convenience rather than a cultural necessity. This was in sharp contrast to the overwhelming influence of media 'at home'. Secondly, consuming music 'out of the home' illustrated how integrated the worlds of music, technology and new media have become. D's ability to digitally disseminate her experiences with her friends highlighted her role as cultural producer as well as recipient with the help of new

media. Thirdly, the dominance of formalised sports and hobbies of previous generations is giving way to more personalised forms of activity, emphasising young people's desires for greater self-expression and alternative group identification. In both formal and alternative forms, new media played a subordinate role, allowing young people to prepare for and then reflect on such experiences. Fourthly, centrality of peer group socialising and its associated media use was evident through both 'best friend' and 'groups of mates' status.

At home, the findings re-inforced the bedroom as a place of deep cultural and mediated significance. The five-fold categorisation based on Brown *et al.* (1994) illustrated the many ways in which mediated images and objects shape young people's bedroom identities. New and traditional forms of media were accepted facets of this bedroom culture. The concept of 'bricolage' epitomised the seemingly chaotic and random coming together of objects, images, and media devices into an identity unique to each individual. Bedrooms also offered a number of personal gratifications allowing young people the time and space to develop, both personally and in their relations with others.

Within adolescent bedrooms, screen based media continued to dominate although a small number of participants did match the levels of new media enthusiasm predicted by Tapscott (1998). Computers however in locations other than the bedroom, combined with participants' indifference, meant that the internet (in particular) was rarely central to bedroom culture. Music downloading, a key aspect of their 'at home' entertainment, was for example conducted elsewhere in the house and consumed 'out of the home'.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

NEW MEDIA USES AND GRATIFICATIONS

1. Uses and gratifications: initial analysis

1.1 Understanding new media consumption

The third major objective of the study was to compare and contrast young people's uses of traditional media choices such as television and radio with prevalent new ones such as the internet and mobile phones. This section moves beyond aspects of 'when' towards more motivational dimensions. To accomplish this, analysis has been conducted on the uses and gratifications (U&G) section of the quantitative data set. The first stage involved assessing how closely young people's motivations for media use matched a pre-determined list of twenty-four statements. Using the framework laid out by Rubin (1981, 1983) and modified after the pilot study, gratification scores have been divided into categories according to their anticipated reasons for use. The most compelling reasons for media use can be assessed through the lowest mean 'uses and gratification' scores. The findings are presented in Table 30. The section starts with an assessment of internet gratifications.

1.2 Internet gratifications

The figures listed in Table 30 reinforce the notion that new media in general, and the internet in particular, are multi-dimensional entities involving a complex array of usage motivations. *Mean* scores under *3.0* indicate more powerful motivations, and for the internet, these spanned aspects of companionship, entertainment, escapism and information provision. The figures confirm the findings of Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999) that the internet offers a great deal more than as a source of information. Young people believed the internet also provided a valued source of entertainment, corroborating the findings of Eighmey and McCord (1998). The two most powerful

motivations however provide most insight into the underlying motivations for why young people use (and don't use) the internet.

The strongest reason for internet use cited was 'when I have nothing better to do' (*mean 2.1*). This suggests that the internet was rarely a first choice activity when competing for young people's free time. Accessing the internet as a second or third choice activity re-inforced diary observations that the internet was used as a 'shoulder' activity; for mental sustenance and boredom prevention, before or after more motivating pursuits. Television acted in a similar manner (*mean 1.60*) but with stronger 'entertainment' motivations. Beyond acting as this 'shoulder activity', the internet was also perceived as a convenient source of media content (*mean 2.25*). Although mobile phones were considered even more convenient (given their portable characteristics), the internet offered a readily accessible form of mediated information, entertainment and/or communication. This indicated that access was not a major barrier for most in this sample, apart from a minority from more deprived backgrounds. As the qualitative findings will highlight, quality of access has become the dominant access issue.

The findings also indicated strength of association with information provision. Researchers such as Muylle *et al.* (1999) have argued that the internet is a highly active medium, best suited to goal orientated activities. In this study, young people favoured the internet to access the 'most up to date information and advice' (*mean 2.25*). Within this statement, the time element can be interpreted as being crucial. Scores for all other information gratifications were weaker, indicating that the benefit of access to instantaneous information was a powerful motivation to use. 'Up to date information and advice' was the only dominant internet gratification which achieved a more powerful mean score than any of the other mediums listed (see Table 31).

Table 30 Mean gratification scores: internet

I use the internet …'	Category*	Mean	S.D.
When there's no one else to talk or be with	Companionship	2.61	1.291
Because it's so convenient	Ease	2.59	1.143
Because it entertains me	Entertainment	1.60	0.720
Because it amuses me	Entertainment	2.01	1.014
So I can forget about school and other things	Escapism	2.51	1.263
So I can get away from what I'm doing	Escapism	2.72	1.391
Because I just like to use it	Habit	1.71	0.925
Because it is more intimate and personal to me	Identity	4.22	0.930
For the most up to date information and advice	Information	2.87	1.171
It shows me what society is like nowadays	Information	3.45	1.216
Because I am curious as to what I am missing	Information	3.47	1.286
So I can learn how to do things	Information	3.49	1.169
Because it helps me learn about myself and others	Information	3.66	1.110
Because it helps me decide what to buy	Information	3.72	1.209
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	Information	4.40	0.926
Because it relaxes me	Mood Enhancement	2.57	0.986
Because it's exciting	Mood Enhancement	2.73	1.209
Because it gives me a lift	Mood Enhancement	3.65	1.160
When I have nothing better to do	Pass Time	1.86	1.027
So I can talk with other people about what's on	Social Interaction	2.93	1.270
Because it's something I do with friends	Social Interaction	3.32	1.232
So I can be with other members of the family or friends	Social Interaction	3.32	1.271
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	Social Interaction	3.80	1.226
To be like my friends	Social Interaction	4.39	0.937

* Categorisation based on factor analysis findings by Rubin (1981) and then for the internet by Kaye (1998), and findings from pilot study (Grant 2002).

Table 31 illustrates that mobile phones were not (yet) associated with the provision of 'most up to date information' (*mean 3.36*). This may be surprising to those responsible for the marketing of time related text messaging services such as football scores and gambling. It is anticipated that such services may become a contentious future battleground; marketing practitioners are keen to exploit locational and temporal sensitive services (Dholakia and Dholkia 2004) whilst consumers want to preserve such mediated space for their own personal communication needs.

Practitioners such as Wunker and Hughes (2001) advocate mobile marketing as the optimal combination of "targeting" and "instantaneous actionability". It is evident from this research that the internet but crucially not yet mobile phones represent an accepted method of accessing up to date information and advice.

Other aspects of information provision beyond temporal aspects did achieve above average scores for the internet. A score of *3.81* for 'Because it shows me what society is like' corroborated other study findings that the internet enables young people to learn about society and the world surrounding them (Verrept and Gardiner 2000, Stald 2004). No medium however, including the internet, was highly valued as a source of education on such matters. Ebersole (2000) also found that "pleasurable experiences" ranked higher than "learned information" for the internet.

A number of questions arise from this finding requiring more detailed research exploration. Firstly, is this finding simply confirmation that young people's priorities in their late teens are not (yet) orientated towards self-education and improvement? Undoubtedly, more impulsive, hedonistic pleasures will continue to provide compelling reasons to fill their leisure time. High levels of agreement with attitudinal scores such as 'I try to have as much fun as I can and let the future take care of itself' appear to re-inforce this suggestion. The most powerful gratification media can offer (measured in this study) was the entertainment provided by going to the cinema (*mean 1.53*). Secondly, are educational gratifications so strongly associated with school activity that they suffer in comparison to other attractions? It was clear that no media choice was associated with helping young people form their moral and ethical values. In keeping with U&G theory, such findings assume that consumers are active and capable of forming such judgements. This however assumes that media does not act on a more subliminal, subconscious level influencing young people's morals and value systems.

The internet has increasingly been characterised as the ideal environment for helping consumers search for information and advice on what to buy. For most young people however, the internet does not (yet) fulfil this kind of information searching. This contradicts 'evangelistic' commentators such as Lindstrom and Seybold (2003) who suggested that children often assist and even lead purchase decision making because

of their much-vaunted internet expertise. For the young people in this research, magazines continued to provide a more attractive and perhaps credible source for information on purchasing decisions. It is also evident that television was not readily associated with such buying decisions. The data suggests that young people do not always actively seek out television (and implicitly TV adverts) primarily to access purchasing information. Researchers such as O'Donohoe (1994) and Ritson and Elliott (1999) have long suggested that young people consume television advertising for many varied reasons beyond retrieving information directly concerning the product or service being advertised.

The research confirmed that the internet provided a means of accessing and enjoying different forms of entertainment. It indicates that there were 'passive' as well as 'active' reasons for internet use. MSN messenger style chatrooms, online gaming and website surfing were all common forms of entertainment keeping young people logged onto the internet, sometimes for hours at a time. It does appear that the internet has caught up with more traditional forms of teenage 'entertainment' such as magazines but still falls a long way behind the more visually dominant television and cinema. It remains to be seen whether advances in technology will encourage more young people actively to prefer the internet to television as their preferred domestic source of entertainment.

1.3 Mobile gratifications

One of the more surprising observations from the research was the lack of compelling reasons offered by young people for using mobile phones, particularly for 'social interaction' uses. The comparatively weaker scores for many of the gratifications are highlighted in Table 32. Indeed, convenience ('because it was so convenient', *mean score 2.04*) was the only statement in which mobiles were clearly the preferred media choice.

Given the high level of usage of mobiles by young people, it should follow that strong underlying motivations do exist. The findings confirmed that mobile appeal centred primarily on 'social interaction' and 'entertainment' gratifications. Scores of less than 3.0 *mean* for 'so I can talk with other people about what's going on' and 'because it's

something I do with friends' highlighted the social aspects of mobile phone use.

Table 31 Mean gratifications scores across media types

Gratification	Category	Internet	Mobile	Television	Radio	Cinema	Magazine
When there's no one else to talk or be with	1. Companionship	2.97	2.95	2.61	3.26	4.27	3.11
Because it's so convenient	2. Ease	2.25	2.04	2.59	2.62	3.17	2.92
Because it entertains me	3. Entertainment	2.34	2.85	1.60	2.20	1.53	2.43
Because it amuses me	3. Entertainment	2.80	3.03	2.01	2.74	2.02	2.86
So I can get away from what I'm doing	4. Escapism	2.89	3.37	2.72	3.06	2.85	3.02
So I can forget about school and other things	4. Escapism	3.14	3.33	2.51	3.34	2.55	2.97
Because I just like to use/ watch/listen/go to/visit	5. Habit	2.78	3.62	1.71	1.97	2.23	2.35
Because it is more intimate and personal to me	6. Identity	4.05	3.72	4.22	4.15	4.18	4.11
For the most up to date information and advice	7. Information	2.25	3.63	2.87	2.78	4.24	2.79
So I can learn how to do things	7. Information	3.49	4.10	3.49	4.18	4.33	3.53
Because it helps me learn about and others	7. Information	3.58	4.10	3.66	4.04	4.17	3.36
Because I am curious as to what I am missing	7. Information	3.64	3.75	3.47	3.78	3.52	3.51
Because it helps me decide what to buy	7. Information	3.66	4.37	3.72	4.25	4.44	3.31
It shows me what society is like nowadays	7. Information	3.81	4.26	3.45	3.82	4.08	3.82
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	7. Information	4.42	4.45	4.40	4.46	4.46	4.33
Because it's exciting	8. Mood Enhancement	3.08	3.41	2.73	3.39	2.21	3.37
Because it relaxes me	8. Mood Enhancement	3.27	3.38	2.57	2.86	2.47	2.55
Because it gives me a lift	8. Mood Enhancement	3.55	3.73	3.65	3.61	3.13	3.58
When I have nothing better to do	9. Pass Time	2.10	3.00	1.86	2.78	3.17	2.55
So I can talk with other people about what's on	10. Social Interaction	3.34	2.98	2.93	3.78	2.90	3.56
Because it's something I do with friends	10. Social Interaction	3.41	2.84	3.32	3.89	1.55	3.84
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	10. Social Interaction	3.65	3.55	3.80	4.10	3.56	3.97
To be like my friends	10. Social Interaction	4.05	3.89	4.39	4.42	3.81	4.26
So I can be with other members of the family or friends	10. Social Interaction	4.23	3.91	3.32	4.28	2.74	4.28

The relatively weak scores however for many of the other gratification statements (yet high levels of mobile access and use) suggest that stronger motivations might exist but were not fully recorded. Leung and Wei (2000) discovered seven gratification clusters but their study did not compare competing media choices and so was less restrictive in the number of gratification statements presented to participants. Non U & G studies of mobile motivations amongst teenagers such as Ling (2000) have concentrated on motives for owning rather than using mobiles.

One methodological interpretation of this finding could be that young people struggled to compare mobile phone use with the other media listed in this survey. By using a standardised list of statements across all media, it may be that a number of specific mobile phone motivations were missed. It might also indicate that mobile use was quite different from other media types and should be treated separately by academics and practitioners alike. The findings from the qualitative research underline this point by suggesting that young people did not consciously perceive mobile phones as a mediated format in the same conscious manner as television or newspapers.

1.4 Assessing media gratifications by age, gender, school type and frequency of use.

Before seeking underlying uses and gratifications through factor analysis, initial analysis was carried out on whether significant relationships could be found between individual internet gratifications and traditional discriminators of age, gender, (school) background and frequency of use.

Although this study did not set out to hypothesise *a priori* relationships, it is important to assess further the characteristics of the individual gratifications used. One way of doing this is to assess the relationships that exist between each gratification and a range of independent variables. This required a bi-variate analysis to explore such relationships using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's r). This was chosen because the nature of the variables was deemed 'interval' (Bryman and Cramer 2001). Two tailed tests were conducted as the direction of the relationship was not assumed. Cohen and Holliday (1982) give guidance on what constitutes a significant size of relationship: $<0.19 = $ *very low*, 0.20-0.39 $= $ *low*, 0.40-0.69$= $ *modest*, 0.70-0.89$= $ *high*, 0.90-1$=$*very high*.

After completing the bi-variate analysis, no significant relationships were found for either age, gender or school type. This might have been a consequence of the relatively low sample size. It might also be an indication that, although there are clear differences in levels of access and usage, underlying motivators to use the internet are more uniform across variables. Frequency of internet use did however highlight a

number of significant, albeit weak relationships (identified as <0.3 significance). These are illustrated in Table 32, ranked in order of strength of relationship. The table indicates that the more entertainment-based gratifications are more strongly related to frequency of use. Again, this suggests that more frequent 'advocates' of the internet are more likely to value the internet as more than just a source of information and communication.

Table 32 Bi-variate correlations between internet gratifications and frequency of use

Significant gratifications	Pearson r	Sign. (2-tailed)
Because it amuses me	0.287	0.000
Because it is so convenient	0.279	0.000
Because it relaxes me	0.271	0.000
Because it gives me a lift	0.256	0.001
Because it entertains me	0.251	0.001
Because it is exciting	0.200	0.008
So I can get away from what I am doing	0.186	0.014
When there is no-one else to talk to	0.176	0.020
Because I just like to interact with it	0.170	0.024
So I can forget about school and other things	0.165	0.029

Previous U&G research studies have assessed the strength of relationships of the independent variables on the basis of combined gratifications using factor analysis. Before drawing any firm conclusions therefore, the next section will outline findings of the exploratory factor analysis.

2. Deriving multivariate factor analysis

2.1 Data reduction using factor analysis

This section covers the assessment of interrelationships that might exist between different uses and gratifications, for the media types concerned. Again, the focus will be on a detailed study of the internet factors and then a comparison with factors extracted from comparable media options. Given the large number of independent variables utilised for assessing media gratifications, data reduction was required to achieve a deeper understanding of the underlying, interrelationships between study variables. Exploratory factor analysis using principal component analysis (PCA) was

chosen as the ideal data reduction technique. For a detailed overview of the rationale for this choice, refer to the Appendix 8.

2.2 Assessing appropriateness of data set

Before embarking on PCA factor analysis, care was needed to ensure that the research design and subsequent data set was suitable for such an undertaking. The first consideration emanating from the questionnaire design stage was to ensure that interval style data was collected using a five-point interval scale. Such scales are the most common method of measuring and then factor analysing U&G based research.

Secondly, once the research has taken place, account was taken of sample size and nature of data. A visual inspection of the 175 completed questionnaires revealed that 8 questionnaires were filled out indiscriminately with the participants filling in the same answer for every variable. This can be interpreted as examples of participants being bored with the task required. Initial cluster analysis including those cases resulted in a set of relatively meaningless data and so it was decided to remove them from subsequent runs. No further cases were removed and all outliers retained for final factor extraction. Although the final sample size for factoring was relatively small because of the constraints of researching in multi-site schools, a sample of 167 cases is considered adequate for factor analysis (Gorsuch 1983, Comrey and Lee 1992). Most importantly, researchers wishing to conduct factor analysis need to be confident that the number of cases per variable is above the 1:5 ratio recommended as a minimum (Gorsuch 1983, Hair *et al.* 1998). With twenty-four variables, the ratio of 1:7 in this study was deemed sufficient, if not ideal.

Thirdly, a number of statistical tests should be conducted before a data set is deemed worthy of factor analysis. The two simplest procedures involve an examination of the correlation data matrix and related communalities. If a visual inspection of the coefficients of each combination of variables reveals a majority of correlations smaller than 0.3, then factor analysis is inappropriate. The analysis of variable coefficients for each media choice is listed in Table 33.

Table 33: Analysis of variable coefficient matrix

Media gratification	% variable coefficients * (= or < 0.3)
Magazines	17.2%
Internet	23.3%
Mobile	26.4%
Radio	36.6%
Cinema	46.0%
TV	80.7%

* 576 variable matrix combinations

A visual inspection of the correlation matrix revealed that three possible factors solutions, magazines, internet and mobiles have a significant majority of variable coefficients equal to or greater than 0.3. The relatively small number of variable coefficients for television on the other hand suggested that a factor analysis of TV uses and gratifications would be inappropriate. It was decided therefore to seek further evidence of appropriateness before proceeding with any extracted factor solutions. A second test of appropriateness was to ensure the independence of populations of variables by testing for the overall significance of all correlations within the matrix. This is done using Bartlett's test of sphericity (see Hair *et al.* 1998: 98). Table 34 indicates the chi-squared scores for each of the media choices factored.

Table 34: Additional measures of factor appropriateness

Media gratification	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (276 d.f.)	Kaiser - Meyer- Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
TV	1045.527	0.780
Radio	1826.571	0.872
Internet	1921.785	0.905
Cinema	1734.332	0.877
Mobile	1912.747	0.904
Magazines	2559.695	0.924

The high significance of each of the values found in Bartlett's test (with the exception of TV) allows for the rejection of the hypothesis that data sets do not contain independent variables. Hair *et al.* (1998) also suggested testing for sampling adequacy using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (Kaiser 1970). This ensures that variables 'belong' together. The index ranges from 0 to 1, a score of 1 implying that each variable can be perfectly predicted without error by the other variables. Scores of 0.90+ are considered *marvellous,* 0.80+ *meritorious,* 0.70+ *middling,* 0.60+

mediocre, 0.50+ *miserable* and below 0.50 *unacceptable* (Kaiser and Rice 1974). In this study, the only score that did not achieve at least *meritorious* was for TV. The remaining scores were more convincing considering that one of the conditions for high scores is larger sample sizes (Hair *et al.* 1998). Based on the appropriateness tests therefore, it was decided to proceed with initial factor derivations for all media choices with the unfortunate exception of TV.

2.3. Initial factor derivation

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted on each of the five media choices to identify underlying structures of relationships. Method of extraction was principal component analysis (PCA) for the reasons laid out in the methodological overview. The initial statistics for the unrotated factor solution indicate the number of factors to be extracted and the degree of variation accounted by each of the possible factor solutions. Table 35 presents the total amount of variation explained by the initial eigenvalues, for each of the media choices.

Table 35: Comparisons of factor variations explained

Initial eigenvalues: total

	Radio	Cinema	Internet	Mobiles	Magazines
Factor 1	8.170	8.015	9.176	9.901	11.199
Factor 2	2.883	3.060	2.225	1.883	2.370
Factor 3	1.451	1.262	1.363	1.483	1.237
Factor 4	1.146	1.203	1.240	1.116	0.995
Factor 5	1.123	1.107	1.010	1.037	0.925
Factor 6	0.936	1.013	0.917	0.959	
Factor 7		0.884			

Using the 1.0 eignenvalue 'cutoff' point illustrated in Table 35, the number of factors to be extracted would be as follows; radio *five*, cinema *six*, internet *five*, mobiles *five*, magazines *three*.

Table 36: Comparisons of cumulative factor variations

Initial eigenvalues: cumulative (%

	Radio	Cinema	Internet	Mobiles	Magazines
Factor 1	34.041	33.395	38.235	39.603	46.663
Factor 2	46.053	46.145	47.507	47.134	56.539
Factor 3	52.100	51.401	53.187	53.066	61.692
Factor 4	56.877	56.412	58.353	57.529	65.694
Factor 5	61.554	61.023	62.561	61.678	
Factor 6		65.244	66.382		
Factor 7					

2.4 Identifying internet gratifications

Interpreting Tables 35 and 36 specifically for the internet, a five-factor solution accounted for over 61% of the internet variation and a sixth factor solution would only add another 3.821% of variation. If further clarification is needed on the optimum number of clusters, a further step is to conduct a visual scree test plot as outlined by Cattell (1966).

Figure 16: Internet gratifications scree plot
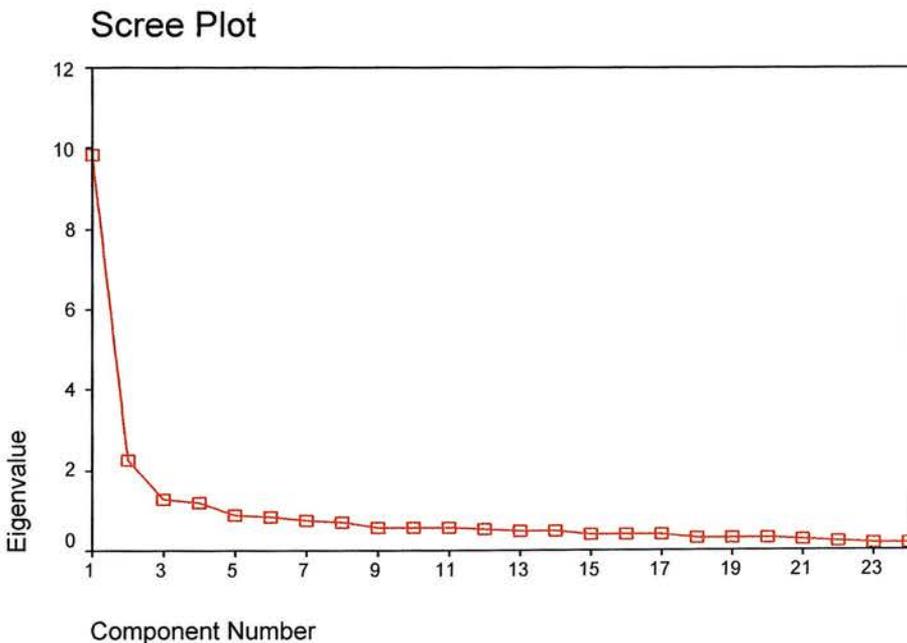
Figure 16 illustrates the sharp decrease in variation between factors one and two, and then a more modest drop after factor five. Given that this more 'subjective' method might indicate five factors as optimum (assuming two factors do not explain enough of the variance), it was decided to conduct comparative factor analysis for five and

then six factor solutions. This was done to see if the sixth factor would add a further dimension to the insights drawn from the study. From this comparative analysis, it was concluded that the sixth factor solution did not provide for a more insightful solution and therefore a final decision was taken on a five-factor solution for internet gratifications. Scree plots and comparative testing (where needed) were also conducted for the remaining media options chosen before final factor solutions were arrived at.

Once the ideal number of factors had been identified, the data was rotated using orthogonal rotation with varimax before a final factor solution was arrived at, for each of the five media alternatives.

3. Internet Uses and Gratifications factor analysis

3.1 Final solution

The final rotated component matrix is presented in Table 37. Five factors with an eigen value greater than 1 were identified, accounting for 62.56% of the variation. The table lists the variables within each factor together with the rotated score for the eigenvalue, and percentage of variance explained. In interpreting the factor matrix, cognisance must be taken of the sample size (Hair *et al.* 1998). In samples of under 200, any variable factor loading of less than 0.4 should be ignored. Loadings of 0.4 to 0.5 are italicised in the table to highlight their reduced significance. Factor labelling is also an essential element in the interpretation of each factor extracted. Guidance is taken from the variables that load most heavily on each factor but labelling remains essentially a subjective activity (Tabachnick and Fidell 2000). The resulting factors and labelling are laid out in Table 37.

The following sections will now discuss each factor in turn, from strongest to weakest.

Table 37: PCA explanatory factors: internet gratifications

Factor components	Rotated d score	Eigenvalue	% explained	Cronbach alpha
Factor 1: Mood enhancement		9.176	38.235	0.751
Because it entertains me	0.806			
Because it amuses me	0.804			
Because it is exciting	0.736			
Because it gives me a lift	0.591			
Because it relaxes me *	0.551			
Because I just like to interact with it	*0.469*			
Factor 2: Experiential learning		2.225	9.272	0.804
Because it helps me to learn about things about myself and others	0.762			
So I can learn how to do things	0.715			
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	0.662			
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	0.640			
To be like my friends	0.548			
Because I am curious as to what I am missing *	*0.475*			
Factor 3: Passive escapism		1.363	5.681	0.839
When I have nothing better to do	0.730			
So I can get away from what I'm doing	0.642			
When there's no one else to talk to or be with	0.620			
So I can talk with other people about what's going on	0.587			
So I can forget about school and other things	0.567			
Because it is so convenient *	0.530			
Because it's something I do with friends	0.506			
Factor 4: Personalised contact/communication		1.240	5.166	0.683
So I can be with other members of my family or friends	0.697			
Because it is intimate and personal to me	0.535			
It shows me what society is like nowadays	*0.451*			
Factor 5: Purchase information and advice		1.010	4.208	0.485
Because it helps me decide what to buy	0.743			
For the most up to date information and advice	0.695			

* Denotes highly loaded on two factors

3.2 Factor 1: Mood enhancement

The cluster accounting for the largest amount of variance, combining the strongest set of motivations has been labelled 'Mood enhancement'. This spans not just entertainment components found in previous studies (Kaye and Johnson 2002, Korgaonkar and Wolin 1999, Eighmey and McCord 1998) but also attributes which changed the mood status of the user (for example, to 'give me a lift' or to 'relax me'). Discovering entertainment to be one of the more powerful sets of motivations corroborated the findings of Kaye (1998) and Ebersole (2000). Perhaps not surprisingly, researchers have also found that the heaviest users find the internet more entertaining and pleasurable (Chou and Hsiao 2000).

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The emphasis on mood enhancement differed from the findings of La Ferle *et al.* (2000) who maintained that the internet was used amongst adolescents primarily for information based activities (e.g. research, homework, news and current affairs). This research suggested that mood enhancement was a more powerful motivator in absolute terms although information searching may ultimately have been the internet's differentiator. Given that this research was conducted amongst teenagers, it should not be surprising that mood enhancement ranked above more functional activities such as searching for information. The internet offers much in the way of opportunities to enhance mood change given the range of content and interactive services. It still however lacks the visual affective experience offered by cinema (and television to a lesser extent). This in part might explain why although mood was the internet's most powerful motivation, other media were still more preferable for entertainment based gratifications. It might be hypothesised from this finding that the internet will never seriously displace television until the standard and nature of entertainment improves. Linn back in 1994 concluded that the internet will only displace traditional media when it can "deliver services, content and entertainment attractively or conveniently". Undoubtedly the spread of broadband access and increased interactivity will impact on this but it remains to be seen if many of the barriers to use will be overcome.

3.3 Factor 2: Experiential learning

The second most powerful motivator grouped together a number of statements revolving around the desire for personal learning and experiences. The world-wide-web in particular, offers limitless opportunities for learning about and experiencing all aspects of society and contemporary living; adolescents are believed to use media to help define the world around them (Arnett 1995). The interactive elements of the internet mean that such experiences are not learnt in isolation but can be discussed and exchanged with friends and peers through e-mailing, chat rooms and bulletin boards. Tapscott (1998) suggested that the internet is the perfect place for 'active young people' to find out things for themselves. Although not a strong loading, the final attribute in the factor ('to be like my friends') did indicate that there may be peer

pressure involved in internet use (although specifically for more personal learning and experience is more difficult to understand).

Another consideration emerging from this factor was the use of the internet for more formal educational learning. Use of the internet in schools is now almost universal and increasing amounts of homework are now done on the internet. It is not clear from the statements and factor composition to what degree formal education was part of the underlying factor although the qualitative research suggested that it undoubtedly played a part. The fact that learning (personal and more formal) was the second highest motivator to use the internet appears to allay fears that internet use for institutionalised learning has created a negative image, discouraging leisure time use. Higher loading statements such as 'helps me learn about myself and others' indicates that such learning may be more about self-development and social skills than helping to pass school exams.

An important aspect of this factor was that it has not been grouped together with purchasing motivations. The composition of the factor matches what Kaye and Johnson (2002) described as surveillance (finding out or searching for information about some feature of society of the world around them) but did not appear to relate to classic information searching for consumer purchasing. Although there is a separate factor concerning this, it only accounts for 4% of the variance. This has important implications as it suggests that young people's information searching using the internet was more concerned with personal learning than personal consumption of products and services.

3.4 Factor 3: Passive escapism

Escapism is a classic motivation associated with most types of media, particularly television. Increasing levels of access and the convenience of the internet for many mean that it was often used to fill time. Unlike television (until the emergence of Sky + in the UK), content could be accessed twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. Ease of use has been highlighted by previous U&G internet researchers such as Eighmey (1997). Some aspects of the internet are particularly suited to escapism such as surfing for new websites, chatroom discussions and spontaneous e-mailing. Such

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motivations were not the goal orientated motivations often associated with internet use (Muylle *et al.* 1999), again highlighting that the internet is suited to passive as well as more active and interactive pursuits. As the qualitative research will show however, convenient access did not always equate to unrestricted use. The lower levels of access in teenage bedrooms and limited points of access in each household may have hindered its convenience.

3.5 Factor 4: Personalised contact/communication

At first reading, the fourth most important internet motivation would appear to offer an element of contradiction. Statements such as 'so I can be with other members of my family or friends' suggested the social interaction dimension Kaye (1998) first highlighted. However, the statement 'because it is intimate and personal to me' also suggests the more individualistic personal involvement advocated by Eighmey and McCord (1997), albeit in a business context.

Kaye claimed that internet use for social interaction, motivated by the need to communicate with friends and family, was not an attempt to counter loneliness but the best way for known individuals to communicate when separated by geography (see also Franzen 2000, Dimmeck *et al.* 2000). Such interactions have now been enhanced by the increasingly popularity of digital imaging allowing friends and family to exchange more than just text. The massive popularity of messenger services such as MSN amongst teenagers, offering a closed form of 'peer-to-peer' text-based communication, will also have contributed to this factor.

The internet however also has a history of encouraging new friendships beyond known relationships. Chatrooms and bulletin boards have allowed users to access strangers on a social basis in a way that might not otherwise have been feasible. Its unique two-way interaction has long been cited as one of the main advantages of the internet (Ainscough and Luckett 1996). Therefore, the grouping of 'to be with other members of my family' and 'because it is intimate and personal to me' may not be as strange as first appears. Undoubtedly, the privacy of internet use and the 'one-to-one' relationships of the internet encouraged different kinds of socialisation, sometimes on a more personal and discreet level. It avoids the problems of peer pressure and

awkward situations that meetings with others beyond close peer group pose. Indeed, it has been argued that the asynchronous features of interactive communication (Dimmeck *et al.* 2000) allow for greater convenience whilst ensuring that the user remains in control of the nature and degree of contact. The attractions and dangers of contact with strangers through chatrooms will be returned to in later chapters.

3.6 Factor 5: Purchase information and advice

The final and weakest motivator to use the internet was labelled 'Purchase information and advice'. This factor linked the desire for a convenient source of information and a source of information and advice on purchasing information.

On one level, one might expect this to be an important factor given suggestions that young people are reputed to be family internet experts with their technological literacy and information surfing expertise (Tapscott 1998). There was however limited evidence reinforcing this claim, re-enforcing suggestions from the pilot study that there exist significant barriers to commercial engagement online. This subject was therefore explored in greater depth in qualitative discussions. Another reason for further exploration was the relatively low reliability score for this factor (a= 0.485).

4. Mobile Uses and Gratifications factor analysis

Table 38 highlights the five factor solution for mobile phones, considered a new (er) form of mediated communication with some perceived similarities to the internet. The table confirms that use of mobile phones was primarily concerned with entertainment based motivations.

4.1 Convenient entertainment

The loading of 'because it entertains me' dominated the first factor labelled 'convenient entertainment'. Earlier mean scores however suggest that mobile phones remain less entertaining in absolute terms than for most other media. Therefore, the critical element in this factor is its combination with statements such as 'because it is

so convenient' which does not feature in the comparable internet factor. The sheer convenience of mobiles, highlighted earlier, undoubtedly plays a significant role. More than any other media, mobile-based communication offers entertainment (in the form of texting, verbal conversation and sometimes internet services), at the touch of a button. Adolescents' use of telephony services, for fun and enjoyment, was recognised several years ago (Williams *et al.* 1998). More recent non-U&G based studies of mobile use amongst Finnish teenagers have highlighted the trendy, impulsive nature of phone-based consumption (Wilska 2003).

Table 38: PCA explanatory factors: mobile gratifications

Factor components	Rotated d score	Eigenvalue	% explained	Cronbach alpha
Factor 1: Convenient entertainment		9.901	39.603	0.839
Because it entertains me	0.810			
When I have nothing better to do *	0.616			
Because it relaxes me	0.602			
Because it is so convenient	0.550			
For the most up to date information and advice *	0.552			
Because it amuses me	0.551			
Because it's something I do with friends*	0.464			
Factor 2: Social stimulation		1.883	7.531	0.807
Because it gives me a lift *	0.633			
Because it is exciting *	0.626			
So I can be with other members of my family or friends	0.606			
So I can learn how to do things *	0.544			
To be like my friends	0.523			
Because I just like to read them*	0.422			
Factor 3: Experiential learning		1.483	5.933	0.782
Because it helps me form my moral /ethical values	0.773			
Because it helps me decide what to buy	0.732			
Because it helps me to learn things about myself and others	0.615			
Factor 4: Escapism		1.116	4.462	0.714
So I can forget about school and other things	0.753			
When there is no one else to talk to or be with	0.706			
So I can get away from what I'm doing	0.618			
Because I am curious as to what I am missing *	0.396			
Factor 5: Purchase information and advice		1.037	4.150	0.286
Because it helps me decide what to buy*	0.795			
So I can talk with other people about what's on	0.615			

* Denotes highly loaded on two factors

4.2 Social stimulation

The second factor draws from entertainment and socially based motivations and has

been labelled 'social stimulation'. This can be explained by the combination of stimulating gratifications such as 'because it is exciting' and 'because it gives me a lift' with social gratifications such as 'so I can be with other members of my friends and family'. It suggests a linkage between the anticipation, and then subsequent gratification, of receiving a text or phone call from family and especially friends. This ties in with the social dimensions of mobile chatting, sharing of secrets and instigating romance suggested by Tran (2003). It re-inforces the importance of peer based communication through new media and suggests that mobile use has important emotional dimensions overlooked by previous studies (Leung and Wei 2000, Höflich and Rössler 2001).

4.3 Experiential learning

The third dimension has a close resemblance to the 'experiential learning' applicable to the internet. Its importance however for understanding mobile phone use is significantly less. The dimension does however suggest that young people do use mobile phones for classic media reasons of 'learning about themselves and others' although the gratification statements within the factor do not give clear direction on the nature of these information based experiences. This is not a factor that has previously been associated with mobile phones, requiring further exploration in the qualitative discussions. It may however be an indication that young people are willing to consider their phones as tools for learning more about themselves and others. This requires considerable advances in technology and services before mobiles can hope to emulate the use of the internet for such gratifications.

4.4 Escapism

The immediate and personal access to mobile phones makes it an ideal conduit for various types of escapism. Escapism in this situation encompasses getting away from an activity or organisation and/or simply from everyday boredoms. The phone's convenience again offers an instant opportunity for such escapism, unrestricted by location or company. Unlike the internet escapism factor, the emphasis appears more towards social loneliness ('when there is no-one to talk to or be with') rather than activity driven ('when there is nothing better to do').

4.5 Purchase information and advice

Finally, and in common with the internet, there appear to be only very weak motivations to use mobile phones for reasons of commercial engagement, to help decide what to buy. The factor is also unreliable given its low cronbach alpha score.

5. Traditional media gratifications

Rather than presenting entire factor solutions for each of the remaining 'traditional' media choices given the study objectives and space constraints, it was decided that the best method for comparison would be to analyse the two most important factors concerned. The first two factors in each media choice explained at least 46% of the variation, illustrating the strongest motivations prevalent.

Table 39 highlights the findings for radio, cinema and magazines. It does not illustrate the factor solution for television as the factor solution was not considered reliable enough for inclusion. The 'unreliable' factor solution run for television did however indicate similarities with the internet in so far as the strongest sets of motivations for both media were rooted in entertainment. This indicative finding corroborated the cross-over motivations of television and the internet found by Ferguson and Perse (2000), Kaye (1998) and Papacharissi and Rubin (2000).

Of the more reliable factor solutions, both radio and cinema appeared to offer stronger motivations for experiential learning for young people. Radio in particular offered motivations for self-learning and also helped young people to then share ideas with others. This might seem surprising given that radio is non-interactive for the vast majority of its listeners and sometimes treated as background media. It is also however renowned for its intimacy and considered a personal 'one-to-one' form of communication (The Henley Centre 2004). Intimacy (represented in this first factor through the statement 'because it is personal and intimate to me') helps to explain why young people find radio motivating as a source of experiential learning. Radio chat shows and entertainment-based shows are more likely to be seen as educational if

viewed in a very personal light.

The most important factor for cinema motivations combined experiential learning and information seeking. This suggested that cinema was used by young people to access a wide range of information types, both commercial and non-commercial. The relatively high loading of 'because it helps me decide what to buy' may be an indication that young people recognised the influence of commercial activity (adverts, product placements, film sponsorship) in helping them decide what to buy. Both radio and cinema offered strong entertainment gratifactions although in the case of cinema, entertainment was clearly a more social activity, enjoyed with friends as a social occasion.

The factor solution for magazines was less conclusive. The first factor was a very large one accounting for 11.199% of the variance and dominating the overall factor solution. As a result, it pulled together a wide range of gratifications and has been labelled 'variety'. The magazine format often allows for wide diversity of content and this might be one explanation why such a diverse range of entertainment, escapist, convenient and information-seeking gratifications were grouped together. The second factor solution appeared more focused however. Titled 'social inclusion', the high loading of 'to be like my friends' and 'because it's something I do with friends' suggested that reading magazines had as much to do with making sure young people were not missing out and keeping up with friends as simple enjoyment on a personal level.

Table 39 PCA factor solutions for traditional media: radio, cinema & magazines

Comparison of Factor 1 and Factor 2 solutions

RADIO

Factor 1: Personal learning (ei: 8.170)	Rotated d	Factor 2: Enjoyment and entertainment (ei: 2.883)	Rotated d
Because it helps me to learn about myself and others	0.732	Because it amuses me	0.777
So I can learn how to do things	0.729	Because it entertains me	0.758
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	0.727	Because it is exciting	0.646
It shows me what society is like nowadays	0.709	Because I like to listen to it	0.645
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	0.688		
Because it is intimate and personal to me *	0.585		
So I can talk with other people about what's going on	0.510		

* Denotes loaded on two factors, 2nd factor > 0.4

CINEMA

Factor 1: Experiential learning and information seeking (ei: 8.015)	Rotated d	Factor 2: Social enjoyment (ei: 3.060)	Rotated d
It shows me what society is like nowadays	0.803	Because it entertains me	0.815
Because it helps me to learn about things about myself and others	0.758	Because it amuses me	0.803
So I can learn how to do things	0.755	Because it entertains me	0.787
Because it helps me decide what to buy	0.695	Because I like to listen along and watch	0.667
Because it is intimate and personal to me	0.665	Because it's something I do with friends *	0.641
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	0.655	So I can talk with other people about what's going on	0.511
For the most up to date information and advice	0.642		

• Denotes loaded on two factors, 2nd factor > 0.4

MAGAZINES

Factor 1: Variety (ei: 11.199)	Rotated d	Factor 2: Social inclusion (ei: 2.370)	Rotated d
Because it entertains me	0.823	To be like my friends	0.804
Because it relaxes me	0.810	So I can be with other members of my family or friends	0.787
When I have nothing better to do	0.807	Because it's something I do with friends	0.663
Because it is so convenient	0.786	Because it is intimate and personal to me *	0.576
Because I just like to read them	0.768	It shows me what society is like nowadays *	0.545
When there's no one else to talk to or be with	0.715	So I can share experiences and ideas with others	0.545
Because it amuses me	0.690	Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	0.529
So I can forget about school and other things	0.681		
So I can get away from what I'm doing *	0.625		
For the most up to date information and advice *	0.619		
Because it is exciting	0.499		

* Denotes loaded on two factors, 2nd factor > 0.4

6. Relationships between gratifications and discriminating variables

Analysis was conducted to assess whether any significant independent relationships could be found linking media factors with possible discriminators of age, gender, school type and frequency of use. Although a number of relationships were found, none was either more significant than very low, (<0.19) or low (0.20-0.39), using bi-variate analysis (Pearson's r).

Given that previous studies have found stronger relationships between internet motivations and demographic/ frequency of use indicators (Chou and Hsiao 2000), this suggests that the relatively low sample size (for bi-variate correlations of this type) may have affected the overall results. It should also be noted that the relatively small age span might explain the lack of any strong age related relationships. It was therefore decided not to report further on this section and concentrate efforts elsewhere.

7. Barriers to internet use

The pilot study findings suggested that a range of barriers existed, discouraging young people from greater enthusiasm towards internet use. Certain barriers such as slow downloading speed were specific to the internet, others including privacy concerns had resonance across many types of media. It was decided therefore that a specific quantitative objective should be used to assess the scale and frequency of known barriers to internet use.

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a list of seventeen possible reasons for using the internet 'less often'. Mean scores and standard deviations were then analysed for a rank order of barriers to use. The findings are shown in Table 40. It illustrates that one concern was significantly more important than all others. Participant annoyance/irritation with online advertising including 'junk' e-mail was found to be reaching almost universal proportions during the study period. The subject of consumer annoyance/irritation with online advertising and e-mailing practices has been highlighted for a number of years (Ducoffe 1996, Rettie *et al.* 2001). The widespread agreement however with this statement as a barrier to use and its ranking above all other factors has not been highlighted. The findings quantified the exploratory qualitative findings outlined by Molesworth and Jenkins (2002).

The second most significant barrier, the belief that there is insufficient time for more frequent internet use, offers insights into the pressurised lifestyles led by young people. Increasing exam pressures, intense social and leisure lifestyles result in not finding enough time for lower priority activities. According to Gleick (1999), technologies (including computers and mobile phones) are speeding up consumer lifestyles, especially for younger people. It seems somewhat ironic that young people do not think they are able to find the time to use the internet, designed to make life more convenient. This reinforced the finding that the internet was rarely a priority activity for most young people.

Table 40: Mean barriers to internet use

Barrier to use	Mean	S.D.
Get annoyed or irritated by online advertising	2.22	1.268
Don't have enough time to use more often	2.87	1.343
Have to share computer with other members of family/friends	3.03	1.452
Shopping on internet not secure	3.05	1.283
Strong concerns about availability of unsuitable material	3.12	1.467
Speed of connection/computer too slow	3.21	1.411
Takes too long to find things	3.34	1.341
Cost of telephone calls	3.38	1.425
Price of equipment to my parents	3.53	1.268
Unsure of how to get best from internet	3.56	1.288
Not interested in what is available	3.64	1.223
Computer does not have good enough software	3.75	1.242
Don't know many people who use chatrooms	3.77	1.319
Quality of information not good enough for my needs	3.78	1.098
Improve surfing skills	3.80	1.207
Don't know many people with e-mail address	4.15	1.073
Unable to get access to computer outside school	4.26	1.158

Sample size: 175.

The issue of internet access was a multifaceted one. In one respect, Table 40 and earlier access findings illustrate that gaining access to computers outside school was becoming less of an issue. The need however to share a computer, primarily with other siblings, was an important barrier (*mean score 3.00*). Most households possessed only one domestic computer and/or telephone line causing competition for use amongst parents and the family as a whole. This was compounded by the frequent situating of the computer in areas of the household referred to by Livingstone and Bovill (1999) as 'public' spaces. Common examples included the living room, hall or even kitchen. Therefore, competition for computer time became more problematic as issues of personal privacy arose because of the computer's location.

Amongst the weaker barriers emerging, there were concerns over the 'security of shopping online' (*mean 3.05*) and 'access to unsuitable material' (*mean 3.12*). As already highlighted, shopping was not a major motivation for young people's use of the internet and concerns over the security of parental credit card details can only have compounded their lack of enthusiasm. The qualitative research did however highlight that confidence is growing over online security and the recognition of online security icons.

Unsuitable material not surprisingly polarised attitudes with the stronger reservations held amongst girls. Although the mean score amongst the sample was only *3.05*, 21.4% strongly agreed with the statement 'Because I have strong concerns about availability of unsuitable material', a figure only exceeded by 'annoyance at online advertising'. 26.9% of the sample however strongly disagreed with the statement. The concerns found mirror parental concerns over unsuitable material with a recent survey claiming that "nearly one in ten British children with home internet access are being banned from using the internet", because of parental concerns over material suitability (Harvey 2004: 12). Even a number of the boys in the qualitative groups admitted that they had concerns about the nature of certain sites and chat rooms they had gained access to.

Issues of slow online speed and downloading times highlighted in previous research (Grant and Waite 2003) appear to be receding. With broadband access becoming more widespread and the standard of modems continuing to improve, these findings suggest that such problems are no longer prevalent amongst the majority of young people. A minority did still have problems over such technological problems, more often from the more disadvantaged backgrounds depicted in the 'digital divide' debate.

8. Conclusions

This chapter provides the 'bedrock' of analysis into how young people use different media choices, focusing on new and then other competing forms of media.

One critical finding was that the internet was rarely the favoured choice for any one gratification. Television continued to provide stronger entertainment gratifications, cinema stronger sociability gratifications and mobiles stronger overall convenience. Only in its ability to provide timely information did the internet provide a service seemingly unmatched by competing choices. Its most powerful motive, 'when I have nothing better to do' indicated that it was rarely high up young people's preferred activities.

The factor analysis uncovered five main internet factors of significance. A number of conclusions can be drawn from this analysis. Firstly, the internet did indeed provide an alternative source of entertainment and mood enhancement for young people. This took precedence over more information based activities from the factor analysis. It remains to be seen if the improvements in broadband access and advancements in online content will be sufficient to displace or even supersede television as the pre-eminent place for entertainment. Secondly, the factor analysis separated the non-commercial internet use for 'experiential learning' from the less significant, more commercially orientated 'purchase information and advice'. This highlighted a stronger desire to use the internet for personally motivated learning, although some might be explained by increasing homework completed online. Information searching for purchase based motivations on the other hand was a relatively insignificant factor, indicating that internet use in association with commercialism could indeed be problematic. Thirdly, the factor analysis confirmed that internet and mobile phones contribute to the generic need for teenagers to escape. Both facilitated passive and more active forms of escapism. Finally, the complexities of social interaction online were apparent. The internet facilitates both the desire to avoid face-to-face contact through escapism and enhanced social contact on a less constrained, more personal and more global basis.

The factor solution for the other new media in this study, mobile phones, was less well formed. This may be because mobile phone use is still in its infancy and evolving rapidly. One factor dominated, combining entertainment, convenience and up to date information and advice. In common with the internet, entertainment played the most powerful role although the factor suggests that it is the combination of entertainment in its most convenient form that provided the motivation. This combining of such diverse motivations with one cluster raises the question of whether diverse gratifications are indeed interlinked, their boundaries difficult to isolate. It is also important to point out that socially motivated gratifications were relatively insignificant in the mobile phone factor analysis, a surprising finding given the nature of much mobile communication. This was an issue requiring a more detailed qualitative exploration.

The chapter finished with an initial assessment of the barriers constraining new forms

of media such as the internet. This section provided a starting point for exploring the darker, more negative experiences of new media consumption. The study found that one barrier, annoyance and irritation with online advertising, overshadowed all other barriers. The strength of attitude for this particular statement confirmed that tensions did exist between internet use and commercial practices, indicating the need for a deeper understanding of barriers to use.

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONTEXTUALISING NEW MEDIA USE

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1. Introduction

The quantitative analysis outlined a framework for understanding young peoples' new media uses and gratifications. The following chapter will explore these in greater detail, focusing on their experiences of the internet and mobile phones as described in the qualitative sessions. The chapter will follow the direction of discussions which focused initially on internet use with participants asked to sketch out how they felt about the internet, the positives and the negatives. Greater emphasis was placed on internet given its complexity of uses, the growing importance to practitioners and amount of feedback received. The chapter will then turn to young peoples' experiences of mobile use.

The quantitative chapter outlined five distinct factors motivating internet use: 'mood enhancement', 'experiential learning', 'passive escapism', 'personalised contact/communication' and 'purchase information and advice'. To allow comparisons with the quantitative factors, similar headings are used to discuss each internet use in turn. Comment will be made where internet could not be so clearly separated or when the distinction between different uses was blurred.

A drawing from a fourteen year old girl (Figure 17) provides an illustration of how young peoples' positive and negative internet experiences are compartmentalised and yet clearly interlinked.

Figure 17: Positive and negative experiences of the internet

Good Things!   **+**   **—**   Bad Things!

- Availability of communication technology (e.g. E-mail, Instant messengers, Chatrooms etc)
- Range and quality of websites available
- Large amounts of services offered (e.g Shopping, digital photo processing)
- Variety of games available (e.g Online Monopoly)

THE Internet!

- Amount of spam especially with web-based e-mail like Hotmail
- Pop-up adverts!!! Aaaaaargh!!
- Uncertainty of safety while surfing (i.e from hackers etc)
- Amount of bad websites out there (like pornography etc)
- Rapid development of viruses increasingly spread by e-mail
- Increase of paedophiles lurking in chatrooms, grooming children

(female, S4, state rural)

2. Contextualising internet use

In categorising internet uses, it is important to point out that young people did not artificially dissect their motivations to use media. Kline (2004) argued that patterns of contemporary media use are diverse but intrinsically bound together by lifestyle and cultural forces. This seamless diversity is directly applicable to understanding internet use. Eighmey (1997: 59) described the internet as "the most versatile of mass medium". Internet advocates in this study reflected this diversity, integrating internet use motivations naturally into their daily lives:

> F: "There are so many things I can do, I can sit on the internet to play a game, go shopping, talk to my friends, send e-mails. There are so many things. What else is so versatile, so many things to do, and I don't think I would get fed up sitting at all, because there is so much to do"
>
> *(female, S5, state suburban)*

For this frequent internet user and self confessed technofile, the internet had become almost a 'home-from-home'. A look back at her personal diaries revealed that on two of the five weekdays, she spent more than four hours on the internet during the evening. For young people like F., the potent appeal lay in diversity of uses. The internet satisfied affective and cognitive needs through game-playing, searching for information and the social exchange of e-mail and MSN messages. The characteristics of traditional mass media such as convenient access and commercial promotion

intersect with those of intra-personal communication through e-mail. This point is emphasised through the comments of C. below:

> C: "You get fast information, what you want with no hassle, cheaper goods to buy, you can talk to people, and it is cheap, quick to download, and there is more to do than anything else in the world" *(male, S4, fee paying urban)*

For internet advocates, this multiple interaction through a single point of access made it unique. It was an attraction that appeared to cut across gender, age and social backgrounds. The only exception to this was the improved internet experience that broadband access bestowed on a few more privileged participants. C. for example benefited from having high-speed internet access in his bedroom, allowing him full and uninterrupted access. The internet provided C. with a wealth of things to do. As will be discussed later in the chapter, he acknowledged domestic problems and saw the internet a place of refuge from his parents. Offering "more than anything else in the world", it allowed C. to satisfy many of his aesthetic, cognitive and social needs without ever having to leave his room. He went on to suggest that "if you get bored, then you can always find something", emphasising the importance of the internet's versatility. It should be noted that C. appeared popular with his friends and such behaviour did not signal a retreat into personal isolation or loneliness. The internet was as much a place to socialise with others as a place to escape. The example of C. "spending five to six hours a night" was a potent example of the internet satisfying a diverse but integrated set of needs.

The internet was also seen to straddle the worlds of work and play:

> A: "I use it it once a week, sometimes twice"
> IG: "What do you use it for?"
> A: "Well, for the e-mail with my friends, for playing games or if I need information on schoolwork, I look up the internet"
> *(male, S6, state rural)*

Being able to switch between activity modes, from enjoying playing games to researching for homework was another indication of the convenient and diverse nature of internet use.

The degree of enthusiasm for the diverse aspects of internet use highlighted by the

three quotes was not widespread. For others, either their enthusiasm for overall internet use was lukewarm or focussed on one aspect of the internet. The examples do however confirm that a minority of internet users were passionate about internet use and its "endless possibilities". This kind of integrated diversity was a characteristic not identified through the quantitative methods. The specific nature of the statements used and the tendency of the factor technique to group similar motivations made such a finding less likely to emerge.

3. Diversity of internet uses

Having highlighted the issue of diversity, this chapter will now break down internet use in a manner similar to the quantitative findings. The first and arguably most important of these was 'mood enhancement'.

3.1 Mood enhancement

Consistent with the quantitative findings, participants described a plethora of reasons for why the internet might be a 'mood-enhancing' medium. One aspect encouraging enthusiasm was the gradual introduction of broadband access. Two years ago, in the pilot study, broadband was virtually unheard of. In this study, broadband was used throughout the schools and increasingly commonplace in more affluent households. At the same time, multiple barriers to 'mood-enhancement' were also outlined highlighting that the 'double-edged' nature of internet use. This section will concentrate on the more positive aspects, encouraging enjoyment and entertainment.

3.1.1 Downloading and online music consumption

Using computers to access and listen to music elicited the largest body of comments. This reinforced earlier findings that adolescents' favoured activities at home were increasingly consumed online as well as offline.

Young people described accessing, storing, editing, compiling and playing music using a combination of the internet and computer technology. Music was either

listened to on computer or transferred to a variety of electronic devices including personal CD players, DVD players, through television sets and digital devices such as mp3 players as highlighted in Chapter 10. The transference of music from one digital domain to another was taken for granted, highlighting how electronically savvy young people are. The ease of moving from one media domain to another was another illustration of young peoples' comfort with the changing media landscape (McGowan 2000).

Enjoyment was also obtained through the personal compilation of digitally enabled music. D. *(S6, state suburban)* described how he took great pleasure in downloading individual songs, compiling them on the computer and transferring them to his mp3 player. Downloading allowed D. to choose and access music more quickly than having to having to go to the nearest musical retailer. However, his real enjoyment came from the ability to individually compile his own personal CD, tailored to his own tastes. This type of behaviour could be interpreted as further evidence of individualisation, as far as young people were personally selecting and creating their own music, tailored to their own interests. Singer (1998) argued that the internet has become the ultimate in individualism. However, a fixation on individualism ignores the socialised aspect of internet enjoyment also evident in these discussion sessions (see Kozinets 1999).

Another facet of this downloading culture was the instantaneous gratification it encouraged.

> A: "I've got a file sharing program so I just download from others, I'll maybe download like random songs or whatever. There's a song in my head, I hear it and oh, I want that song. If I'm working at the computer, or working downstairs, I just play this big list of random songs, and sit and listen to them"
> *(female, S5, state suburban)*

Songs were downloaded, played and then deleted once their immediate popularity had waned. Such instantaneous gratification has parallels with Gleick's (1999) concept of lifestyles 'speeding up' although Gleick focused on the downsides rather than the mood enhancement aspects. S. *(S6, fee paying urban)* talked about how she enjoyed accessing songs before public release, offering a sense of "privileged access". One hypothesis emerging from this could be that as needs intensify, so do raised

expectations and possible dissatisfaction. The barrage of comments on problems associated with online music downloading was one such indicator.

Personal gratification was undoubtedly gained from the nature of online downloading. Young people were aware of the evolving legal status of online musical downloading, using popular sites such as KaZaa and i-mesh. C. *(S4, fee paying urban)* talked about how good he was at downloading, using more obscure sites to access songs or music videos. A. (female, S5, fee paying urban) talked about "getting away with it", the joy of being able to download songs without fear of recrimination. In other groups however, such enjoyment was tempered by a growing awareness of high profile court cases.

Personal enjoyment can also be interpreted as a way of demonstrating electronic mastery in the presence of peers (see Lull 1990 for examples of media competition). C. boasted about the skills involved in accessing obscure music sites. His boasting received much ribbing from others in the group but perhaps some hidden admiration not voiced. A second individual claimed he had over 8,000 tracks stored on his computer and i-pod, to the incredulity of his peers. This transference of music into the personal domain shows that adolescents now represent the "final authors" of the music content as well as the imagery of music claimed by Hogg and Banister (2000: 23).

3.1.2 Online gaming

'Mood enhancement' also came from online games and gaming. Online gaming tended to be less sophisticated than console gaming, involving relatively basic games sites such as realarcade.com, miniclips.com and ezone.com. Other digital games talked about including eyetoy.com, more of an enhanced television service than a pure online gaming experience.

Most participants had accessed some form of online game, even if only briefly. Favoured games were discussed, almost like favourite trading cards, their names and preferred games discussed and dissected. Again, this highlighted the on-going social dimension of 'personal enjoyment'. Adolescents would happily visit each others houses, playing games such as Pop Idol, online or via a console. Entertainment-based

gratifications did therefore display some social relevance although never on the virtual communal level expected by Rushkoff (1996) and Tapscott (1998)

For certain games, a combination of graphics and content provided the source of the entertainment:

> E: "Right, you can go to these sites that you have to load up games that are flashing, and funny and interesting. I don't actually download games as it takes too much time. But I have lots of demos."   *(male, S6, state rural)*

For E., experimenting with online gaming satisfied a short term need, providing entertainment during times of boredom or when avoiding unwanted tasks. One participant described playing as a "last resort" suggesting that online gaming did not have the strength of attraction that console gaming clearly had. Other participants liked its limited interactivity, playing games whilst still doing other online activities. Young people were not averse to playing more adult-oriented games, given the opportunity. Gambling sites in particular, such as online poker and roulette, were popular games to experiment with. Such sites often involved the need for a credit card to play properly. Participants were only too aware, however, that they could download and play the demonstration games without need to access a credit card. Such examples highlighted that young people were more than capable of accessing adult-oriented material, sometimes with the full knowledge of their parents.

Finally, there were examples of young people claiming to have outgrown online games. Younger brothers and sisters played games no longer appealing to older participants. This confirmed that online entertainment was not immune to changing cycles of fashion and the vagaries of growing up. The nature of internet use is therefore likely to evolve as young people move from adolescence into adulthood.

3.1.3 Hedonic surfing

Surfing the internet to discover entertaining content provided a degree of amusement for some participants. This type of spontaneous surfing was rarely widespread however, contrary to speculation that adolescents spend all their time 'surfing the internet'. Accessing humorous websites, sometimes for obscure content, were the

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most frequent outcomes of internet surfing. Groups of participants were clearly familiar with the contents of such sites:

IG: "Tell me about some of the websites you have gone into"
F: "Well, there's that one with the wee baby, it's really funny"
A: "Aye, the one in the bath, with the wee baby singing, it's quite cute the way it drinks the bottle"
L: "Yeah, I showed it to my mum who loved it as well!"

(group of girls, S5, state suburban)

The sharing of contents with parents in this example highlighted that not all internet use is covert, hidden from the eyes of parents. Much of L's enjoyment was derived from sharing the contents with her mother. Accessing obscure websites, particularly the weirder sites, was said to "brighten up your day". This example confirmed that the internet changed participants' moods, providing temporary relief from daily routines and boredom.

There was occasional evidence of internet sites being accessed for more extreme hedonistic pleasure. A few comments were made by boys about accessing pornographic sites although this was a sensitive subject not explored in any depth for fear of peer embarrassment. Livingstone and Bober (2004) found that 57% of 9-17 year olds claimed to have seen porn online. This however did not differentiate between the accidental stumbling on a porn site and the deliberate accessing of sites for entertainment and amusement. A couple of boys were forthcoming about accessing websites with an element of risk and anti-social associations:

IG: "What sort of stuff do you enjoy looking up?"
C: "Well, I like looking up about guns and smoke bombs and stuff like that. I sometimes buy them over the net using my dad's credit card"
IG: "Is he happy to do that?"
C: "Well, he doesn't realise the kind of stuff I buy and doesn't really look too carefully"
(male, S4, fee paying urban)

In another example, a boy said he enjoyed finding out about all the weapons used in the Iraq war by accessing particular websites he had stumbled on. Both examples highlighted that the classic teenage traits of risk-taking and anti-social behaviour, acted out in an online environment. Although these were isolated cases, they demonstrate that the internet can, if unimpeded, allow young people unfettered

freedoms to explore subjects society might consider dangerous.

3.1.4 Surfing sites to extend personal hobbies

Website surfing for some involved extending the pleasure derived from favourite sports and hobbies, beyond just accessing humorous sites.

In the case of football, websites allowed individuals to keep up with fantasy football teams, find out more about their favourite stars and plan travel to fixtures. One boy, M. *(S4, fee paying urban)* took this a stage further, using the nike.com website to help him improve his footballing skills. He downloaded mini-clips of his favourite stars in action, using slow motion to mimic their moves. Beyond the obvious entertainment obtained from such downloads, this illustrated the skill mastery within the second internet gratification factor, 'experiential learning'. Other examples in a similar vein included downloading guitar tabs and studying rugby tactics online.

3.1.5 Extending the appeal of mass media

It has been suggested that the growing entertainment component of internet use might in time "threaten to displace television viewing" (Ferguson and Perse 2000: 169). Television has historically been the medium of choice for entertainment gratifications (Rubin 1981). Such researchers may never, however, have envisaged how TV viewing is sometimes augmented into internet use. In this study, one participant claimed to enjoy watching Friends online because it allowed him to do other things such as e-mailing at the same time. This example shows one of the ways young people are using the internet to re-invent traditional media viewing experiences.

The following drawing from this sixteen year-old boy illustrates how his perceptions of internet use straddled several media types including radio and television.

Figure 18: Multi-media experiences through the internet
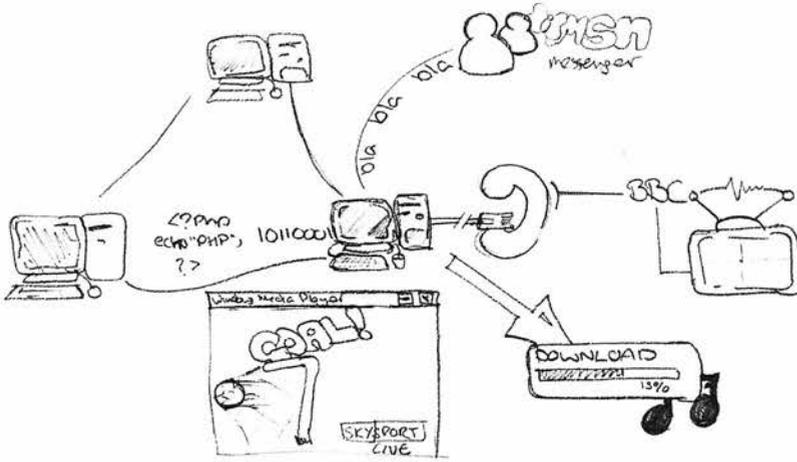
(male, S6, fee paying urban)

It also illustrates that theories of integration rather than displacement are arguably more relevant. A fourteen year old female described how she pursued her TV initiated fascination for a Fame Academy contestant to almost obsessive lengths online:

> E: "Yeah, I have developed my own website for Ainslie, and have put twenty Ainslie songs onto it, downloaded from my computer. They are just like rehearsal things. Like when he was at Fame Academy. They're really good. Now I have got 300 hundred plus pictures of him on my computer too. I'm always looking up his site for more stuff" *(female, S4, state suburban)*

This example was extreme but highlighted the unusual lengths some young people go to pursue their favoured celebrities through integrated media. More commonplace was the accessing of the popular television websites such as Who Wants to be A Millionaire and Pop Idol. Such behaviour suggested that the internet can successfully add to the television viewing experience. Rather than replacing it, the internet was seen to augment and lengthen the experience, providing access to new material and opportunities for limited celebrity interaction.

The qualitative findings have found a spectrum of internet gratifications which could be described as mood enhancing and entertainment-based. However, it was also clear that participants' depictions of those experiences were not always recounted with unbridled enthusiasm. There were few examples of participants expressing unrestrained enthusiasm for internet use. Similarly, there were few examples of the

blissful relaxation television is said to offer (Rubin 1981, 1983).

3.2. Experiential learning

Researchers have debated to what extent the internet is used for creative/ experiential learning (Sefton-Green and Buckingham 1998, Andrés Albero 2004). The quantitative findings suggested that using the internet for experiential learning purposes may be its key differentiator in comparison with other media. Chapter 11 has already highlighted some of the more entertainment-oriented ways young people use the internet to learn, such as improving skills for sports and hobbies. However, evidence that young people actively use the internet for reasons of self-improvement and personal learning was harder to uncover. In common with the findings of Livingstone and Bober (2004), the internet at home was used widely for school or homework rather than the kind of self- motivated learning advocated by Tapscott (1998).

3.2.1 Digitised homework

Having a convenient source of information for homework projects and exam preparation was undoubtedly a popular internet use. Being able to access information (sometimes from their own bedrooms), thereby speeding up the process of 'work' was particularly appealing:

> C: "You don't have the hassle of going to the library. Trying to find a book and then looking for the page, you can just sit there. And then like say you needed the information, you would have to go and get it photocopied, here you can just print it from the web and you have got it there"
>
> *(female, S4, fee paying urban)*

> R: "I have got down information and homework which is the same kind of thing, because it gives you, if you need to research something, rather than going and reading lots of books, you can just go on the web, and it can get you information faster than having to look through a library"
>
> *(male, S6, fee paying urban)*

There were some specific educational sites widely used in contrast to the findings amongst Spanish adolescents by Albero-Andres (2004). The most popular of these was.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize, recommended by teachers and used frequently by older students. It was described as a great way to practice exam technique "before the

real thing". Educational internet uses did appear to increase the demand for convenient access to the internet by young people and presumably their parents.

It has historically been assumed that educational uses of the internet are personal in nature, influenced primarily by school demands and parental pressures. Participants in this research however suggested that there was also a peer aspect to completing homework online. L. for example talked about exchanging information online, helping to complete a biology project:

> L: "Yeah, because I was searching for growth of the pollen tube and then my friend found this stuff on the internet for me, and she sent it and I thought 'wow, what's this', it was so detailed and really helpful"
>
> *(female, S4, state rural)*

As the next section will illustrate, this was one of the many examples of the internet acting as a social 'exchange', in this case helping L. to complete her biology project.

The internet offered a number of characteristics which made it more stimulating for education tasks. Participants talked about the screen looking better than the page of a book, graphics more engaging and methods of searching more stimulating. Beyond this, the ability to then copy and paste images and text was again seen as convenient. This augments claims that online reading may be a factor in the decline in book reading amongst young people.

Young people were less unified about their abilities to search for the right kind of educational information. Navigating for some was seen as "time consuming" and a constant "source of frustration", involving dead-ends and little guarantee of success on completion. For others however, the non-linear, fluid style of information searching reflected their digital abilities, portraying hunting through books as positively archaic. One commerce-oriented sixteen year old described searching for information as "e-research" highlighting that such practices were now a normalised part of homework completion.

The search engine Google was the most frequently cited starting point for educational information searches. For a number of participants, Google had become the natural

start point, a trusted place to commence searching. A. *(male, S6, fee paying urban)* for example described Google as "knowing everything", emphasising its position of power and influence on young people. Another example from S. highlights how Google has become the privileged vehicle, trusted to take the user to a valued site:

> S: "I use Google for everything, if I want to find anything on Google, I will begin searching on Google first. Lyrics, guitar tabs, downloading, homework stuff. If I want to buy something, I always go on Google first. I just saves me the time of having to go and find the right site. I just type in Google and off I go"
>
> *(female, S6, fee paying urban)*

For a few such as A., internet use was justified as an educational aid:

> A: "If we are looking for stuff from homework, I think it is good to have to look up things, but I don't really spend much time on it otherwise"
>
> *(female, S5, state rural)*

Looking back over A's questionnaire and diary forms, it was clear that she was not an internet advocate, using the internet relatively infrequently and without strong attitudes towards issues of new technology and society. She typified a small group of young people who did not feel beholden to the internet, using it purely as a work necessity. This highlights one of the issues conceptualising internet use. The internet is a medium that crosses the boundary between work and leisure, raising the possibility that it might become associated in the minds of young people with work rather than play. The majority of participants felt there was no conflict between work and play although opinions did vary. This suggests a continuum of attitudes, from the internet solely for work purposes to suitability for any form of activity. Using search engines such as Google for example were acceptable for both accessing leisure and work-related sites.

Looking back through the transcripts, it became evident that participants from the *fee-paying* school talked often (if not always enthusiastically) about using the internet for educational information searching. In contrast, there were relatively few comments from the *state suburban* school. This could be not explained by a lack of equipment at the school as it was very evident that in school, pupils were constantly using modern desktop Apple Macs. Researchers in the past have argued that affluence and social grade do influence ICT-based education in the home (Buckingham and Scanlon

2003). The increased levels of access and higher penetration of broadband access in this study may form part of the explanation. However, it would be dangerous to draw too many conclusions from this observation. One of the most enthusiastic advocates of the internet for educational tasks came from a less privileged background. She claimed that her parents had encouraged her to use the internet, initially for educational purposes, at an early age. This reinforces the arguments of Kline (2004:152) that it is important to "situate young peoples' use of mediated communication in the social context of family relations". In this case, it was likely that parental encouragement rather than demographic explanations of class and wealth was the catalyst. As Livingstone and Bober (2003) have observed, education is often the backdrop for parental involvement in encouraging child internet use.

3.2.2 Informal learning through the internet

Technological determinists such as Papert (1996) and Tapscott (1998) have argued that the computer and its internet functions feed young peoples' natural inclinations to explore and learn for themselves, independent of formal encouragement. It could be argued that any exposure to a mediated source is a form of learning and simply surfing the internet looking for content could be a useful learning exercise. Indeed, the findings of the quantitative section suggested that one of the most powerful motivations for internet use was because it 'helps me to learn about myself and others'. The discussions of young peoples' experiences tell a slightly different story however.

Relatively few educational internet experiences were not in some way related to formal education. The internet was used by a couple of the more enthusiastic participants for keeping up to date with world news stories such as the Iraq war. The up-to-date nature of such information meant that it was sometimes preferred to watching the news through television or even radio. Taking this a stage further, an older girl from the *rural state* school claimed she enjoyed using the internet to find more about "other cultures" such as Australia and New Zealand. She came from a well-travelled background and so was extending her natural curiosity for travel and foreign countries. Internet was used to extend past experiences and family ties, providing convenient access rather than providing the impetus to learn *per se*.

The creation of (or contribution to creating) personal websites was the most common form of 'self-directed' learning. Two individuals talked about creating their own websites, aided by their peers. For both, learning to design a website was not a school accomplishment but something developed in their own spare time. For P. *(S5, fee paying urban)*, the website was a natural extension of his interest in all things digital, allowing him to creatively use his computer skills. It also acted as a source of entertainment for others and a forum for peer communication. For E. *(S4, state rural)*, her website was created as a personal fanzine for her hero, the pop star Ainslie. Both individuals claimed to have spent a lot of time researching how to do it, searching for imagery and page layout. There were also examples of skills development, such as the earlier example of a fourteen year old boy claiming to use nike.com to help improve his footballing technique.

A final example of informal learning concerned the social dimension of the internet. A couple of participants suggested that they used chat rooms to establish contact with people from other cultures and backgrounds. F. *(S5, state suburban)* suggested that the attraction was that she could "talk to them about almost any subject". It has been argued by psychologists such as Kiesler *et al* (1984) that there are fewer social barriers involved in internet use, encouraging less inhibited conversations.

Figure 19: The global dimension of internet use

(female, S4, state rural)
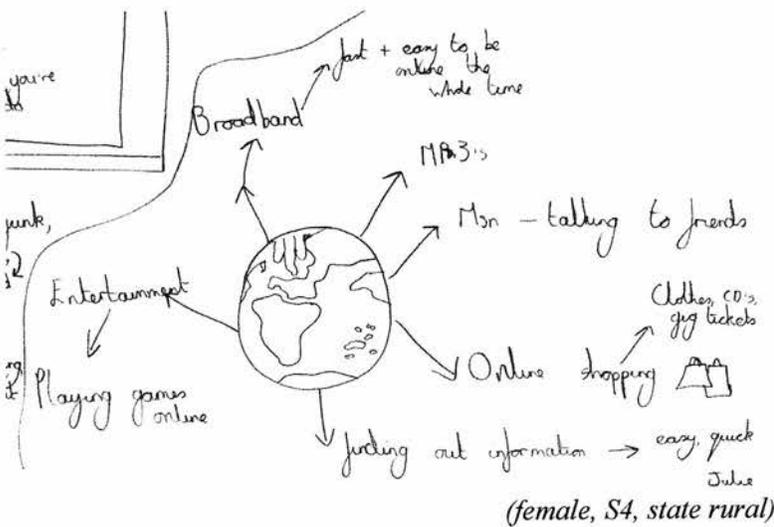
A few participants did conduct internet conversations to find out more about people

from other parts of the world, exchanging jokes, finding out how time was spent and occasionally sharing concerns. Such isolated examples were evidence of learning about society beyond their domestic homelife. For one fourteen year old female, the drawings illustrated in Figure 19 show how her concept of the internet revolved around its spatial nature, allowing activities, conversations and information-seeking on a global as well as local basis.

3.3 Diversion, avoidance and escape

The internet mirrored many of the traditional forms of diversion, avoidance and escape found in television viewing. It offered an instant diversion from the tedium of homework for example. It was suggested that being able to switch from homework tasks to chatting with friends on MSN was an addictive pastime, enhanced by how easy it was to switch modes through the computer. Younger participants claimed that parents were sometimes checking up on them, seeking to ensure they were still doing their homework. This kind of motivation shifting was consistent with the findings of Hoffman and Novak (1996a) who stated that consumers switch between "goal-directed" and experiential motivation states. The diversion was usually to something more entertaining or interesting, with no guarantee of returning to the initial task.

Diversions from learning tasks were not restricted to domestic life. Participants described how they enjoyed playing internet games in the classroom rather than listening to the teacher. Although rules were laid down, the temptation to use the internet for recreational pleasure rather than concentrate on school work was at times overwhelming. Participants took great delight in describing how they managed to avoid the attention of the teacher concerned. The internet also provided an ideal place to bypass the clutches of boredom. For internet advocates M. and C., escaping into the world-wide-web to avoid boredom was preferable to the TV:

> IG: "So what is so good about the internet then?"
> M: "The internet offers more than anything in the whole wide world"
> IG: "Is that why you would rather spend more time on the internet?"
> M: "Well, like TV, you just go like you have seen all this. The internet, if you get bored, you can always find something"
> C: "Yeah, there is so much information that it keeps you going basically"
> *(two boys, S4, fee paying urban)*

In this case, the internet was perceived as a positive alternative to other forms of media, offering greater choice and variety than television. Amongst other less enthusiastic participants however, the internet merely acted as a place to go, to pass the time of day:

> IG: "So tell me about what you have put down there then?"
> A: "Well, it is something to do when you are bored and you have nothing else to do, you can go on it and browse around. It passes quite a lot of time at home, I don't know, when I'm bored.....I will go on like music sites, horoscopes, quite a lot really... or maybe e-mail" *(male, S6, state rural)*

A. was a more ambivalent user of the internet. The internet provided a convenient stop gap, with enough time to surf a few sites and pass the time of day, without any real motive or goal in mind. This type of behaviour fits the pattern of 'passive escapism' described in the quantitative findings. It allowed A. an opportunity to escape from the everyday routines and conformities of his daily farming existence. This type of escapism was consistent with the pilot study findings, situated in a suburban environment (Grant 2002). It was therefore not unique to the kind of escape from boredom that rural living described earlier.

There were also examples of the kind of 'social escapism' conceptualised by Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999). One female participant in particular suggested she enjoyed using chatrooms to keep her company, thereby using the internet as a way of combating loneliness at home. This example corroborates the low mean score for the statement 'when there's no-one else to talk to or be with' in the quantitative findings. A second participant spent a lot of time on MSN to avoid spending too much time in the company of his parents. In both examples, the computer was situated in the bedroom, highlighting the growing role of the internet in encouraging escapist bedroom cultures.

There was no evidence in this study of internet use for escapist fantasy such as role playing and multi-user domains in which the user adopts fully fledged identities in role- playing games (Turkle 1995, Kozinets 1999). Whether this was because participants were not willing to reveal such behaviour or because it was of insufficient interest to them was not clear. One individual did suggest that he liked the internet

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because "it just takes you wherever it takes you", suggesting a kind of experiential journey through different types of websites. This could be interpreted as evidence of a desire to venture into the kind of hyper-reality described by postmodernists such as Firat *et al* (1995). The sense from this discussion however was more of a desire to 'explore the unknown' with possible surprises in store rather than a deeper desire to seek out another version of reality online. It was not Gould and Lerman's (1998) version of interactive fantasy in which identity is exchanged and a different version of reality harnessed.

There was however evidence of desires to adopt different identities through the adoption of multiple identities in chatroom consumption. Livingstone and Bober (2004) found that 40% of young people used a different identity online at some point. In this study, R. and M. described the pleasures of adopting a different identity in chatrooms:

> R: "Well, it didn't matter who you spoke to because you could be who you wanted to be and no-one knew who you were"
> M: "I thought it was interesting how you could speak to all these people from all over the world and they didn't know who you were, you would just chat away to them and you'd never find out who they or you were"
>
> *(two boys, S6, state rural)*

This type of escapism can be interpreted as a fun way to masquerade true identities rather than a more systematic identity crisis. The word 'escape' suggests a level of unhappiness with current persona; this did not appear to be the case from this example. Neither R. nor M. gave any sense that they were in any way embarrassed about who they were or how they came across. However, the desire to hide identity came from the pleasure of being able to be someone else, enjoying the opportunity to act out different personas. R. admitted that he felt more able to be forthcoming, making rude jokes that he would not want attributed to him. R. also admitted that he enjoyed lying using a different identity, knowing that such lies, insults and pranks could not be sourced back to him. Adopting a different identity was as much about "having a laugh" as it was about the need to escape personality issues.

In another example, A. (*S5, state suburban*) used the names 'Tasha' and 'Sky' because she enjoyed acting out how 'Tasha' and 'Sky' might react to different conversations.

This can be seen as an example of developing an additional sense of reality through creation of Tasha and Sky. The emphasis was on experimentation beyond existing relationships rather than seeking to replace it (see Sjöberg 2004). It should be noted that another powerful motivation for adopting different identities was a direct consequence of fear from computer misuse. Awareness of issues such as online paedophilia has taught these young people to be wary of revealing too much personal information. This example of identity escapism also highlights overlaps between motivations of identity and of mood enhancement.

There was however one example of changed identity online which did appear to be a genuine attempt to escape an existing identity. One fourteen year old boy admitted that he used a pseudonym because it allowed him to act older than he actually was, entering into conversations normally reserved for older teens or even young adults. In this sense, he was escaping the realities of life as a fourteen year old and attempting to experience the world of his older contemporaries. Media has traditionally given young people an insight into adult worlds (Meyrowitz 1985) but this example takes this a stage further with young people using media to act out what it might be like in an 'older world'.

3.4 Social interaction and involvement

In each of the section so far, social dimensions can be identified in the gratifications analysed (social entertainment, social learning, social escapism). Given the largely individualist nature of computer use, this is perhaps surprising at face value. However, it is important to bear in mind that socialising is a dominant theme in the lives of older adolescents, internet use merely another facilitator of this process. Lull (1980) first suggested that television uses could be grouped together under "social uses" and a similar exercise was performed for the internet by Maignan and Lukas (1997). It was perhaps surprising then that the quantitative findings did not find social uses a more important motivation for internet use. Diverse definitions of what can be considered 'social' in gratification statements (such as *'so I can share experiences and ideas with others'* and *'so I can talk with other people about what's going on')*, categorised under different motivational categories in Chapter 11, highlight the limitations of reliance on uses and gratifications methods alone.

In next section, the social uses explored in the qualitative discussions (and not discussed in earlier sections) will be examined. Social uses encompassed three main internet activities: e-mail, messenger groups and chatrooms.

3.4.1 Digital socialising

The most noticeable aspect of digital communication was young peoples' desire to stay in touch with their friends. As Livingstone (2002) pointed out, the advent of mobile texting, online messenger systems and e-mail has encouraged a constant stream of digital conversation. The diaries in this study reinforced this finding. Internet communication for example, restricted in school, was conducted frequently via the home computer. Some young people maintained a continuous 'virtual' presence even if they were not there in person. Software programs such as the ubiquitous MSN encouraged young people to conduct frequent, expansive and sometimes multiple conversations with friends. The following conversation amongst a group of enthusiastic participants illustrated some of the benefits of peer-to-peer online communication:

> D: "MSN is ten times cheaper (than texting)....you can have a huge conversation, like type as much as you want"
> F: "And a lot of different people can talk at the same time"
> D: "You can like speak to people, or add them into your conversation and then have lots of people in your conversation"
> N: "And it just takes like two seconds for them to reply, like when you text, you have to wait for ages for them to type it all out and that"
> IG: "How many people take part?"
> D: "Well, everybody on the list"
> N: "We have contact list and have so many people on it. You can add to them"
> D: "You can only talk to them when they are online"
> F: "And then you usually only have a conversation with one person, but then lots of others"
> N: "Yeah, I sometimes have five conversations going on at once"
> D: "They are just like pop up friends that you can click on them and they will come up"
> F: "Like say you were trying to organise something and all your friends were online, then you can get in touch in one conversation and invite them round for a chat"
> *(mixed group, S6, state suburban)*

A number of important meanings can be interpreted from this discussion. Firstly, instant messaging allowed users greater control over the flow of the conversation. Being able to dictate with whom and when conversations took place gave users a

greater sense of empowerment and social control, even amongst good friends. There was almost a sense of 'temporal friendship' in D.'s comments towards the end of the conversation. Being able to "click up and down" friends at a moments notice hints that such friendships may not have been as valued if communication was face-to-face. Certainly, there were few indications that such conversations were developing deeper, more meaningful relationships as advocated by Parks and Floyd (1996) in their study of adult discussion groups.

Secondly, the use of contact lists gave young people a sense of their own popularity, with several participants claiming to have a wide circle of friends who regularly kept in touch. Instant messaging was popular across school type, particularly in discussions with those from the *suburban state* school, as it required limited expense to participate. Circles of contact lists spread beyond school boundaries, from sporting connections to new acquaintances struck up online. Those who did not participate tended to justify their decision on the grounds of being disinterested in online communication rather than digital exclusion. For a small minority, face-to-face communication was always preferable, virtual communication perceived as time-wasting and unproductive.

Thirdly, the multiple, instantaneous nature of conversations was frequently mentioned. Young people enjoyed the fluidity of online conversations with continuous comments, sometimes over the course an entire evening and into the next day. Phone and text conversations were thought be more expensive and sometimes less convenient than online chat. The multiple conversations were illustrative of the 'many-to-many' characteristic of internet use (Hoffman and Novak 1996b). Sometimes, participants claimed to have become "lost in conversation" as a result:

> IG: "How long do you find yourself on the internet?
> "S: Well, usually about an hour ... I usually go on and talk to my friends and then… a long conversation happens and I find I have been on for longer than expected, I just get lost in conversation" *(female, S6, state rural)*

This kind of behaviour was not unusual with another participant claiming that his parents had to stop him using the internet because of such lengthy sessions on MSN. This kind of behaviour has parallels with concept of flow defined as "the holistic

experience that people feel when they act with total involvement". (Csikszentmihalyi 1975: 36). In this case, participants were totally immersed in online conversation with little regard for time or competing activities in a manner predicted by Rettie *et al* 2001. Unlike in previous studies (Sueiss *et al* 1998), this was not a medium used predominately by girls for socialising. There were as many examples of online communication from mixed groups, suggesting that the internet has indeed closed the gender gap because of its virtual qualities (argued by Seiter 2004), encouraging rather than inhibiting conversations.

3.4.2 Distant friendships

Finally, the internet was used for conducting and sustaining more distant friendships sometimes with pen pals or new friends met at home or abroad. The following highlights that the internet acted as a convenient method of maintaining networks of friends without the need for closer contact.

> W: "Yeah, that is a huge part of what I use the internet for, and it is really easy to keep friends that way. You know, pen pals, you just write e-mails. You can write to a lot of people at once, you know all that kind of stuff, it is quick"
>
> *(female, S6, fee paying urban)*

3.5 Commercial information seeking and online purchasing

The final set of internet uses groups together those of a more commercial orientation. Communication researchers have tended to avoid distinguishing between commercial and non-commercial content in part because of the blurring between commercial and non-commercial content (Yuan *et al* 1998). Commercial content stretches across a range of formats from "corporate or brand websites, retailer sites, banner and other advertising, paid for links and promotional emails" (Molesworth and Jenkins 2002). This makes the definition of what can be considered commercial use less than clear. However, the findings from the quantitative research suggested that young people do indeed make a distinction between commercial and non-commercial motives, particularly when searching for and purchasing online. This section will therefore outline how young people actively used the internet for commercially-oriented information searching and purchasing.

3.5.1 Searching and comparing product content

One of the more common commercially-minded motivations was to conduct exploratory searches for products and services of interest. Internet sites provided a convenient method of finding out what existed, checking specifications and visualising the desired product. It was rare for such behaviour to be unplanned and favoured retailer and/or manufacturer brands were often recalled. Sites tended to reflect the interests and hobbies of the participants with shopping, sports and travel sites most commonly mentioned:

> IG: "Do you use the internet for looking for companies or brands?"
> L1: "I have tried a few different ones"
> L2: "I tend to go on the shopping ones"
> E: "Yeah, like the Top Shop site"
> L1: "I like to go onto the sports ones, for trainers and football boots"
> E: "I like the Next and New Look sites. You can see what you want and then go into
> the shop and get it" *(group of girls, S4, state rural)*

For young people, the internet clearly offered a number of benefits when it came to pre-purchase behaviour. The generic internet qualities of being able to process information quickly and make swift comparisons between different choices were both evident:

> A: "I find it more interesting to look through the websites than work my way through
> all those (travel) brochures. It is exactly what you want. Especially if you want to get
> through a lot of stuff quickly" *(male, S6, fee paying urban)*

> S: "You can search through, you can find the best things, without having to go to like
> twenty shops, you can just look at some different sites"
> *(female, S5, state rural)*

This kind of behaviour amongst young people has been described as 'window-shopping' (Lunt 2002). Examples of aspirational 'window-shopping' were mentioned, cars a particular favourite amongst boys approaching the national driving age. This only part tells the story however as many adolescents have access to considerable disposable incomes and so are in a position to purchase from their own resources. It also ignores the influence that teenagers have on parental purchases. Searching for information online for certain products was more than just an aspirational activity.

The search behaviour most commonplace in this study was closest to the concept of seeking "informed choice" (Thomson and Laing 2003). The researchers argued that young people search for information online to assist them make better, informed choices when high street shopping. Searching for such information was also influenced by attitudes to ICT in general. A few more technologically savvy individuals (such as M. *S4, fee paying urban*) boasted about their abilities to find cheapest prices for desirable brands such as i-pods using a combination of intermediary sites and e-bay. This more advanced internet search behaviour was rare.

3.5.2 Influencing household purchasing behaviour

It has been suggested that children's interest in and abilities on the internet make them natural conduits for influencing parental purchasing behaviour (Thomson and Laing 2003). In this study, there were several examples of adolescents seeking to influence household purchases (cars, hotels, travel plans). Their online purchasing behaviour however was sometimes more complex than merely acting as technical assistants for IT- fearful parents. Parental IT competencies varied widely across the sample. There were as many examples of participants claiming that their parents knew what they were doing as examples of novice parents. More IT literate parents did however appear to be associated with the *fee-paying* school participants, a likely consequence of both parents working, often with professional careers. It was the norm in such schools for at least one parent to be IT literate.

In the case of A., an online hotel booking was a joint activity. She believed she had a highly influential part in the online choice of destination and hotel. She saw herself not just as an online assistant but was an active partner in the entire decision-making process. She even suggested that she was the ultimate decision-maker although financial and logistical considerations were undoubtedly the parent's domain.

IG: "So how into the computer are your parents?"
A: "Not so much my mum but definitely my dad. Yes, not so much my mum. We use it for booking holidays and hotels"
IG: "Do you get involved in this?"
A: "Yes, because a lot of the time, I am the one picking the hotels because I want a nice hotel, they don't pick the nice ones. I would pick the destination sometimes"

(female, S6, fee paying urban)

In a second example, A. *(male, S6, fee paying urban)* believed in purchasing holidays online with his parents because of the additional features accessible online. Both parents were net literate but it was A who spent time conducting the research online. In the quote below, he was actively involved in the choice of hotel based on being able to visualise the property online:

IG: "Are you involved in helping your parents buy online?"
A: "Yeah, we buy our holidays online. You can buy flights, but we don't buy the actual holiday. We booked this villa near Barcelona the other week. That was good ... You can do this 360 degrees thing where you can move about your villa. Cool"

(male, S6, fee paying urban)

This example illustrated that it was sometimes adolescents who possessed the enthusiasm to conduct detailed research online before purchasing. Parents may be net literate but may not have the time nor inclination to do it themselves. When purchases are made on behalf of the family, this can be delegated to other more willing family members.

3.5.3 Personal purchasing online

Thomson and Laing (2003) claimed that 43% of children in their Scottish study had purchased online, predominately for personal use. In this study, personal online purchasing was evident although attitudes towards it very mixed. Items purchased online tended to be relatively small such as CDs, concert tickets and books. Motivations for purchasing online were varied with benefits cited context-dependant. For example, one participant described how he liked to book online because it meant not having to deal with (grown up) sales assistants on the telephone:

D: "It saves having to talk to someone. I don't have to get on the phone or go down the shops. It I want a ticket or something, my mum would say 'phone up yourself'. She wouldn't do it for me so I just go onto the internet, it's just so easy... that's the

good thing about the net, you don't have to deal with anybody at all"

<div align="right">(male, S4, state rural)</div>

On other occasions, more functional and generic benefits such as the promise of cheaper prices and faster ordering times were deemed most important. For individuals living in rural communities, the distance to specialist shops such as sporting equipment or reputable bookshops were valued. For online clothes shopping however, the locational convenience was often outweighed by perceived disadvantages. These included social barriers (the lack of a social 'event', missing the atmosphere of shopping with friends) and functional/service barriers (the inability to try on and experience clothes first hand; the inconvenience when having to return products to retailers; the need for personal attention).

Young people were knowledgeable about the problems associated with online costs and delivery times. Experiences of high postage and delivery charges, hidden costs and problems of constantly returning unwanted goods did colour young peoples' enthusiasm towards online purchasing. For every positive story, there was a contrasting tale of woe. Some were adept at balancing time and cost tradeoffs of online versus offline purchasing. One sixteen year old described how he would only make online purchases if delivery charges were less than the equivalent bus fare needed to get to the shops.

For a very small minority, purchasing online had become a frequent and even compulsive activity. In one particular discussion, two girls revealed the temptations of online purchasing:

> IG: "Can you tell me about your online purchasing then?"
> K: "Well, it's just addictive"
> N: "Aye, you just want to spend all your time doing it"
> K: "Aye, and you can go onto the internet and you can buy, buy, buy on the internet. It's like it says 'buy this and buy that' for this much and as soon as you buy it, you get caught out"
> N: "But because you've bought this and you got this review, and said it was amazing"
> K: "Aye, Amazon do it and HMV as well. Other people have said 'this is fantastic', 'they've really rated it highly and perhaps you might buy this CD' and it will take you to the page it's on and it will tell you all about it, it gets you hooked"

<div align="right">(two girls, S6, state suburban)</div>

This example highlighted that internet literacy did not always equate to commercial or

marketing literacy. Young people feared they were not immune from manipulative practices of online marketing. Both girls were aged sixteen, clearly able to recognise some of the dangers. However, both girls felt they were still being seduced, resulting in negative experiences of internet use. Other barriers cited as reasons why more online purchasing did not take place included issues of trust, security, personal information, the shopping experience and a lack of human assistance. These issues will be covered in later chapters. The remainder of this chapter will move on to analyse young peoples' experiences of the other important form of new media, mobile phone use.

4. Contextualising mobile phone use

The quantitative diary analysis confirmed the popularity of mobile phone use, particularly texting, in the daily lifestyles of young people. Participants talked enthusiastically about relationships with "their" mobile phones, requiring little in the way of moderator prompting. So normalised had mobiles become that many participants did not even consider taking a photograph of their phone. Their rationale was that the phone was no longer symbolic of something novel, simply a taken for granted part of their daily existence. The exception to this was the new generation of multi-media phones such as video and camera phones, only just starting to become popular during the fieldwork.

There were numerous cases of constant texting from mobiles. D. (*male, S4, state rural*) talked about "burning something like £5 a night" on texting, spending "four to five hours a night on the phone". Nightly sessions of constant texting "back and forth" were not uncommon, as highlighted in the personal dairies. Such examples confirmed the emergence of the 'addictive texter' (Pedrozo and Wilska 2004). S. (*female, S5 state rural*) suggested that "I don't go anywhere without my phone, it is always next to me". The phone was her constant companion, carried everywhere and never away from her side. Her rationale for this was that "I keep it next to me just in case somebody wants to text me". It had become an addictive need, something she claimed she might struggle to cope with if not nearby.

Mobile phones were not uniformly popular in this study. The quantitative study suggested that 87% of the sample had some sort of access to a mobile phone. Within this, there existed a minority of 'mobile resisters', willing to use mobile phones for functional reasons such as organising or keeping in touch but opposed to the idea that mobiles are an essential lifestyle accessory.

> IG: "Tell me about why you haven't taken pictures of mobile phones then?"
> B: "I don't have one but my brother lends me one"
> S: "Mine is about sixth hand, I do use it sometimes when we go out to keep in contact with my friends"
> IG: "How important is it to you?"
> E: "We aren't obsessed with it"
> S: "Ben used to be obsessed with it"
> E: "I wasn't obsessed with it but I realised that I don't really need to use one now. But we wanted to have a phone because my brother is always on the internet. Or his phone is engaged. We can hardly ever get through"
> E: "But I think phones are anti-social… because everyone that has got a phone, is just sitting there, speaking with the phone. I get annoyed with T. always has his on. His is a video camera on his phone, which is quite sad that people can't live without their phone"   *(mixed group, S6, state rural)*

Ling (2000) suggested that from mid-teens onward, some young people were ideologically opposed to the use of mobile phones. His suggestion was that older teens become cynical towards the status-driven attractions of mobile phones. In the quote above, a number of reservations are voiced, providing evidence that mobiles have not (yet) reached universal acceptance. The reservations from this quote include issues of perceived self and social identity, a lack of necessity and intrapersonal intrusion.

The qualitative discussions allowed the analysis of mobile use to move beyond the relatively undifferentiated factor analysis presented earlier. The remainder of the chapter will outline a number of distinct uses for mobile phone consumption. When talking about mobile phone use, there was not always a clear distinction between voice call and texting. Researchers such as Höflich and Rössler (2001) have conducted 'text-only' uses and gratifications studies. However, it was natural for young people to talk about "using their mobile" when they specifically meant text only. Gratifications can be understood under five main headings: social connections, entertainment, combating boredom, identity formation and safety & well-being.

5. Diversity of mobile uses

5.1 Social connections

The most commonly cited and arguably most important gratification concerned social connections. This contrasted with the findings from the quantitative factor analysis. Mobile phones and in particular texting were frequently used as a way of maintaining social networks:

> A: "Well, I don't think I could live without it, it's a very important part of my life…it is very useful because I don't know how I would organise things with my friends without my phone. I could use my house phone but that's not easy"
>
> *(female, S6, fee paying urban)*

Texting was seen as a way of keeping in touch, being kept in the social 'loop' and feeling part of the peer group. Tully (2002) argued that because youth culture is very dynamic, there is a need to be synchronised with peers. For most of the young people in this research, texting was a way of remaining in that peer group, making sure to not miss out on nights out or the latest gossip exchanged.

The fear of not wanting to miss out and the need for re-enforcement of personal popularity was evident in several discussions. During one of the sessions, a fifteen year old boy received a text and proclaimed "hey, I'm popular, I've just got a text message". Although the comment was said with a degree of sarcasm, the fact that he was only too happy to announce his text to his friends suggested that being included in the latest round of social chat was important to him.

The social connected aspect of texting had an important spatial dimension. M. and A. explained how texting can be understood as a form of virtual socialising:

> IG: "Tell me why it is important to you then?"
> M: "Because I can just talk to my friends and text my friends"
> A: "It is a way of going out without going out"
> M: "Yes, it's a way of going out with your friends whilst you are in your bedroom"
>
> *(two males, S4, fee paying urban)*

This suggests that texting contributes towards the concept of the 'media rich'

bedroom, arguably encouraging young people to retreat further into their own personal spaces. In a similar manner to internet messsenger boards, texting allowed young people to actively participate in a social discourse whilst remaining at home. Such findings suggest that new media use is creating new forms of socialisation, where physical presence is no longer a necessity.

One of the huge benefits of mobile use in comparison to the internet lay in its very mobility. It allowed young people to socially participate, wherever and whenever it suited them. This included at home, when travelling, at school and when out socialising. Texting enabled young people to either contribute immediately or respond at a more suitable time. Gillard *et al* (1998) referred to this constant adjustment of everyday activities using mobiles as 'micro-coordination'. Sometimes texts from friends were responded to that instant, other times reflected upon and saved for another time. It was this flexibility in communication that distinguished it from the location-bound internet or landline.

> S: "Well, texting is easier because you can do it anywhere because it is in your pocket and you can just contact someone or communicate with someone without having to call them. Really easy. Whereas I think I find e-mail a bit more of a nuisance. Especially because I don't have broadband" *(female, S6, fee paying urban)*

In common with the internet, young people perceived mobile phones to be a more private form of communication. Texting allowed young people to conduct social conversations in public places, sometimes in close proximity to those not included in conversations.

> A: "You can say what you want without having to say it, it's more private. If you want to say it to someone and maybe they are in a public place, they can get a beep and they can read it out without anyone else hearing the conversation" *(female, S5, state suburban)*

This included school friends, teachers and, of course, parents. In this manner, mobile phone use can be understood as a way of social seclusion as well as social connectedness. Phones were seen to facilitate 'distance socialising' whilst allowing adolescents to circumvent some of the social barriers such as embarrassment involved in face-to-face communication. Although there was insufficient time to explore the nature of text language using mobile phones (see Patterson *et al* 2004), a couple of

participants did suggest that texting allowed for a more intimate form of conversation. In common with the internet, texting enabled them to feel social barriers could be crossed. An example of this was 'text flirting' in which more risqué forms of language were used. This more intimate form of communication highlighted the very personal nature of mobile phone use with implications for external parties wishing to intrude.

5.2 Entertainment

Social and entertainment-based reasons to use mobiles were often interconnected. This might go some way to explaining why both were grouped together in the factor analysis. Texting friends to keep in touch was also seen as good fun, an enjoyable pastime. The very nature of texting with its own particular form of abbreviated language and more risqué forms of communication was entertainment in its own right. Beyond cost reasons, this might be one of the reasons why texting remains such a popular youth activity. There were also more specific, entertainment-based gratifications enjoyed through mobile phone use such as mobile gaming, exchanging pictures and programme texting.

5.2.1 Mobile gaming

The advent of add-on services, sometimes referred to as digital content has encouraged the use of mobile phones for a number of entertainment-based and more personal gratifications. Mobile gaming was a common practice, games either located on the phone from purchase or downloaded using the internet. Games mentioned such as *The Italian Job* and *Pirates of the Caribbean* highlighted the increasing use of mobile games for promotional tactics by film merchandising and marketing. This again was another example of the growing integration of different digital forms of media with individual media channels feeding each other to provide entertainment services.

5.2.2 Exchanging pictures

The advent of what were described as either picture or camera/video mobiles was very much in its infancy during the fieldwork. A small number of participants already

owned a version, several expressed a desire to make it their next major purchase. Given the weight of marketing behind camera/video phones and anticipated word-of-mouth, it was not surprising to find most participants at least aware of this next generation of mobile phones.

Picture mobiles were primarily seen as an additional and sometimes unnecessary form of mobile entertainment. Most participants were aware that their ability to exchange images and small films depending on camera specification. This was seen as an interesting novelty rather than a 'must have' purchase. The importance of peer network was perhaps one of the greatest inhibitors to quicker adoption. As one fourteen year old boy suggested, there was no point having one with no-one to send images to! Participants highlighted the cost of sending such images but examples of friends sending them suggested that cost barriers were being overcome. The consensus was that exchanging images using mobile phones would continue to be a secondary motivation to everyday text based communication. Given that some participants had reservations about receiving even personal images, this has negative implications for practitioners hoping to use mobile phones as the new format for image dominant advertising.

5.2.3 Programme texting

A final form of entertainment-based mobile use was the growing popularity of programme texting. Responding to reality TV shows such as 'Pop Idol', 'Big Brother' and 'I'm a Celebrity' were familiar practices. Participants claimed to derive enjoyment from the feeling of participation when texting such programmes. Being able to contribute was seen as desirable, even though they acknowledged their limited personal contribution. The use of texting to programmes can be interpreted as a shift from the intra-personal to the impersonal. Such texting involved communicating with organisations based on reputation rather than intimate, personal knowledge. It could be argued, however, that young people were happy to text such organisations because they felt a degree of empathy with the presenters. This kind of texting was never perceived as excessive or out of control. In one exception, a fourteen year old girl admitted she was a "compulsive" reality show texter, sending upwards of twenty texts per event. It did, however, highlight that young people are becoming more

comfortable when communicating directly with impersonal bodies. There was, however, clear distinctions made between texting to celebrity-endorsed programmes and texting commercial companies seeking to establish a branded relationship, a theme discussed in Chapter Thirteen.

5.3 Combating boredom

In common with many other forms of media, mobile phones were seen as another way to combat boredom. Playing games and texting on phones were perceived as ways of filling in or wasting time. When asked what was the ideal time to text, one female suggested it was simply when she could think of "nothing else to do". Unlike other media, the mobility of this media meant that it was uniquely suitable for this type of immediate gratification. Its very closeness and convenience ensured that it could be used to fill in between other activities. Its essentialness therefore lay in always being on hand to combat adolescent claims of "having nothing to do".

5.4 Identity formation

Pedrozo and Wilska (2004) suggested that adolescents have an acute awareness of the impact of mobile phone consumption on their personal identity. The purchase and subsequent use of mobile phones for reasons of identity formation was not a prominent theme in discussions with this group of young people. For a minority of participants, the novelty of sending pictures and video clips was deemed "cool" in a similar vein to i-pod or X-box consumption. This was not the norm however.

On a couple of occasions, participants criticised their friends for camera/picture phones, portraying them "novelty items". Implied in this was that 'other' young people were using such phones to be "with the in-crowd". J. described how she felt she might eventually have to follow this lead:

> J: "Yeah, well I wouldn't say no to a camera phone if someone was going to get me one, but I don't know if I would go out of my way to buy one. I mean, just now I have got quite a nice one. If I was to buy a new one, I might consider it but it's a bit of a craze, a bit of a novelty, isn't it?"   *(female, S5, fee paying urban)*

Young people were also cognisant of the impact of mobile phone advertising campaigns such as Vodaphone's television advertising using David Beckham. They suggested that adolescents using such phones enjoyed a degree of association with role models. However, this kind of direct association was rarely admitted to, the older participants being more conscious. This is an area that requires further research to ascertain whether mobile phones are as interconnected with issues of personal identity as suggested by Coogan and Kangas (2001).

5.5 Safety & well-being

An important functional and emotional reason for mobile phone use was perceived safety & well-being of that individual. Safety & well-being can be broken down into genuine concerns about personal safety and perceived concerns that parents and guardians might have. Mobile phones were sometimes carried around "just in case" of a breakdown in personal health such as a sudden asthma attack. Mobiles were also seen as reassurance in case of personal attack, a growing concern amongst young people. The fact that there was a possibility of using a mobile in such an emergence was deemed sufficient to be reassuring. Mobiles were also an important way of facilitating independence from parents whilst maintaining a virtual connection. A. explains:

> A: "When I go out, I always make sure I have got my phone on me, in case they need to contact me or I need to get in touch with them. It makes them feel better and I know they won't be worrying about me" *(female, S5, state suburban)*

In this context, mobile use can be interpreted as encouraging an enhanced feeling of independence made possible by the 'safety-net' of the phone, symbolically stepping away from family ties yet always within reach. The very flexibility of the mobile therefore allowed young people to choose their mode of socialising, helping to overcome safety concerns which might restrict their desires for greater parental freedoms.

6. Conclusions

This chapter offers a contextualised understanding of young peoples' uses of the internet and mobile phones. In both cases, uses were indeed highly diverse in nature, reflecting varying degrees of user enthusiasm and a multitude of desired uses. Uses were also at times intertwined and simultaneous rather than isolated.

The findings confirm that some but not all young people derive pleasure from internet use. Enjoyment encompassed both personal and social consumption. The downloading, editing and replaying of music highlighted a more individualistic side to internet consumption. However, the desire to then exchange and swap files served as a reminder that such behaviour often has social dimensions. Internet enjoyment can further be understood as a source of immediate, hedonic gratification as was the case for online gaming and surfing, providing relief from daily routines and boredom. Finally, new skills learnt on the internet blurred the boundaries between what can be interpreted as entertainment and personal learning.

There was little doubt that the internet has become an important locale for extending formal education. In this sense, it represented a place of 'work' as well as 'play', influenced by parental and institutional attitudes, socialised backgrounds and importantly, personal enthusiasms. The importance of internet use for informal education was less clear. Examples of personally-motivated learning such as the creation of personalised websites or information searches about foreign cultures were infrequent. Whether internet use for self-development remains a minority interest, tainted by 'working' associations, remains a contentious issue.

The internet did offer the ideal place for diversion, avoidance and escape. Its convenient, connecting possibilities allowed young people to escape unwanted tasks and relieve boredoms that afflict adolescent lives; the "endless possibilities" experienced online enhancing such escapist tendencies. Chat room conversations for example allowed for multiple personas, with associations of fun, risk and uncertainty. This kind of active escapism contrasted with the more passive examples of aimless website surfing to avoid more pressing matters. With more computers now accessed

from teenage bedrooms, such internet-facilitated escapism is only likely to increase. The qualitative discussions have underlined how socially-constructed much of young peoples' internet use was. Online peer-to-peer communication offered young people enhanced feelings of social control, status and the opportunity for multiple, simultaneous socialising. It also encouraged the extending of social ties beyond their immediate locale, facilitating and sustaining distant relationships. Few internet activities did not have a social dimension, activities either facilitating immediate communication or encouraging subsequent discussion. Commercialism did play a part in young peoples' uses of the internet. There were examples of young people actively searching for commercial content, influencing both personal and household consumption patterns. Such experiences were often enhanced by higher levels of online expertise. Commercial uses however were also accompanied by the kind of multiple commercial barriers discussed in the next chapter.

Mobile use was more orientated towards satisfying social needs than internet use. Texting established, maintained and re-inforced social networks, in a more immediate and spontaneous manner. Texting was not location, time nor technology-dependent, allowing for a more accessible form of communication, not always possible through internet use. The interconnectedness of new media gratifications was highlighted by the convergence of social and entertainment uses of mobiles. The exchanging of texts, games and pictures amongst friends was as important for social as personal entertainment gratification. This interconnectedness also mirrored integrated media content such as promotional-based entertainment, downloaded and shared amongst friends. Although picture and camera mobiles were in their infancy, early signs suggested these visually-orientated entertainment gratifications would enhance rather than displace the dominant text/voice based ones.

Mobile use sometimes mirrored generic media use such as when combating boredom. They also however offered gratifications quite distinct to internet consumption. There was evidence to suggest that mobile phone use was closely linked to identity formation. More conclusively, the findings highlighted the use of mobiles for personal reassurance concerning safety & well-being. Finally, the research offered little in the way of encouragement to marketing practitioners, finding little evidence of active or even desired mobile use in connection with commercial gratifications.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

CONTEXTUALISING BARRIERS TO NEW MEDIA USE

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1. Introduction

Previous chapters have illustrated how diverse and complex new media use can be for adolescents. The quantitative findings highlighted a range of barriers preventing more enthusiastic use of new media. This chapter aims to delve into such barriers, exploring the intensity of young people's concerns when engaging with new media. The chapter concerns itself with the internet, the focus of most of young people's new media concerns. Five 'non-commercial' barriers to use have been conceptualised from the text: issues of motivation, access, inconvenience, social perception and personal concern. Issues of commercial intrusion will be dealt with in the following chapter.

2. Issues of motivation

One barrier evident early on in many discussions was simply a lack of genuine interest in internet use beyond the "necessary tasks". As earlier sections on young people's lifestyles have illustrated, the internet by no means dominated the lives of participants in this study. For a sizeable minority, it possessed little sense of excitement or enthusiasm. Its use was restricted to educational purposes and rarely accessed beyond the school. If it was accessed for reasons other than for homework, it was typically described as the "last choice" for entertainment:

> IG: "If you had half and hour to spare, would you use the internet?"
> B: "Only if I was really bored, I would probably go on the internet. But yeah, if I had a choice of anything else to do, I would do it. It would probably be music... or just stick on the television." *(male, S6, state urban)*

As earlier chapters have argued, this may be because the internet offers many, and no one dominant 'reason to use'. In B's case, television or music (sometimes through the

internet) was clearly his favoured way of spending a spare half an hour. Internet use for others had a 'jack of all trades, master of none' nature; it offered a range of possibilities, none of which was ultimately compelling.

Amongst this small group of older non-enthusiasts, there was indication that the internet used to be a more exciting prospect. Two older participants described using the internet in their early teens, but rarely logged on nowadays as the novelty wore off. These findings reinforce the findings of Wyatt *et al.* (2002) that adolescents experienced the internet but then fell away, bored and disillusioned. Disinterest or disillusionment in internet use was rarely experienced in isolation. Young people went on to describe a range of related issues (access, privacy and perceived intrusion), each one reinforcing such feelings.

3. Issues of access

3.1 Personal access

Debates concerning internet access have traditionally studied whether young people have an adequate source of access, often focusing on aspects of the 'digital divide' (Hoffman *et al.* 2000a). In this research, rising homeownership of computers and universal availability of ICT in schools made initial access less of an issue.

There were two examples of participants from less privileged backgrounds claiming that their parents could not afford computers in the household, and by implication the additional costs of internet access. In both cases however, the participant claimed that neither they nor their parents had any real interest in computers. It was evident that their non-use was attributable to more than just financial constraints. Their parents were not particularly ICT literate and fearful of the financial, educational and social implications of internet use. Facer and Furlong (2001) argued that social conditioning and lack of parental support have been one of the main reasons keeping some young people "at the margins of the informational revolution". In common with Livingstone and Bober (2004), such experiences in this research were few and far between.

A far more frequent barrier was the contextualised and negotiated nature of internet use. Competition for access, parental surveillance and the aspiration for sophisticated access such as broadband were prominent. The growing demand for internet use amongst young people (and their parents) was the cause of considerable dissatisfaction, corroborating the questionnaire findings. Few homes had more than one internet connection point. Access was consequently constrained by a combination of one computer per household and/or only one shared telephone line. L. described how she had to "steal" the computer to gain satisfactory access:

> L: "On Friday, I had my cousins down to stay, we try to steal the pc in my house as there are so many kids and with the adults as well, it is hard to get on. We managed a couple of hours in the chat room and playing Connect4 before we got kicked off"
> *(female, S5, state rural)*

Amongst some, access was carefully negotiated with parents and worked smoothly. In the case of L. however, she admitted being "sick of the arguments about accessing the internet", sometimes resorting to her mobile phone as a preferred method of communicating with her friends. Similarly, K. and N. described family frictions and competing concerns that characterised internet access at home:

> IG: "Tell me what you don't like about the internet?"
> K: "If your brothers get on before you, or your sister, and they don't let you on. That is annoying. My wee brother just sits there playing Monsters.inc."
> N: "Yeah, it always ends in arguments in my house"
> *(two females, S6, state suburban)*

One consequence of growing frustrations of access was the aspiration to own a laptop. Clearly, this was more common amongst the more ICT literate and to be expected of those from more privileged backgrounds. The following quote illustrated that such aspirations were not always their preserve however:

> C: "When I leave home, I'm going to be away somewhere else. I want a computer when I'm leaving, I've wanted one for ages because I've said I spend a lot of time on it but my mum and dad are always on it"
> N: "I'd rather have my own computer cause I can have my own e-mail address so that no-one can read my e-mails, and they wouldn't steal my games"
> *(two females, S4, state suburban)*

The quote highlighted the frustrations of trying to negotiate everyday access and the links between access, personal identity and privacy. For C. securing her own laptop

with internet access was almost a 'rite of passage', a tangible sign of negotiated independence. For N., a personalised e-mail address was another sign of the need to establish her own identity through negotiation of her own form of access and use.

Issues concerning domestic access to media mirror historic problems associated with television access. If the internet follows the trend of more traditional forms of media then it too may emerge as a medium characterised by multiple domestic access. Early evidence of this can be seen in the multiple ownership of computers more prevalent amongst *fee-paying* school attendees and the trend to pass on 'cast-offs'. Alternative methods for internet access were evidenced through two domestic ICT trends. Firstly, a few young people talked about parents bringing home their internet enabled laptops, freeing up the family computer. Secondly, higher levels of broadband access amongst those from a more privileged background enabled uninterrupted internet access, 24 hours a day.

Problems of access were also a function of spatial location. Having to access the computer in 'public' rather than 'private' spaces could be problematic (Livingstone 1999). One consequence was fears over participants' right to privacy. One fourteen year old girl recounted how she could only access the computer through her father's study. Another participant described the problems of access in a shared living room. The need for some degree of privacy when using the internet reflected both the more personal nature of internet use and adolescent desires for autonomy and independence, even when in the home.

Finally, access can be conceptualised in terms of the extent of internet access young people were allowed. Several participants recalled parents using filters and software programmes such as 'netnanny.com' to invoke restricted access. Most participants were accepting of such practices, cognisant of the need to be vigilant against security fears. A few complained of not being able to access more adult-oriented material such as the online game 'Dead or Alive: Xtreme Beach Volleyball'. There were however few indications that such practices reduced young people's motivation to use the internet.

3.2 Technology and related costs

Despite the advances in technological innovation, issues of slow computer connections continued to be problematic for young people. Their frustrations could be heard in their depictions of slow downloads and on–going connection break-downs. Such technologically induced barriers lead to a build up of frustration, sometimes leading to anger. A. revealed that this lead to jealous feelings over her brother's better fortunes:

> A: "The computer we have at home, is just really slow. It takes an hour to download stuff and I can't be bothered sitting there. And it's just too expensive. My brother in his new home has a new computer and software and broadband. So it's much easier for him, it's just not fair" *(female, S6, fee-paying urban)*

The issue of broadband access was occasionally divisive. With the possibility of easier downloading of music and videos, broadband access allowed young people greater opportunities for immediate online entertainment. Stories of friends accessing fast downloads were told with more than a hint of envy. Those privileged enough to have broadband access enthused about their much-improved experiences:

> IG: "How much time do you spend downloading then?"
> A: "Well, on my 'bad side'. I put 'slow connection' when downloading. But I don't have a problem with that now I have broadband, which is really quite fast"
> S: "I used to have a 56k modem and it was really, really slow, it took thirty minutes to download a song. And I have now got broadband and it takes about, like it can take five minutes a song, sometimes even faster. It's so so much better"
> *(male and female, S6, fee-paying urban)*

Such stories suggest that the debate over the 'digital divide' has moved on from straightforward issues of access and towards concerns over quality of access. With increasing amounts of entertainment derived from the internet, it is likely to become an on-going issue until high speed connections become more affordable to all.

Frustrations were also expressed about breakdowns in internet service. Internet sessions were sometimes cut short and not returned to because of rising frustrations with blockages or viral related problems. Such interruptions stopped the continuation of 'user flow' (Hoffman *et al.* 2000b). User flow enhances the user's experience of the subject in question (Csikszentmikihalyi 1997). Breakdowns have been found to

cause frustration and anger. Van Doren *et al.* (2000) predicted that consumer expectations of a quick, customised and effective communication through the internet were growing. This research confirms that such expectations were not yet being met and dissatisfaction might actually grow as technological advances re-define concepts such as the 'digital divide'.

4. Issues of inconvenience

4.1 Temporal inconvenience

One aspect of how young people felt about the internet was the symbolic drawing of a 'clockface' representing the dimension of time. Participants such as S. recounted experiences of how time consuming the internet could be:

> S: "Under here, I have got a 'clock' which suggests that the internet takes up greater time, time really goes really, really quickly. You go on at five o'clock and suddenly you find it is eight o' clock.... It's because you are chatting to your friends on the internet. I used to do it a lot [go on internet] but no more"
>
> *(female, S5, state rural)*

From this example, losing track of time might not appear to be a significant barrier. Other participants however recounted stories of spending what they felt was too much time on the internet, on messenger boards and chat rooms. Of particular concern was the amount of time the internet took up, preventing them from doing other activities including homework, and having to face trouble from parents and teachers.

Temporal barriers were also cited by less enthusiastic participants. Complaints included the internet being too time-consuming, something they struggled to fit into their busy lifestyles. In this context, it was seen as "time-wasting", a distraction from other, far more pleasurable pursuits. It was neither worth investing significant time nor effort:

> J: "I never really got into it. I think I was just too busy doing other things. Playing sport or going out and I didn't have time to sit down and look at websites and all the rest"
>
> *(male, S5, state suburban)*

Such time related considerations were exacerbated by the technological problems

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mentioned earlier. Searching for information on the internet could be problematic, lengthy searches with no obvious benefit. For the less than enthusiastic, the collective impression given was that the internet was "more hassle than it was worth".

4.2 Information overload

Searching for information on the internet brought its own set of frustrations. B. recalled the problems of wading through irrelevant information:

> B: "Sometimes, when you search for things, it comes back with a million different things, and by the bottom, it's like, you've typed into the thing hoping to come upon with everything there and by the time you are at the bottom, it's like a tiny part of one of the words featured somewhere on the site. I don't like that"
> *(male, S6, state rural)*

E. went on to outline why the internet did not provide an easy way to find search for information, in contrast to more traditional texts such as books:

> E: "On the bad side, the main thing is that either you get absolutely nothing or you get so much that it is impossible to disseminate what you actually want... with other sources of information like books, you can look at the directory and if it is not there, then it is not there, plain and simple. But on the internet, there are so many pages that do have stuff that might be helpful. With search engines, when they look through and find words matching what you put down, it brings up things that are completely irrelevant to what you want"   *(male, S6, state rural)*

Such examples were not unusual, suggesting the internet could be a confusing and time- wasting environment rather than a convenient place for information retrieval. Hunting through pages of obscure sites, ending up in 'blind alleys' did little to catalyse young people's natural desire for exploration using digital media (Sefton Green and Buckingham 1998). Tapscott (1998) argued that young people have a natural affinity with digital media, empowering them to explore and discover new things. The sheer amount of information online and the need to navigate through a confusing maze of data however was problematic. Participants in this research did not suggest they lacked the ability to conduct such tasks. Instead, they felt their natural impatience and desire for immediate gratification did not synchronise with the time consuming nature of online information retrieval.

5. Issues of social perception

5.1 Peer group image

The pilot study (Grant 2002) highlighted an image problem associated with excessive internet use. Amongst certain participants, excessive internet use was associated with anti-social tendencies including being seen by peers as "geeks" or "not normal". In this larger study, such negative associations rarely surfaced. This may be because the internet is now a more established, acceptable activity for young people to enjoy. There was some evidence however that identity concerns have switched from the amount to the nature of use. In the following example, anti-social behaviour was characterised as much by negative associations of chat room communication as by spending many hours alone on a machine:

> IG: "What do you think about people spending a lot of time on the internet?"
> A: "Well, there is something a bit anti-social about it, isn't there. Which is a bit ironic too, because people who go onto chat rooms, they are like socialising but it is not the same, I think, because it is not actually social. You are hiding something about yourself, aren't you?" *(female, S6, fee-paying urban)*

This subject encouraged a further exploration of the barriers that existed because of the internet's 'non-human' characteristics.

5.2 Non-human characteristics

For more sceptical participants, online purchases were seen as a poor substitute for the kind of face-to-face interaction enjoyed in the high street. One concern centred on the lack of a human face to approach, having to rely on a virtual interface even when problems emerged. This finding might appear surprising given the growing popularity of digital forms of communication such as instant messenger and texting amongst young people. Young people were clearly comfortable communicating through technology and are recognised in some contexts to be ICT experts (Tapscott 1998, Livingstone and Bovill 1999). Several types of concerns about this 'non-human' interface were however identified.

Firstly, young people had concerns about dealing with organisations without an

obvious person to speak to, especially when things went wrong. Comments were reserved for situations in which there was a problem to solve or a complaint to follow up on:

> IG: "What do you think about organisations that can only be contacted via the internet?"
> D: "Well, it can be really difficult. Say I go shopping, then I can ask someone to help if I am having problems. But with the computer, they give you so many options, and you can't discuss and show them what's wrong with it, you have a list of what might be wrong"　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*(male, S4, state rural)*

This example gave another illustration of the related theme of information overload, with a bewildering array of choices but no-one to guide or offer advice. From his personal diary, D. was a frequent internet user but still had concerns about its applicability for online shopping because of the lack of human interaction.

Concerns extended to the practicalities of shopping online. Being able to experience clothes first hand, try on different sizes and seek out sales assistants for advice. The internet was seen as problematic when shoppers were unclear about precisely what they wanted or in situations where personal advice was required. In contrast, there were a couple of occasions where the anonymity of the internet suited the needs of young people. One fourteen year old female described how sales assistants in clothes shops could be quite dismissive of young people of her age. The internet on the other hand bypassed the need to deal with over-zealous sales assistants whom she perceived to discriminate based on her age.

Secondly, concerns were raised about internet providers' attempts to mimic the high-street experience. One individual experienced attempts by organisations to offer an online version of a human helpline. His disillusionment with such practices was illustrated in the following quote:

> D: "I went onto a site trying to buy something, a year ago. They had this link for technical support, to talk to one of their operators. And I thought 'how can I talk to one of their operators?' If you had a microphone, apparently you can hear them say 'how can I help you?' but I couldn't reply. It was weird that I could actually talk to one of their operators through a website. I think it would have been much better just to have offered a telephone number"　　　　　　　*(male, S4, state rural)*

Finally, a few participants raised the subject of organisational mistakes in processing

and a general concern about a lack of human skills involved in online purchase processing. There were fears about sending the wrong order or the wrong size and the anticipated hassle in having to return the goods. At the heart of such fears was what Hoffman *et al.* (1999) referred to in an adult context as "consumers simply not trusting most web providers enough to engage", in relationship exchanges or even short term transactions. In such cases, internet providers have not been able to reassure users sufficiently to allay their natural concerns.

Examples of problems experienced are by no means exclusive to a youth audience as Hoffman *et al.* has illustrated. They reflect wider societal concerns of the over-reliance on technology at the expense of human interaction. Given that younger generations have been depicted as digital experts however, it is therefore all the more surprising to encounter such reservations.

6. Issues of personal concern

6.1 Privacy concerns

The issue of personal privacy and digital media provoked strong reactions amongst this group of young people. It was clearly an issue many had reflected on, some taking very deliberate steps to protect what they perceived as their own 'private world'. This private world covered related areas of personal identity, personal conversations and personal lifestyles. Four distinct user types emerged from transcript analysis in relation to this issue: these were labelled *'naïve enquirers'*, *'confident dismissers'*, *'open-minded liberals'* and *'cynical concealers'*.

6.1.1 Naïve Enquirers

Firstly, *'naïve enquirers'* were participants who gave limited consideration to the subject of online privacy. Few openly fitted this depiction however as it implied a level of ignorance they were not willing to admit to. Those participants who did appear to fit the descriptor were less frequent users and less enthusiastic about the benefits of digital media.

Naïve enquirers were not completely ignorant concerning problems of internet use. Consideration was given as to whether individuals or organisations might be tracking their online communication, accessing their personal details or simply holding personal details online. Westin (1967) labelled these privacy concerns "information privacy". In the example below, E. highlighted that he was at the very least aware of the dangers:

> E: "I am not really that safety conscious on the internet, though I probably should be. But if I am filling out a form, if I am stupid enough to do it over the internet....I always wonder if they check it out or if it just goes through the database system or where it ends up" *(male, S6, state rural)*

6.1.2 Confident dismissers

Secondly, the *'confident dismissers'* were participants who felt online privacy was not worthy of serious consideration. The internet was no longer a dangerous or manipulative place and/or they felt more than capable of protecting their own online privacy:

> R: "I think most people are not that bothered about it, most people I know think they are quite safe on the internet and think it is getting better" *(male, S6, state rural)*

This group of young people represented a more confident generation of internet users, no longer concerned about potential dangers therein. Their confidence lay in their online abilities and their growing trust in the medium as a safe place to interact.

6.1.3 Open-minded liberals

Thirdly, *'open-minded liberals'* depicted participants who felt they had nothing to hide from engagement with internet use. They were aware of the problems of online privacy having considered issues such as multiple identities online but rejected such practices:

> B: "There's nothing that I would say on the internet that I wouldn't want to say elsewhere. I've got nothing to hide … I certainly wouldn't dream of making up a fake

name just to avoid detection"

> B: "I type in my name into the 'little section' sometimes. I can't remember the last thing I did but they ask for your name, address and country. I have done it loads of times, and nothing has come of it"

<div align="right">(male, S6, state rural)</div>

B. in particular articulated what he thought was a healthy attitude towards internet use. The internet was an important but not dominant facet of his daily life. Taking time to conceal identity online was seen as time wasting and ultimately pointless.

6.1.4 Cynical concealers

Finally, the most common attitudinal type, *'cynical concealers'* depicted participants most concerned about issues of privacy and personal identity online. This group tended to be the most opinionated; their comments frequently appeared in the transcripts, across gender and background. There was however an age effect, more prevalent amongst the experienced, older participants.

Cynical concealers believed parents, outside individuals and organisations (in varying degrees) each sought to intrude into their own private (online) worlds. Protecting their privacy, often through the use of hidden identities or clever software manipulation was a reaction to fears of surveillance and even intrusion. Further analysis of this group revealed that *cynical concealers* were concerned with two distinct agents. Parents represented a 'known' entity they were keen to conceal their internet use from. Organisations in contrast were an 'unknown' entity. *Cynical concealers* sought to hide from both groups.

6.1.4.1 'Hiding from the known': parents

For some, the concept of protecting their personal privacy meant the desire to evade parental scrutiny. Arguably, this need for online privacy from parents can be understood in the wider context of adolescents seeking to establish their own personal identities through personal use, unfettered from parental interference. The simplest examples concerned minimising screens when parents were close by or quickly switching off the computer to avoid closer scrutiny:

IG: "Is privacy an issue for you?"
S: "Yeah, you see that's why I was minimising things cause it felt like my mom was coming up purposefully and watching over me to read my conversations. Sometimes I close down my chatroom when I hear her coming"

(female, S6, state rural)

Although S. did not feel she was doing anything wrong, she resented the fact that she might have to disclose her personal conversations to her parents.

Young people were also concerned about the outcome of releasing their personal information after purchasing online. Goods requested over the internet for example might fall into their parents hands should they be purchased over the internet using their personal details. This provided another barrier, stopping them from greater use of the internet for information and purchasing reasons. One example given concerned teenage pregnancy. One fourteen year old girl feared that if she used an online website for accessing advice, the website company might then send her details through the post, thereby risking parental intervention. She did not appear to fully understand permission rights and feared that even if she did not request it, it might be sent anyway.

6.1.4.2 'Hiding from unknown': organisations

Fears over privacy were not restricted to concerns close to home. Privacy concerns were also attributed to the strategies and tactics of online organisations. D. described his feeling of helplessness when he was automatically "moved" from one part of a website to another, without his permission:

IG: "What about privacy online?"
D: "Yeah, well when I am on the internet and sometimes it says you have been moved to a separate location, a remote computer or something like that. I don't like that, I don't like when that happens.... It concerns me also when you give out details...I will never type in my address or my real name if I do not trust the people. Or when you have to access a site and they say 'please make your account with us to go onto our site', yeah, I wouldn't do that"

(male, S4, state rural)

This example mirrored fears over perceived loss of control conceptualised by researchers such as Nowak and Phelps (1992). D's fears resulted in a high level of

distrust towards the practices of online organisations. This manifested itself not just through his raised awareness of online navigation problems but also in his more proactive behaviour. He frequently withheld personal details from online organisations, particularly his correct name, address and postcode. He went on to describe how he often entered false details onto websites for fear of being bombarded with junk mail/advertising:

> D: "I have a few names. I was once called Gene. If I have just got to give my name and postcode or something like that, I just put in my name and then just type in a whole load of numbers, and then it accesses you anyway, they don't check up. So I just type in 11111111 at the beginning and then enter. It gets you anywhere"
>
> *(male, S4, state rural)*

On another occasion an older boy outlined his evasive tactics for ensuring organisations could not track him down:

> E: "I give companies my address but never my full postcode because they can get information from that. And I never give them my telephone number anymore, I just make up one if they say they need one. I often give my school e-mail address so that if the site is dodgy, then they, the school can deal with it. They have lots of anti viral things"
>
> *(male, S6, state rural)*

Later in the discussion, he finished the discussion with the words "they'll never track me down", a digital evolution of Coupland's (1992) 'I am not a target'. This sentence encapsulated his feeling of being hunted, of being personally tracked down and targeted for the gains of the organisation or company. Again, such strong use of language illustrated the depth of resentment some young people reserved for such tactics. Some *'Cynical concealers'* were well aware of organisations' abilities to 'data mine' personal details, deriving very personal depictions of individuals from details such as personal address and postcode. This example highlighted the growing awareness and reaction against the increasingly sophisticated and intrusive online practices of certain organisations.

6.2 Personal safety

Concerns of personal privacy occasionally extended to fears over personal safety. This was seen as one of the main reasons behind the popularity of instant messenger

services:

> M: "I read recently about MSN closing down its chat rooms. Well, in (MSN) messenger, you know the person's address; you just add them to your contact list. So you pretty much know who you are talking to"
>
> *(male, S6, state rural)*

The dangers emanating from mediated communication have long been associated with parental fears (Davidson 1983) but this research suggested that young people were acutely aware the potential dangers of online use, particularly through extensive use of chat rooms. A number of individuals mentioned that this was a subject covered in their classes and so were aware of the potential dangers. Safety awareness was also re-inforced through exposure to news stories. There were no examples admitted to of participants being advised by parents on such issues. One girl suggested that she knew a lot more than her parents about the issue.

Chat room use drew the most vocal concerns about personal safety. Young people were mindful of the different roles people play in 'open access' sites such as chat rooms and the connected dangers. Although changing identities online was seen by some as fun and frivolous, others had a clear conception of the dangers such as conversing with someone who may not have been who they purported to be. For S., the lure of meeting new people was outweighed by the potential pitfalls:

> IG: "You've put down 'misuse here, can you tell me a bit about such misuses?"
> S: "Well, you always hear stories in the newspapers, like paedophiles using the internet and that. And I associate that with chat rooms"
> IG: "How genuine a concern is that?"
> S: "Well, not really to me because I wouldn't get involved in anything like that, but it's what comes to mind. Like misusing the computer. And like chatrooms are dangerous as well, because they're people pretending to be someone they are not"
>
> *(female, S6, fee-paying urban)*

Young people were also mindful of other more illegal practices such as computer hacking and data manipulation. Without first-hand experience however, such practices were typically learnt about through media exposure.

7. Conclusions

This chapter offers a detailed account of the diverse barriers impacting on young people's internet uses. It confirms that young people's enthusiasm for internet use was modified by a range of complex, interconnected barriers. These have been conceptualised into five main categories.

The first, often of immediate concern, was a lack of appreciation for the internet as a desirable leisure activity. For a sizeable minority of young people in this study, daily lifestyles were full of many competing attractions and the internet symbolised little more than a necessity to keep up with the homework.

Secondly, it has been known for some time that internet use is constrained by issues of access. In this research, this has moved on from considerations of 'how many' to 'what kind' of access, encompassing availability of technology, negotiated access, geographies of access and the nature of parental control. Broadband availability may point towards higher quality access amongst those from a more privileged background but it ignores the social content within which internet use is consumed. Relationships with parents, siblings and peers often influence the manner in which the internet is accessed and ultimately used.

Thirdly, the findings suggest that the internet should not always be portrayed as a convenient source of information and communication. Internet use presented a number of inconveniences from its time consuming but addictive qualities to its time wasting frustrations. The abundance of information choices available online sometimes contributed to feelings of digital overload. Although such feelings were not universal, there were expressed with considerable conviction.

Fourthly, the virtual and therefore 'non-human' characteristics of internet consumption contributed its own set of barriers. Even amongst this young and reputably digitally expert generation, certain consumption experiences were best suited to the 'face-to-face' environment. Internet shopping for example remained an alien environment to less confident users, without a human face to turn to for advice,

or when things went wrong. It appears that the virtual environment has not managed to replicate certain human qualities and remains a poor substitute.

Fifthly, young people of varying degrees of enthusiasm recounted stories concerning issues of personal privacy and safety. The findings suggest a spectrum of viewpoints ranging from the interested but naïve through to the open-minded, dismissive, and, most commonly, cynical. Of these attitudinal groups, the cynical were the most pronounced, going to great lengths to protect their personal identities from the attentions of parents and organisations alike. They displayed a high level of sophistication both in their knowledge of commercial practices and their own competencies to evade such efforts and protect their self-interests. The final qualitative chapter will therefore explore young people's relationships with such practices in some detail.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

RELATIONSHIPS WITH MARKETING PRACTICES

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1. Introduction

The practitioner findings highlighted a diverse range of tactics adopted when targeting young people. The final objective of the 'consumer' phase of the research was to explore the attitudes of young people towards such practices.

Researching young people's attitudes towards advertising and brands was a subject that could have encompassed an entire thesis. The findings that follow offer only a tantalising glimpse into their relationships with advertising, brands and new media. Unlike the practitioner research, time given to this subject was limited. This was the most difficult section of the fieldwork to research as it involved asking questions about practices some young people were clearly unaware or disinterested in. The structure of this chapter follows the direction of many conversations. It starts by exploring attitudes towards traditional media advertising and then other forms of advertising, before broadening out to perceived relationships with brands. Finally, it focuses on relationships with new media marketing practices.

2. Attitudes towards TV advertising

Although the research was never designed to focus on television advertising, discussions centring on television use were often accompanied by spontaneous comments about favourite ads. Television advertising still has an important place in the lives of this group of young people. With longer advertising breaks on satellite digital channels and before any impact from ad zapping technologies (such as Tivo), advertising remained a popular consumption experience. Conversations were often enthusiastic in nature, in marked contrast to discussions concerning online advertising.

A number of characteristics can be identified re-inforcing previous research arguments that young people's advertising consumption experiences are sophisticated, complex and on their own terms (Meadows 1983).

2.1 Separation of use from commercial purpose

Young people had their own set of personal and social advertising uses which did not always marry with perceived commercial objectives. The most common example of this was the perception that advertising was for (their own) entertainment purposes, with little meaningful need to engage with the advertised product:

> S: "I love watching the adverts. Cause you can watch like a set of adverts, eat your tea and you're not gripped into anything. You just watch and enjoy. I don't pay much attention to who the advertising is for. That doesn't matter, does it?"
>
> *(female, S5, state rural)*

This example corroborates research suggesting young people have diverse uses for advertising (O'Donohoe 1994). These include to entertain, to act as a diversion (from homework), to multi-task (watch and eat) and to structure time (habitual consumption around teatime). S. suggested later on that television watching also allowed her to avoid spending time with her parents (family relations).

2.2 Sophisticated consumers of advertising

Through their conversations, young people evidently had more than just a passive relationship with television advertising. There were examples of the different modes of advertising sophistication found in O'Donohoe and Tynan's (1998) study of young adults. The first example concerned the sophisticated understanding of advertising objectives and how advertising is meant to work, labelled 'surrogate strategists' by O'Donohoe and Tynan:

> IG: "What do you think about advertising you see?"
> A: "Well, some of them go deliberately over the top, like the Esure ones, to make them more memorable, but they are quite funny so they work"
> R: "Yeah, they are deliberately poking fun at each other"
> A: "It is catch though. I mean, you remember the advert so it obviously must be working"

R: "But how long will people be making fun of Esure"
A: "Yeah, we are all laughing at Esure but they may be laughing all the way to the bank!"
(two males, S6, fee-paying urban)

There was evidence that young people enjoyed playing along with the advert, interpreting its content but becoming more critical if the advert was deemed to insult their intelligence (Shavitt *et al.* 1998) or became too repetitive. This suggested that young people continue to be ambivalent towards TV advertising (O'Donohoe 2001), their mood switching from enjoyment to cynicism depending on execution and context:

F: "I'm really cynical or raving about advertising. The Tango one is a really amazing advert and I like the Irn Bru one with the old lady… or the Spec savers advert in the jungle. Others, I just can't be bothered with and wonder what's the point of them"
(female, S5, state suburban)

A second example below illustrates several characteristics of sophisticated advertising consumption. It shows a sense of participant ambivalence towards advertising use, ranging from enjoyment to boredom (Otnes *et al.* 1997), signs of the 'myth of immunity' that advertising affects others but never the participant in question (Pollay 1986), illustrations of advertising "cognoscenti" (O'Donohoe and Tynan 1998) when talking about production references used in famous adverts and finally intertextuality in their making sense of relationships between film references and advertising stories (O'Donohoe 1997).

B: "Well, some adverts are just good, great fun at times"
S: "Yeah, they are amusing"
E: "But sometimes you watch it once and then get fed up pretty quickly. The clever ones are the best ones that make you think, but the majority of the rest are just well, 'they wouldn't persuade me to buy the products at all'"
S: "They don't persuade me to buy the stuff, I just think they are funny"
B: "If there was a really good advert, I might buy the product just because the advert was really good, because of the trouble and care they went into making that advert"
E: "Yeah, like the Guinness one on that programme last night, the surfers 'tick, tock' one.
B: Yeah, the 'horses in the sea', I think they took the horses from the sea from 'the last vehicle', the raging bull drove them into the sea"
(mixed group, S6, state rural)

It was ironic to discover that this conversation was between three participants who held the most negative viewpoints towards brands and commercialism in general.

Again, this highlighted that advertising use was often separated from commercial intent in so far as they clearly enjoyed interacting with advertising but only on their own terms. Attitudes were not always so positive, however, as the following section will illustrate.

2.3 Advertising scepticism

The advertising scepticism highlighted by US and UK adolescent and child research studies (Buckingham 1993, Bouch *et al.* 1994, Bartholomew and O'Donohoe 2003) was evident in this study. Bartholomew and O'Donohoe argued that such scepticism was rooted in young people's questioning of the differences between advertising depiction and their familiar, everyday realities. In this research, older adolescents were well-versed in the idea that advertising does not depict reality and therefore took this very much for granted. They did however feel that younger consumers would be less likely to differentiate fact from fantasy.

They were far more critical about the way in which advertising works, highlighting their more advanced knowledge of perceived participant objectives. For example, one fifteen year old female described how she felt advertising sought to manipulate demand for forthcoming film releases:

> IG: "What do think about TV advertising?"
> A: "TV advertising can be misleading, like on DVD's and that, it will give you a really good idea in the trailer which persuades you to actually buy it, or like the trailers for the new movies just out in the cinema.... They will show you the best scenes and might hook you into going and you see it and it isn't that good"
> *(female, S5, state suburban)*

In the example, A. showed an understanding of how advertising raises expectations and sometimes creates artificial demand. She also hinted that even a sophisticated understanding of such practices is sometimes insufficient to avoid being 'sucked in'. O'Donohoe (2001) argued that advertising literacy can facilitate feelings of insecurity and vulnerability. Such examples mirrored the feelings of manipulation highlighted earlier in an online context.

Young people talked about how the imagery communicated through advertising was

designed to influence their purchasing behaviour. In the following example, D. was cynical about the effects that role models could have on the aspirations of young consumers:

> D: "In television adverts, you get all these footballers advertising trainers. Like in the Nike or adidas adverts. They want children to see their favourite players wearing the boots and of course, they want children to want to be like them, like the stars. And of course on tele, you can see the stars wearing the boots [unlike the internet] so it's more life like. No wonder so many children buy those boots. It's not fair really."
> *(female, S4, state suburban)*

Such examples highlight that young people possess strong attitudes towards advertising practices. There was little sign of the indifference towards advertising suggested by Day (2002). There was also little indication of Goldman and Papson's (1992) suggestion that young people immerse themselves in advertising consumption in the hunt for deeper meanings. This group of young people perceived advertising as an immediate source of entertainment and enjoyment. Such enjoyment however was coloured by a healthy scepticism for practitioner objectives.

2.4 Advertising avoiders

There was also evidence that young people were ad avoiders as well as ad sceptics. Researchers have found that ad avoidance is a skill young people are already familiar with from their early adolescence years (Bartholomew and O'Donohoe 2003).

Ad avoidance came under several different guises in this research. Participants were keen to stress that advertising did not have an impact on their personal attitudes and behaviour even if they enjoyed watching the commercial. They were also equally adept at finding ways to turn away from TV advertising when it interfered with more engrossing alternatives. Channel switching during commercial breaks was common practice, particularly with the multi-channel nature of digital TV households. Much of the contents of channels such as MTV appear designed for immediate gratification with little need for extended viewing to satisfy. A couple of participants from the more 'media rich' households had also experimented with the benefits of Sky+. This system allowed for personal viewing recording (pvr) and so automatic ad avoidance.

3. Attitudes towards other forms of traditional advertising

Young people were very aware that advertising extends well beyond the confines of the television. Within the home, young people were particularly knowledgeable about radio advertising through commercial music stations such as Beat fm, Forth fm, Borders fm and, on a national level, Virgin. As with television advertising, opinions varied although radio advertising was sometimes criticised for interrupting the flow of musical programme they were listening to. There was little evidence of radio's much cited qualities of personalness and intimacy (Henley Centre 2004).

Out of the home, mention was made of outdoor forms of advertising such as bus-side advertising, bus-shelter advertising, roadside posters and taxi advertising. This was in keeping with the mobile nature of adolescent lifestyles. S. highlighted how bus-side advertising helped alleviate boredom when travelling:

> S: "My walk is to school every morning and I always walk past the buses and the bus-stops, so I always see adverts in shops and by the bus-stop… this is a photograph of me getting the bus to school. There was another bus passing with quite a funny advert, it's the Elf movie with Will Self. And it has a funny picture of him in an elf suit holding two bananas… I often notice them because there is nothing else to do on the bus"
> *(female, S6, fee-paying urban)*

A second example suggested that these young people were aware of the contents of such adverts and did notice more imaginative versions:

> D: "Yeah, I spend a lot of time on buses… I always read the same advertisement for five minutes waiting for the bus…it's good cause when you get a good one, cause its so boring waiting for buses"
> P: "I like the one where they've turned a bus-stop into a 'Cup-a-Soup', that's a really good one"
> *(mixed group, S5, fee-paying urban)*

Fewer mentions were made by participants from ruralised background illustrating the concentration of advertising messages in urban locations. Rural participants were not however immune from such advertising, citing examples from visits to their nearest towns or cities. This highlighted that participants in ruralised communities were rarely isolated from other forms of advertising, even if not directly targeted:

> E: "I like it in Edinburgh where they are doing stuff to buildings, where there is this

huge poster on the side of a building. I think it was for Toyota"
B: "Yeah, I've seen one for that new Nokia mobile game player"
E: "They look great and stand out a mile"

(two boys, S6, state rural)

Although the findings in this section provide few surprises, they do indicate that practitioner efforts to use 'out of the home' media to target mobile young people are being consumed.

4. Relationships with brands

Discussions centring on brands and how brands impact on young people's daily lives centred on three key themes: branded culture, sources of influence and the shift to digital communications.

4.1 'Branded culture'

For most young people in this research, brands and branded consumption were accepted, 'part and parcel' of everyday life, as predicted by practitioners earlier. Brands mentioned spontaneously revolved around clothes worn, electronic gadgets used, sporting, musical & media stars associated with and occasionally food & drink consumed. Associations with certain brands did reveal certain subcultural affiliations. Examples of brands and their sub-cultural associations includedDaKine/Vans(snowboarding/skateboarding), Burberry/fcuk (fashion/celebrity) and i-pod (technology/music).

The idea that young people were naïve victims of 'branded culture' (Rattansi and Phoenix 1997) was firmly rejected by those willing to express an opinion. Academics have recognised that by the time young people reach their early teens, they have the capacity to analyse and interpret the commercial motives behind practices (Nava and Nava 1990). In this research, participants either recognised and then subscribed to this 'branded culture', were ambivalent towards it and, in a few instances, rejected its intent.

Images from young people's bedrooms showed how commonplace brand names were,

sometimes proudly displayed and vivid illustrations of their own personal identities. E. described how she enjoyed customising a well known label to help decorate her bedroom wall:

IG: "You have a label there, what is it?
E: "That is fcuk"
IG: "But on your wall?"
E: "Well, I like it, I cut it out from a French Connection bag and stuck it up, it looks good and I like their clothes"   *(female, S4, state rural)*

A few espoused a more anti-commercial viewpoint towards brands in keeping with the views of Klein (2001). The example below illustrates a group who believed they had successfully opted out of what they saw as the 'fashion victim' status of their peers:

IG: "Tell me about brands and labels?"
E: "Well, I'm not interested really"
B: "I don't watch TV so I'm not aware of what's 'in' or 'out'"
E: "Yeah, I don't want to be a slave"
IG: "What about you, S.?"
S: "They're all wearing the same things"
E: "Like it's cool to have big, coloured plastic bangles, bright earrings and pointy shoes. And everyone is having their hair braided to look like the stars on television"
                    (mixed group, S6, state rural)

A number of points can be drawn from this example. Firstly, it indicates that a minority of young people were cognisant of the effects of traditional media on their patterns of brand consumption, even if they were not actively consuming that medium. Young (1990) argued that as soon as children develop an understanding of the purpose behind advertising, they are capable of resisting its appeal. Secondly, it suggests that peer assessment plays an important role in young people's beliefs of branded consumption. Thirdly, it confirms that not all young people are driven by the desire to conform to branded stereotypes. There were participants who claimed to set their own consumption paths. Even they, however, rarely acted outwith their socialised group, sharing similar ideals and beliefs as indicated by the questionnaire results.

4.2 Sources of influence

Media use, and in particular the continued influence of television, continue to play a symbiotic role in the use (and occasionally rejection) of branded culture. Participants stressed that brand association came from a combination of advertising and mass media coverage. It was interesting that new media such as the internet were rarely mentioned as an important influence. In the following conversation about Burberry, it was also evident that peer group played a similarly important role in forming brand associations:

> IG: "So who is this in the photo then?"
> G: "That's my boyfriend, watching tele. So I just took the picture"
> F: "Yeah, he's the one wearing that Burberry cap"
> F: "Did you see that programme the other night about neds wearing Burberry?"
> G: "It's all about the bullies in school who wear Burberry, isn't it?"
> F: "Everyone who wears Burberry is meant to be ken, like all the gangstas an that"
> *(two females, S4, state suburban)*

It was clear that discussing the merits of Burberry as a fashion brand was a commonplace activity for these adolescent consumers. Researchers have highlighted how important young people believe it is to being seen in the right branded fashion and transmitting the right branded signals (Lindstrom and Seybold 2003).

It was also evident that Business Education in the classroom contributed to young people's understanding of branded consumption. This was to be expected given that participants were purposely recruited from Business Education classes. Participants recounted stories of discussions with teachers about the merits of brands and branding strategies highlighting one source of young people's understandings about practitioners marketing intentions.

It was rare for participants to mention e-brands spontaneously when discussions turned to brands and branding. This contrasted with the popularity of academic and practitioner-based books which purport to offer insights into eBrand strategies (De Chernatony 2001, Knobil 2001). Only one example was found in the transcripts and accompanying drawings, from a sixteen year old, who spontaneously mentioned a number of well known e-brands:

IG: "Pick out a corner and tell me about what you have drawn"
F: "Well, it's about the explosion of the dot com era. Well, you know, it is relatively new which can be an advantage for brands online. And for examples, I like e-bay, Google, and other well known names that are just on the internet and nowhere else"

Figure 20: Well known e-brands
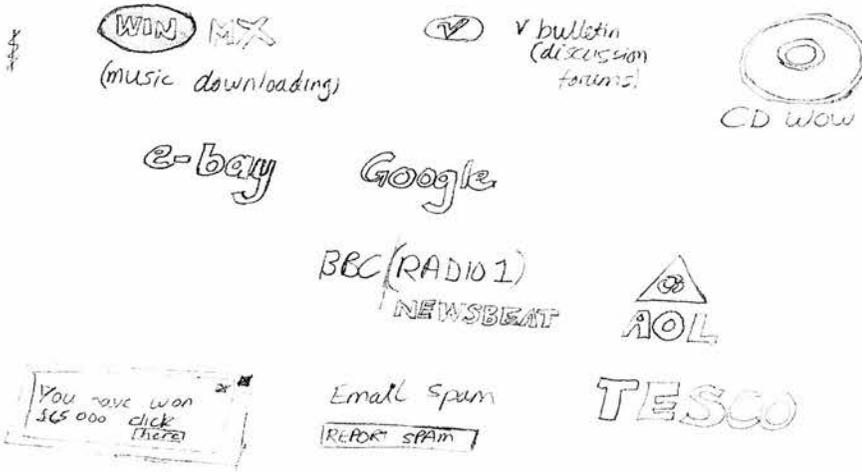
(female, S6, fee-paying urban)

The example suggests that more 'e-savvy' young people were willing to distinguish between online and offline brands. In this case, online brands such as e-bay were well known and credible and so an important contribution to young people's branded identities. However, the fact that such brands were rarely top of mind suggested that the online environment had not (yet) become an important influencer. This was despite the fact that internet use was clearly a significant part of their daily media diet. Here was another indication of young people's lack of engagement with commercialism and commercial practices online. Significantly more attention was devoted to traditional commercial practices such as television advertising.

5. Relationships with new media marketing

5.1 Concept of a marketing relationship

This chapter has highlighted the enjoyment that young people derived from certain forms of marketed communications. Traditional and more contemporary forms of

advertising fulfilled entertainment and, on occasion, information-based needs. As earlier chapters have highlighted however, there was little enthusiasm for the more intrusive characteristics of new forms of commercial communication online. This raises the question of whether young people valued any kind of commercial relationship through new forms of media. Chapter Thirteen found that practitioners adopt different stances when targeting young people, each implying a different level of relational intensity, from the distant and directional of 'brand as beacon' to the mutual partnership envisaged by 'brand as host' and 'brand as co-creator'.

This final part of the discussions started by establishing what a relationship with a company might mean. The idea of having a 'relationship' with a company or brand was a difficult concept for young people to get to grips with. Most found it hard to conceptualise that they might have a 'relationship' with a branded product or service. In their eyes, relationships revolved around emotional ties with partners, their parents and their best friends. Relationships with companies were understood on a more functional basis, an example being how frequently they wanted to communicate with their favoured companies or brands. This deference to functional aspects could be because young people were ignorant of the full extent of their emotional relationships with brands. If realised, they may also have been unwilling to admit to or unable to verbalise their feelings about brands (in the same manner as friends and partners).

The more marketing-conscious participants speculated that the subject of relationships might revolve around loyalty schemes. In the following example, a group of participants talked about how they liked being sent attractive brochures:

> IG: "Companies are taking a lot about building relationships with consumers. What do you think about a company wanting to do this, say it was a brand you liked?"
> R: "What, like brand loyalty schemes?"
> M: "If you purchase one thing, they eternally send you a catalogue, I still get catalogues from people that I bought things from two years ago. Which I don't mind because obviously I have gone to them to buy a certain product and there is the possibility I might use them again"
> R: "Sometimes it's helpful. Soccer clearance wear, Jags Trading send me stuff and I can get football strips from anywhere in the world"
> M: "Yeah, another one is iwantoneofthese.com, they have a really cool catalogue they send me. I look forward to getting it"
>
> *(two males, S6, state rural)*

For other participants though, the word 'relationship' conjured up immediate feelings of cynicism. One sixteen year old female viewed the tactics of companies wanting a relationship as a way of marketing their goods under the pretence of market research:

> S: "Is it like when they send questionnaires and say 'if you do this questionnaire we will give you like free goods'? I get a lot of that, which I really don't like"
> *(female, S6, fee-paying urban)*

This kind of quote echoed the idea of the 'brand as weaver', operating under the guise of promoting free goods to extract personal details for future relationship marketing programmes. Similar examples given by others included chances to win large prizes or holidays if they submitted their personal details. Such examples only served to heighten young people's distrust of online marketing communication.

5.2 The parameters of online relationships

Young people were very aware of some of the informal 'rules' that govern interaction with online commercial communications. For example, most were aware of the difference between solicited and unsolicited communication. Signifiers of solicitation included "giving away your name and address" and "ticking the box". These rules were learnt either through trial and error or as one fourteen year old boy recounted, "by copying my older brother and sister".

The most acceptable form of online communication was by accessing commercial websites. Accessing websites for their favourite sports or fashion brands allowed participants to find out more about their favourite hobbies without fear of intrusion or disruption:

> M: "You can go on to your football team website and see what's happening. Get more details about what the different teams are doing and stuff. And you can give them your e-mail address and they'll send you updates and next fixtures and maybe latest transfer news" *(female, S4, state suburban)*

By controlling the time and the means of contact, young people felt they were in a better position to control the exchange of communication. They felt they were the ones actively seeking information or entertainment rather than the reverse. They also

felt that accessing websites directly often circumvented intrusive pop-ups as they knew that "respectable company websites" were more tightly controlled. Receiving a follow up e-mail or text message then became something to look forward to rather than resent. This form of marketing communication implied a greater sense of consumer empowerment, in the manner advocated by the 'brand as host' typology. In such exchanges, follow-up was more likely if accompanied by some form of incentivisation:

D: "I got an e-mail from the basketball team, the Edinburgh Kinks. It said 'they're coming over here' and told me about the times and stuff. It even offered a free tee-shirt if I booked a ticket there and then, on the internet"
(female, S4, state suburban)

The branded signals identifying incoming e-mail represented another unofficial rule of engagement. Deciphering online communication was described as a simple case of recognising the e-mail address or signifying icon. Participants talked about not opening e-mail unless they recognised the company address and/or had recently visited the company's website. Even if the e-mail came from a recognised and well-liked brand such as Sony and adidas, interaction was not guaranteed, such were the levels of cynicism:

L: "Even if it came from Sony, I would just get fed up with them. It is the same as the pop-up ones. Fair enough, when you get the first one but they keep on coming"
(female, S4, state suburban)

There were no examples of young people wanting to take an active part in an (online) marketing relationship, as envisaged by 'brand as co-created'. The idea that young people might become fully-fledged partners in the marketing of brands was beyond their comprehension. It also implied a level of contribution they did not welcome. Their main criticisms centred on their lack of time, their lack of perceived worth to practitioners and of course their lack of enthusiasm. Contributing to a brand's development through online dialogue for example was anticipated as time-consuming and a distraction from things they really enjoyed. As one fifteen year old put it:

P: "Surely it is the job of these marketing guys to come up with the ideas, we just buy the stuff if we like it"
(male, S5, fee-paying urban)

5.3 Online versus offline communication

Online (e-mail) communication was sometimes grouped together and discussed simultaneously with direct mail through the post. This was because both forms of communication offered detailed information on content such as dates, times, product details and so on. The following example highlighted the fears of online intrusion and its effects which coloured such comparisons:

> IG: "Some companies may want to regularly contact you, send you information and stuff. Should they use the internet or other forms of communication?"
> E: "Through the post is much better than e-mail"
> C: "Yeah, through the post"
> A: "I am more likely to read it if it comes through the post"
> E: "And I might not get it straight way.. it could me a couple of weeks to get to the e-mail"
> A: "And we get a lot of junk e-mail, so it would just add to that"
> *(group of girls, S4, state rural)*

Young people were less worried about junk mail through the post as it did not directly affect them. Posted letters and brochures were welcomed if interesting and sometimes gave the reader a raised sense of importance. This was because of the amount of post directed at their parents. It was recognised that online e-mail communication was personally addressed; a characteristic direct marketers sell as being of value to the consumers. In contrast however, this was often seen as problematic, an immediate obstacle and consigned to the kind of junk status their parents normally reserved for the junk letterbox mail. The idea that companies had records of their personal details and used them for marketing purposes was universally disliked.

5.4 Commercial communication through texting

Amongst a few participants, there was some acknowledgement that mobile phones might provide more acceptable platforms for branded communication. Unlike the internet, young people recognised that they carried their mobiles with them at all times. There was therefore a 'grudging' acceptance that some forms of commercial text-based communication might provide benefits for recipient as well as the sender:

> IG: "How would you feel if a music company or perhaps a record company sends you information, through your mobile phone?"

L: "I think that could be quite handy, if it was for latest concert dates and that kind of thing, or new ringtones"
L: "Yeah, like new concert dates, but if it was through the internet, well, I'm not on it every day. Like last week, we wanted to go to the SECC in Glasgow, phone them up but they were sold out. A text giving advanced warning would have been great"

(two females, S4, state rural)

IG: "Say there was a Robbie Williams concert coming up, and they texted you to say that tickets were going on sale soon, would you welcome that kind of marketing?"
A: "Yeah that would be welcome because if the concert tickets were going on sale in an hour, you would have your mobile in your pocket and respond immediately"

(female, S4, state suburban)

The examples above highlighted the importance of 'communication relevance' as well as 'communication timeliness'. Communication was acceptable if it involved content that they might not have been able to access otherwise. Their description of getting hold of concert tickets suggested that such communication might give them a sense of privilege, accessing valuable information their peers had not been able to source.

There were some examples of participants using mobile phones to initiate or respond to branded communications. Beyond programme texting, young people discussed texting back to a Pot Noodle promotion, texting for downloadable ringtones and texting to access download games. Participants also mentioned receiving texts from brands such as McDonalds and Sugar magazine but not being tempted to respond. Such examples relied on an entertainment-based promotional mechanic to encourage interaction. There was also one example of a text offering educational advice, from a social youth body organisation known as Young Scot. In this case, a fourteen year old boy recounted receiving information on selected social issues; combating drug taking and smoking. It should be stressed that this was an isolated example, welcomed by the individual but not reinforced by any of his peers.

Examples of young people willing to respond to companies through their mobile phones were restricted to a small minority. Such examples were generally encouraged by short term incentivisation rather than the small prospect of on-going relationship hoped for by practitioners. In this study therefore, there was little evidence to suggest that young people welcomed the prospect of mobile communications unless relatively infrequent and guaranteeing high levels of relevance.

6. Issues of commercial intrusion

As highlighted in the quantitative findings, the most vocal criticisms of internet experiences were reserved for concerns over commercial intrusion through different forms of online advertising.

O'Donohoe (2001) suggested that advertising literate young adults engage with, but were ambivalent towards, advertising in a traditional media context. For the adolescents in this research, there was little positive engagement with new(er) forms of advertising such as commercial e-mails, banner adverts or pop-ups. Any sense of engagement and subsequent dialogue with commercial brands was reserved exclusively for situations in which permission had been granted. Very few participants recounted enjoyable, entertaining or beneficial experiences when dealing with online or mobile advertising.

This might seem surprising given predictions by industry experts such as Jupiter Communications (Mack 2000) that online marketing methods are becoming increasingly widespread and cost effective (even when aimed at youth audiences). For this to be a worthwhile exercise for practitioners, one might have expected greater 'consumer' enthusiasm. In contrast, participants fed back a stream of negative comments regarding both commercial e-mailing and online advertising practices. Such negativity can be broken down under five main headings: 'distraction', 'disengagement', 'insensitivity & inappropriateness', 'manipulation & distrust' and 'invasion of privacy'.

6.1 Distraction

At its most basic level, participants universally complained of the sheer volume of e-mails and online adverts received, most unsolicited from commercial sources. Participants referred to such communication as "junk ads" and "junk mail". Often, such practices were tied up with the service providers and messenger services such as Hotmail and MSN. For example:

IG: "What is it about 'junk mail', to use your phrase?"

R: "When you opened the account, it asked you for different categories such as 'do you like sport?' and that, and they send you e-mails about that. You can get blockages but I haven't put them on yet. I haven't used the internet for a while. I'm expecting something like five hundred messages. There will only be ten, maybe twelve for me – the rest will be adverts that they send you every day"

<div align="right">(male, S6, state rural)</div>

The facial expression depicted in Figure 21 illustrates the feelings of frustration, even anger when dealing with the negative aspects of online marketing practices.

Figure 21: Online frustration

<div align="center">(female, S6, fee-paying urban)</div>

One of the main outcomes of online marketing intrusion was a feeling of time wasted. In the case of junk mailings, participants either ignored (but eventually had to deal with), deleted instantly or blocked them to prevent future build-ups. Time spent dealing with such practices was deemed "dead time", preventing them from getting on with more enjoyable or useful activities. Efforts by persistent companies were met with considerable resistance. In some cases, participants had given up even trying to engage with such practices. On a couple of occasions, this lead to disillusionment with e-mail as a useful medium. One female described how she no longer used e-mail for fear of dealing with deluges of spam-mail.

Participants also described a scale of intrusiveness for online marketing techniques. Banners for example were seen as boring but merely inoffensive if not deliberately blocking a specific online activity. E-mails on the other hand suggested a more intrusive and personalised form of targeting, particularly when not requested. Emotive words such as "hassling", "a pain in the neck" and "does my head in" suggested tactics which represented more than just mere irritations. The more direct and intrusive the method, the higher the annoyance factor. Most vehement comments were reserved for the blocking tactics of 'pop-up' style adverts. By blocking the screen, 'pop-ups' were particularly annoying as they prevented users for continuing with their online activity. Several participants questioned the effectiveness of such tactics:

> L: "I used to use the internet a lot for chatting to friends. I don't use it any more. I used to not get anything done. And those little advert posters saying 'you win such and such amount of money'. It sort of stops you doing what you were trying to do. I find it really annoying. And you don't think they will ever work, there's no point in them at all ...you can't go onto a page without seeing them"
>
> *(female, S5, state rural)*

The sheer amount of commercial intrusion for others translated into unwelcome feelings of being pressurised. For one fourteen year old female, technological problems combined with large and intrusive volumes of spam mail caused unwelcome levels of stress and anxiety. In this case, the pressure was to forward e-mails:

> C: "Yeah, well because my computer is like a thousand years old, it is really slow, and I can't find anything quickly that I want to find. There is so much junk in my e-mail, so much spam telling you that you need to read this, and making you feel that you have to forward it to other people"
>
> *(female, S4, fee-paying urban)*

The distractions of online advertising sometimes represented more than just annoyance and frustrations. Pop-ups in particular brought to the surface feelings closer to anger and even resentment towards the sender:

> IG: "Tell me about these drawings then?"
> B: "I'll start with the pop-ups. Those are flames next to them"
> IG: "What does that signify?"
> B: "What I'd like to do with pop-ups!"
> E: "Especially the ones that follow you round the screen. The ones that just pop-up and click off are fine, but the ones that don't have ends on them and even when you

scroll down, they follow you. I hate them, they're so annoying".

It could be argued that young people use words such as "hate" without due consideration and without real meaning. Such comments were however widespread and suggested a collective, even cultural reaction towards such practices. Another participant described online ads as "a killer", a reference to how they tried to destroy any sense of purpose or enjoyment he might be deriving. Occasionally, feelings of annoyance translated into feelings of genuine fear:

IG: "Tell me about some of the pop-ups you have seen?"
E: "I saw this one. It was like for the army or something, and they started shouting in angry male voices".
IG: "How was it doing this?"
A: "It was like moving around and like screaming. It was like shouting angry male voices"

Efforts to close pop-up adverts sometimes resulted in follow-up adverts, racheting up the level of dissatisfaction. Other annoying tactics included instant links to websites with the lightest of (sometimes mistaken) clicks, with no possibility of returning to the original site. As a consequence, there were numerous cases of young people developing and mastering sophisticated e-mail blocking tactics. One fourteen year old boy proudly described how he had taught his parents how to master online evasion tactics.

Such evasion tactics reduced the likelihood of ever engaging with targeted online marketing efforts. Concerns over possible virus contamination also contributed towards the unlikelihood of even considering opening an unknown e-mail. These findings highlighted the heightened desire and ability of young people to evade and reject the online advances of practitioners, most of whom they had little or no interest in.

6.2 Disengagement

Even when participants did consider engaging with online advertising, a number of factors reinforced their lack of enthusiasm. One reason was because of the perceived

low standards of creativity (compared to television advertising). Participants were dismissive of their quality, especially banner adverts. Comments such as "boring", and "not interesting" and "nowhere near as good as TV adverts" highlighted a genuine sense of disillusionment with such practices. Attempts to raise interest levels through the introduction of flashing graphics or disruptive noise effects only heightened young people's sense of annoyance:

> A: "What annoys me with the adverts, they now come as little video clips as well. I don't mind them but the sound is really annoying. It comes on with somebody shouting. There are little clips on the banners. I think it would be better if they just played without the sound. Especially if I am playing music on the computer"
> *(male, S6, fee-paying urban)*

Given young people's continued high levels of exposure to all forms of television and hence television advertising, it was only natural for them to compare and contrast with online advertising. Online adverts were criticised for being too small, lacking in a strong visual element and lacking in memorability. This only served to heighten annoyance when such ads either blocked or distracted them from a specific purpose. Television adverts on the other hand were seen as an accepted, sometimes welcome, distraction between programmes.

This research suggests that young people were disinterested, even cynical towards online advertising. Participants' only desire to decode, discuss and swop stories of online advertising (in the manner described by Ritson and Elliott (1999) for television advertising) revolved around negative experiences.

6.3 Insensitivity & inappropriateness

A lack of engagement with online advertising practices was also exacerbated by examples of highly insensitive targeting by marketing practitioners. For example, little care and attention was though to be given to personal e-mail addresses:

> IG: "So what do you think of such practices?"
> P: "A lot of the time, I think companies don't really think that it is your own e-mail place. They just think your e-mail address is a dumping ground for all their stuff they want to send"
> *(male, S6, fee-paying urban)*

Two words from this quote highlight the strength of emotions. "Your own e-mail place" shows how personalised and private young people's e-mail addresses could be. Furthermore, the inference from the word "dumping" highlights their strength of negative emotion when that place is intruded upon. This indicates limited thought and attention taken by practitioners, with little care for the recipient. P. went on to give examples of such insensitivity, through poor targeting and inappropriate offers:

> P: "But they just get lists of Hotmail accounts and send to everyone. Once, I got an e-mail about a pension plan for over sixty-fives! Which was a good laugh but ..."
> *(male, S6, fee-paying urban)*

In recent years, online advertising has been characterised by an increased ability to target and even personalise adverts. This did not prevent young recipients from feeling annoyed by their blocking presence. The following example concerns D., a sports mad fan who happened to be working his way through a favourite football site:

> D: "I saw a pop-up last night. I think it was the new England strip linked to the Umbro website. I noticed it because it came right in the middle of the screen, with Michael Owen and the strip. I clicked out of it but it wouldn't go away. I couldn't get out of it and had to click out of that website and into another"
> *(male, S6, state suburban)*

It was likely that D's. feelings (a self-confessed football fanatic) towards this pop-up and by inference the sponsoring brand, were detrimental and could potentially harm his perceptions of the brand in question.

6.4 Manipulation & distrust

There were several indications that young people felt practitioners were deliberately trying to deceive using online advertising techniques. M. for example described how difficult it could be to escape the efforts of a concerted pop-up tactic:

> M: "Because it says 'click okay', or 'click the close button to get rid of', there is a close and a false button and then in the top corner, it reappears again and you see you are meant to click the small one but you just click the close button on the actual thing and then it is as if you clicked, 'I want this advert you see'. It's clever but very annoying, a real scam"
> *(male, S4, state rural)*

Manipulation was also understood in terms of the blurring of distinctions between

what was clearly advertising and what was simply website content. With television, young people understood that adverts were clearly signposted by the commercial break. Some participants however felt there was no obvious separation between online adverts and content. One participant was confused when entering a site which later turned out to be advertising embedded into the site contents page. This kind of practice was seen as manipulative and dishonest. Such perceived deceptions illustrate why researchers such as Walsh *et al.* (1999) have pronounced the internet the least trusted medium.

There was also evidence that young consumers were increasingly aware and sensitive to the commercial online communication practices. Blocking strategies were not uncommon for both e-mail and pop-up forms of advertising:

> A: "With a lot of junk mail nowadays, it's not got the company's name, it has a normal person's name so you think it is like a person you are meant to know. But my junk mail goes into a separate thing but then I always have to check it in case it is someone whose e-mail isn't on my list and I get caught out"
>
> *(female, S5, state rural)*

A lack of sensitive targeting and consequently trust were arguably undermining the best efforts of online commercial practitioners. They also highlighted practitioners' lack of a contextual understanding of young people's needs and wants, sending mass-produced and inappropriate pieces of communication. Even when such practices were personalised, their very presence was deemed inappropriate. A small number of researchers have started highlighting the importance of consumer annoyance/irritation at commercial e-mailing and online advertising (Ducoffe 1996, Rettie *et al.* 2001). The levels of annoyance found in this research, however, were particularly high.

6.5 Invasion of privacy

Sometimes young people's experiences extended beyond mere annoyance and irritation into deeper concerns regarding matters of personal privacy and commercial intrusion. O'Malley *et al.* (1997: 55) defined the intrusion of marketing communications into the daily lives of consumers as "physical or interactional privacy". Apart from the desire for personal privacy from parental concerns, the main bone of contention centred on privacy from perceived commercial intrusion. This

subject resulted in much discussion and a sizeable torrent of negative feedback, illustrating the depth of feelings it aroused.

Examples of inappropriately sent communication did include pornography. Some females interviewed interpreted as this an invasion of their personal rights. More typical of such perceived intrusion however was the use (and possible misuse) of personal information for more mundane commercial purposes:

> D: "A lot of people, if they get sent messages, you can find it a bit intrusive. It reduces your privacy. It's like you've set up this account to communicate with other people and then all of a sudden, you are getting bombarded with 'buy this' or 'if you have a Hotmail account, you can get this' "
>
> *(male, S6, state suburban)*

This highlighted the problems arising from conflicts of interest between the motivations of the individual (unconnected to commercialisation) and the aggressive marketing interests of companies concerned. Occasionally, fears of privacy invasion extended to a fear of being personally monitored and watched, with overtones of 'Big Brother':

> A: "There is always the chance someone is watching you what ever you are doing. I don't know how they do it"　　　　　　*(female, S4, fee-paying urban)*

Discussions also centred on the rights of the individual versus the rights of the corporation. In this example, illegal downloading was the source of concern from a surprised sixteen year old:

> R: "Not that long ago, I downloaded The Lion King and then I got this e-mail from Disney, saying that they knew of me and they would take me to court if I did it again."
> IG: "Where did you download it from?"
> R: "KaZaa"
> R: "I don't know how they knew. It was a serious letter from a lawyer."
> IG: "It is interesting that they had your personal details"
> R: "But I don't understand how they could do it. Maybe someone who is uploading, from DisneyWorld or whatever, has a file and starts to check all the downloads?"
>
> *(male, S6, fee-paying urban)*

A range of concerns between the conflicting interests of participants' personal uses and commercial intentions highlighted the depth of young people's concerns and

consequent loss of trust in the internet as a source of gratification. US practitioner research by Lindstrom (2002: 74) found 22% of teenagers cited loss of privacy as the key determinant in inhibiting consumer trust in the net (the next largest figure was 8% for internet crime). Such findings mirror broader societal concerns over commercial intrusions and personal privacy with implications for issues of morality, personal liberty and the rights of the individual. The resultant tension reflects opposing desires of marketing practitioners to "annex cyberspace" for profitable gain and consumers desires to "exercise their freedoms" as described by Venkatesh (1998). In response to such fears, Wang *et al.* (1998) called for a more consumer-orientated privacy model to redress the balance and prevent consumers building up resentment towards corporate marketing activity.

7. Conclusions

Previous chapters have highlighted the frequency with which young people come in contact with commercial practices, both offline and increasingly online. This chapter looked at such contact through young people's attitudes to advertising, relationships with 'branded culture' and, crucially, the dominant issue of media intrusion online.

The study reinforces the view that young people are sophisticated consumers of advertising, capable of identification of commercial intent and separation of this from their personal media gratifications. The nature of their relationships with advertising was far from uniform. Some valued advertising as a form of socialised entertainment, happy to critique ad tactics and content. The more sceptical raised concerns about manipulation of demand and the effects of advertising tactics on their peer group and society in general. Finally, those seeking to avoid contact described a range of blocking and evasion tactics. Some were influenced by more advanced knowledge of new media tactics used by practitioners. The collective result was a sense, particularly amongst older participants, of commercial practices encroaching into their daily lives.

One consequence of commercial consumption has been the emergence of 'branded culture'. In this study, commercial brands played central roles in many (but not all) young people's lifestyles; through sport, music, electronics and fashion. Traditional

sources of influence such as peers and television continue to exert strong influence. Brands originating from new media sources were rarely discussed however. This despite the claimed growth in online brands in recent years. One conclusion to be drawn is that young people's relationships with new media have not translated in a welcoming of commercial branded practices.

Young people's conception of 'a relationship with a commercial partner' was often more negative than their attitudes towards advertising use. A small number of participants welcoming a sustained relationship, provided it benefited them financially and/or provided useful ideas, suggestions and entertainment. This contrasted with the majority who were either disinterested and/or cynical. Online communication did offer an enhanced feeling of control but also brought with it a surfeit of intrusions. Opinions were at their most extreme when discussing commercial texting, with only occasional signs of encouragement for practitioners.

It was the intrusions of online communication that ultimately defined the nature of the relationship. The frequency and intensity of such concerns undoubtedly overwhelmed any sense of user enthusiasm and the best efforts of practitioners. In their least destructive mode, intrusions were merely unwelcome distractions. Feelings were exacerbated by poor standards of creativity and poorly targeted communication. Rather than seeking to engage with communication, participants were more likely to block and avoid. Feelings sometimes developed into a deeper sense of manipulation and distrust of commercial practices, harming the image of practitioners' brands and breaking down hopes of a trusted relationship. The most extreme intrusions concerned issues of personal privacy. This was not a subject associated with conventional media but played a central role in conflicts between the online motivations of young people and the desires of practitioners.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

CONCLUSIONS

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1. Introduction

This study has explored the new media relationships of adolescent 13-17 year olds. On the cusp of adulthood, their importance is reflected by the attention paid to them by marketing practice. The literature has primarily concerned itself with debates about the transformational use of new media versus its detrimental effects upon young people. Less is known about young peoples' everyday experiences of commercial new media, and how these relate to practitioner strategies.

To understand such relationships, the study was based on a holistic examination of young people's experiences, extending beyond, rather than limited to, the uses and gratifications theory. Quantitative research amongst 175 adolescents, using diaries and questionnaires, laid foundations for examining the nature of such relationships. Drawn from the original sample, 16 mini focus groups were used to explore in greater detail the contextual environment within which new media relationships exist. 15 depth interviews amongst 'expert' practitioners provided a contrast between practitioner intentions and young people's contextualised experiences.

This chapter will firstly summarise the study's research contribution before outlining in more detail the key themes emerging. It then provides implications for communications theory, research method, marketing practice and public policy. It concludes with a consideration of future research avenues.

2. "Sand in the hand": young people's relationships with commercial media in the digital age

> "Relationships-of all kinds-are like sand held in your hand. Held loosely, with an open hand, the sand remains where it is. The minute you close your hand and squeeze tightly to hold on, the sand trickles through your fingers. You may hold onto some of it, but most will be spilled. A relationship is like that. Held loosely, with respect and freedom for the other person, it is likely to remain intact. But held too tightly, too possessively, the relationship slips away and is lost."
>
> Anonymous quotation, Thinkexist.com 2005

Young people's relationships with new media can be understood using the metaphor of the "sand in the hand" from the quotation above. The first stage was to establish a better understanding of the "sand" in question. The nature of that "sand" cannot be fully understood if divorced from its naturalised setting. The study has contributed a diverse 'handful', exploring adolescent experiences of media use from three contrasting backgrounds, offering a rich portrayal of adolescents' 'in' and 'out of the home' media use.

Life at home dominated the lives of the adolescents in this study, outside the summer months. Time spent in their bedrooms remained the focal point for adolescent activities, irrespective of background. Here, the nature of media use was arguably more important than the number and variety of media options. Examples were found from each of Brown *et al.*'s (1994) classifications to shed light on this bedroom context; the term *bricolage* best summed up the chaotic interplay of personal objects and media devices, mediated and non-mediated uses. In this interplay, television, music and radio were perceived as taken for granted, almost forgotten media options, because of their everyday use. Of the new media choices, mobile phone usage had become almost universal amongst young people, 'at home' and 'out of the home'. The internet however, remained the preserve of Livingstone's (2002) 'media-rich' bedrooms, with under 20% of young people enjoying the privacy of bedroom internet access.

Relationships with new media contributed to, but rarely dominated, adolescent

lifestyles 'out of the home'. Mobile, and to a lesser extent internet, use did however have social roles to play beyond the home. With adolescent emphasis on peer relations and ritualistic behaviour (Coleman and Warren Anderson 1992), both mobile phones and the internet helped organise, collectively consume and relieve young people's social experiences. Communication through media use therefore played its part in 'out of home' lifestyles, sometimes in the migration between different places. From 'hanging out on street corners' to 'experiencing music beyond the home', new media was found to augment or heighten rather than dominate these experiences.

Distilling the "sand", through uses and gratifications analysis, isolated and prioritised young people's new media uses. In contrast to the enthusiasm of Tapscott (1998) and Lindstrom (2003), the internet represented just another media choice, rarely prioritised and often used in conjunction with more appealing options. Other, more established media choices, in particular television, continued to provide more powerful entertainment-based motivations. The combination of online entertainment, learning opportunities, escapist potential, social connections and purchasing access did however ensure that the internet was accessed frequently. Young people's relationships with the internet were therefore based on multiple reasons for engagement, none of which was ultimately compelling (as indicated by the mean gratification scores). Significantly, the factor most clearly associated with commercial use was ranked lowest. This was the first indication that young people's relationships with the internet rarely embraced the practitioner "hand", seeking to establish a secure "grip".

The distillation of the "sand" offers only a partial picture; in its natural habitat, a more complete picture emerges. The qualitative findings showed that new media uses fuse together, blurring the boundaries between personal and social motives, entertainment and learning, as illustrated when information searching on the internet. The internet was used one minute for home work, the next for accessing entertaining sites. For a few, this motivational contradiction was irreconcilable, but for others, a 'taken for granted' occurrence. The qualitative findings placed greatest emphasis on the social aspect of internet use (Maignan and Lukas 1997, Facer et al. 2003), whether it was for social entertainment, social learning or social escapism; facilitating and fostering 'close friendships' and 'wider circles of peers' (Petersen 1998). For small pockets of

enthusiasts, the internet lived up to its billing as a world full of possibilities (Tapscott 1998). Many, however, had neither the motivation nor enthusiasm to spend hours on the internet, on messenger boards, chat rooms or surfing the latest obscure websites.

The "hand" that seeks to hold the "sand" signifies the problematic aspect of young people's relationships with "new-media". The practitioner study highlighted a variety of 'stances' used to establish, and build, relationships with young people. Extending the metaphor, such stances equate to a series of "grips", exerted by practitioners upon the "sand". From 'brand as beacon' to 'brand as co-creator', the firmness of the "grip" reflects assumptions about how best to target this elusive, and at times, unwilling consumer. The literature suggests that new media channels offer practitioners opportunities for personalised, interactive and lasting relationships (Peters 1998, Zineldin 2000, Long *et al* 1998). The intensity of intrusion felt by young people in this study illustrates some of the challenges practitioners face.

Online advertising intrusion symbolised the darker side of young people's online experiences, confirming the elusive nature of relationships between adolescents and practitioners. Practitioners' attempts to connect with young people through new media can seen as a one-sided relationship, leaving young people frustrated, annoyed and even fearful. The quantitative findings emphasised that online advertising intrusion was the most significant barrier to greater internet use. The concerns expressed about commercial tactics were expressed uniformly, sometimes vociferously. The concept of an online relationship not only uncovered confusions over what benefits there might be, but reinforced concerns about the realties of intrusive commercial practices. Young people were not just passive receivers of unsolicited e-mails and online ads but active and sophisticated in their avoidance tactics. The intensity of their (negative) attitudes highlighted the scale of problems facing practitioners. Commercial desires for new and more effective ways to target consumers appear to be fuelling young people's fears over commercial intrusion, further compromising their desire for 'personal space'. This is in marked contrast to the concept of symbiotic relationships discussed by Lannon and Cooper (1983). In this sense, any tightening of the "grip" applied by practitioners could further endanger young people's continued enthusiasm for internet and even mobile use.

3. Research contribution

This thesis argues that adolescent relationships with commercial media in the digital era are deeply ambivalent, dependent on background, everyday lifestyle orientations and motivations to use. The study highlights how traditional and new media fits into 'at home' and 'out of home' lifestyles, contributing a contextual understanding of contemporary media use. It offers a prioritisation of new media reasons for use, before illustrating how in reality, new media use is wrapped up with issues of socialised behaviour, lifestyle orientation, self-identity and educational necessity. It questions the application of commercial tactics to young people in this context, highlighting the spectrum of barriers to new media use of which advertising intrusion remains the most potent. Finally, it provides contrasting insights into the perceptions and stances used by practitioners to target young people.

The study demonstrates how multiple methods of enquiry can be used in imaginative ways, to build a more holistic understanding. The combination of questionnaires, diaries, mini focus groups and depth interviews each allowed different aspects of an overlapping picture to emerge, as conceptualised by Price and Arnould (1998). Under-utilised techniques such as auto-driving through photo-elicitation and projective psycho-drawings provided a visual dimension to the research, encouraging a richer form of feedback to emerge.

4. Implications for theory

Implications related to three specific theoretical concerns: the uses and gratifications tradition, relationship marketing, and understanding young people.

4.1 The uses and gratifications tradition

The study used a conventional quantitative approach for studying media 'uses and gratifications', before building upon this using contextually based qualitative data. The findings from the factor analysis have added to the limited knowledge on new media uses, providing a "recognisable and easily comparable set of measurements"

(Newhagen and Rafaeli 1996). However, the qualitative findings suggest that many of the gratifications are interlinked, contextually-bound and culturally-informed. Media choices researched in this study were sometimes *converged* such as accessing television online, *used in sequence* such as downloading music files to consume elsewhere or *used in tandem* such as the listening to radio whilst accessing the world-wide-web. The findings raise four important issues when utilising uses and gratifications theory to understand media use.

Firstly, an incomplete picture emerges from the artificial separation of media motivations from other socio-cultural influences. It was natural for young people to move seamlessly between different media choices, at times without making a conscious 'decision'. The multi-tasking anticipated by practitioners was one such example; others included listening to music, doing homework and even texting almost simultaneously. This undoubtedly made it more difficult for participants to separate out individual gratifications from their cultural context.

Secondly, uses and gratifications, in common with other survey methods, are often completed in a very personal, isolated manner. This does not marry with socialised nature of media consumption, particularly for a youth audience. Domestic circumstances, parental attitudes, peer involvement and competing lifestyle choices were all found to impinge on media motivations. The increased emphasis on the social dimension of new media use in the qualitative discussions questions whether the findings from the factor analysis underestimated the level of social involvement.

Thirdly, consideration should be given to whether audiences are "conceived as active … and goal-directed" as argued by Katz *et al.* (1973: 21). Ruggerio (2000) argued for the reconsideration of classic uses and gratifications theory in the light of the interactive characteristics of new media. The qualitative findings however highlight that feelings towards internet use were ambivalent, and rarely reached the heightened expectations of Tapscott (1998). Furthermore, the passivity of certain internet uses such as 'boredom avoidance' and 'to pass the time of day' question how the term "active" should be defined. The young people in this study only became animated when recounting internet related problems rather encapsulating the more active, goal-orientated version of media use envisaged by Katz.

Fourthly, the findings indicate that uses and gratifications theory offers only a partial delivery on the promise of Katz. Katz *et al.* (1973: 30) concluded that "our position is that media researchers ought to be studying human needs to discover how much media do or do not contribute to their creation and satisfaction". In this research, the importance of studying levels of audience satisfaction was evident in the diverse range of barriers to internet use identified. In this respect, media researchers have something to learn from consumer behaviour researchers familiar with the concept of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction in marketing relationships. This study suggests that future research studies should pursue a more holistic agenda, taking into account the temporal dimensions of media use beyond 'initial expectation' of media use.

4.2 Relationship marketing

The findings also have important implications for marketing theory, and in particular relationship theory, in a new media context. Prominent researchers such as Gronröös (1994) and Brodie *et al.* (1997) advocate relationship marketing to be for the mutual benefit of companies and consumers alike. Long *et al.* (1998) raised the issue of compatibility and its absence in much of RM literature. The authors suggest "relationship building will be able to foster 'virtual relationships' between companies and customers if managed effectively" (113). This research found little evidence that young people wanted to 'open', 'develop' and 'cement' online commercial relationships, based current practitioner approaches. Consideration was only given to a 'relationship' if the terms of that relationship shifted closer to a more sympathetic, less intrusive approach, providing a more obvious reason to enter into.

The idea of a mutually beneficial relationship was therefore rejected on the basis of their current online experiences. There were undoubtedly occasions in which young consumers might welcome the idea of online communication with their favoured brands, celebrities, and organisations. However, young people rarely embraced the current practices of continuous 'one-to-one' communication, with its implications of e-mails avalanches, inconvenient text messages and resultant concerns ranging from annoyance to personal privacy. There were few examples of the kind of psychological

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satisfaction of long-term needs, such as for belonging, acceptance and affection, that relationship building implies (Duck 1991).

Christy et al. (1996) argued that both the consumer and the product influence the nature of marketing relationships. The findings from this study fit most closely to a 'relationship-indifferent' rather than relationship-welcoming' scenario envisaged by the authors. The literature suggests that new media such as the internet offer a high relationship potential because of their interactive, one-to-one possibilities. However, this relies on a high level of consumer engagement, evidently missing amongst this group of young people. In such a scenario, few 'natural relationships' will emerge as hypothesised by Christy et al..

4.3 Understanding young people and new media use

The research findings confirmed the importance of context when studying youth consumption behaviour. Beyond the standard separation of age, gender and class, other important contextual factors emerged including 'rural' versus 'urban' location and 'in home' versus 'out of home' lifestyles. The findings also emphasised how new media use reflects a constant movement in young people's lifestyles. The transitions from home to school, from work to leisure activity, were important spaces for new media consumption.

The qualitative discussions showed how much of young people's new media use was socially constructed. Online peer-to-peer communication for example offered young people enhanced feelings of social control, status and opportunities for multiple, simultaneous socialising. It also encouraged the extending of social ties beyond their immediate locale, facilitating and sustaining distant relationships. It reinforced how new media was actively being used by young people to help facilitate the transition from childhood to adulthood (Banks et al. 1992, Coles 1995), a shift in priority from parental to peer relations (Berndt 2002).

Furthermore, the findings provide some evidence of the concept of young people as 'bricoleurs' (Lévi-Strauss 1966, de Certeau 1984), picking and choosing aspects of new media form and content, adding them to their many other sources of cultural

identity. However, this can only be applied in certain contexts, and by certain participants: it assumes a high level of enthusiasm and involvement in the medium evidently missing amongst some. The suggestion that new media and youth were inevitably linked because of their inherent characteristics (Buckingham 2000, Tapscott 1998) risks an over-generalisation of young people's involvement. One characteristic in particular, the willingness to multi-task, did however, encourage greater new media involvement.

This study reinforces the findings of Ritson and Elliott (1995, 1999), which suggested that older adolescents are sophisticated in their attitudes towards, and use of, commercial advertising. This sophistication was evident in their abilities to enjoy, analyse, criticise and avoid the adverts they encountered. The emergence of new media forms of advertising however marked the shift towards a more cynical attitude towards commercial advertising, an evolution of the Bousch *et al.* 1994 study into (traditional) advertising scepticism. This shift towards scepticism signals an evolving chapter in young people's relationships with marketing communication, characterised by an increased resistance to commercial engagement, coupled with the ability to more easily disseminate their opinions. At the time of the study, new media advertising was depicted at best as insensitive and creatively uninteresting, at worst as intrusive, and manipulative.

5. Implications for research method

The study has demonstrated how a multiple methods approach, including quantitative methods, can be used within an interpretive framework. Care however should be taken to ensure that each method has a clearly defined purpose yet contributes to the overall aim. In this study, the diary techniques proved time consuming for both the participants and researcher to operationalise. As Crosby (2004) argued for her diary work, considerable doubt exists over whether the end justifies the means.

The data provided by self-completion questionnaires did provide a benchmark for understanding media gratifications. There is a responsibility however for careful interpretation of the findings from such studies. The completion of lengthy and at

times repetitive 'uses and gratifications' questionnaires is not without its critics. Although significant efforts were made to allay concerns over the quality of completion, there were signs of participant boredom and even deliberate inaccuracies. This intensifies the onus on the researcher to evaluate the findings critically. The quantitative findings did however provide important insights into youth attitudes and their prioritisation of new media uses.

The findings have presented a richer understanding of media use through the inclusion of qualitative methods. By the time the qualitative sessions were conducted, the interviewer had already built up some rapport with the participants. The use of friendship triad groups allowed for detailed feedback, in an intimate yet welcoming atmosphere. As the photographs and drawings have illustrated, the use of projective techniques stimulated group inclusion (Rook 2001), encouraging more varied and at times subconscious feelings to emerge. The researcher was, however, left with the impression that even more evocative stories might have emerged with more time spent with each group. Successful ethnographic media-related approaches such as Radway (1987), Palmer (1986) and Ritson and Elliott (1999) have demonstrated the benefits of spending extended time with young people. Such studies do however have financial and temporal implications.

The final consideration emerging from this study concerns issues over schools research. Conducting research in schools was at times more challenging than anticipated. The climate for conducting research in schools has become more difficult for a number of reasons. Barriers to initial school consent included passing disclosure procedures, overcoming concerns over child privacy rights, increased teacher and pupil workloads, parental dissent and multiple gatekeepers. Furthermore, much time was required to properly manage the process, taking into consideration more detailed ethical considerations and school priorities. Researchers should also give careful consideration to the implementation issues of schools research highlighted in Chapter 6. Conducting interviews in schools requires the researcher to be flexible to last minute changes, coping with less than ideal environments and dealing with teacher concerns. Schools research can however be highly rewarding for researcher and participant alike but should never be seen as an easy option for accessing young people.

6. Implications for marketing communications practice

The combined findings of practitioner and youth studies raise two important concerns for practitioners to consider: 'media literacy' and 'control of brand communication'

6.1 Media engagement

The first concerns the level of media engagement practitioners prepare for. Given that practitioners continue to recognise the pivotal role that brands play in adolescence lives, it was instructive to hear their polarised views on the degree of involvement expected of young consumers. The omnipresence of brands in contemporary media culture does not appear to have translated into a uniform approach to targeting consumers. The practitioner stance of 'brand as beacon' discovered in Chapter Seven implied a level of passivity and acknowledgement that high levels of involvement should not be taken for granted. 'Brand as co-created' on the other hand implied a level of sophistication and more importantly, enthusiastic participation rarely voiced in the discussions.

Contemporary communication plans are increasingly reliant on interactive elements with television, the internet and mobile advertising encouraging greater consumer participation (Zineldin 2000, Allan and Chudry 2000). This requires a motivated audience, keen to contribute and even create as part of the marketing process. The findings have however highlighted a diverse spectrum of concerns threatening this 'hoped for' engagement. Privacy emerged as one of the most fundamental of youth concerns and may exacerbate if practitioners adopt the stealth tactics described in 'brand as weaver'. Perhaps only the stance of 'brand as host' provides an adequate balance between the desires of practitioners and the mediated needs of young people Returning to the earlier metaphor, such a stance implies a higher level of sensitivity to young people's needs and an acknowledgement that relationships cannot be built if the practitioner "grip" remains too tight.

6.2 Control of brand communication

The second concern relates the issue of control over the direction and interpretation of brand/marketing creation. 'Brand as host' was the most extreme conceptualisation in which young people were encouraged to take greater ownership of a brand's development and communication. Taking this to its natural conclusion, it is questionable whether it is always in the brand owner's interest to pass on what might be unwanted responsibility and rely on adolescent consumers to play their part. Young people in this study were more preoccupied with texting their friends than contributing to a proposed online marketing campaign. Furthermore, at what point do the objectives of commerce conflict with the desires of the consumer, as suggested by Venkatesh (1998)? The upsurge in consumer boycotts in recent years vividly illustrates that such interests do not always happily co-incide. Practitioners need to be cognisant that young people often prefer a relationship at arms length and very much on their own strictly defined terms.

7. Implications for public policy

Two dominant issues emerged from this study with implications for the creation of public policy: 'the educational agenda' of young people and issues surrounding the 'creation of marketing ethics'.

7.1 The educational agenda

The quantitative and qualitative findings both emphasised the growing role of 'new-media' in an educational context, both in the classroom and at home. Ebersole (2005) highlighted the issue of academic study in an increasingly commercialised environment. The internet in particular offers a place for learning advancement although the degree to which young people welcome this remains unclear.

The advantages of internet access in schools and at home remain a point of contention as Hecht (1997, in Ebersole 2003: 3) explains:

"...having the internet in the classroom is like equipping each classroom with a television that can be turned on at any time and tuned to any of 100,000 unrestricted channels, only a tiny fraction of which are dedicated to educational programming (and even those have commercials)"

In this study there was evidence of internet use to escape educational chores, both in class and at home. The internet was however used for skill developments tasks such as website creation and educational information searches. Kozma and Quellmalz (1996) called for research into the effect of internet use on educational achievement and this remains a contentious issue. The increased educational component of internet use raises the issue of suitable internet access. A new kind of digital-divide emerged in this study, re-defining 'the haves' and 'the have nots' by the quality and accessibility of their internet access, and the standard of their IT equipment. Initiatives by The Scottish Executive to encourage broadband take-up in all households were only starting during this study, with the majority of households unaware, disinterested or unwilling to pay for expensive access. As domestic broadband access inevitably become more widespread, an educational chasm may open up between those with access to rich media and consequent fast download times and those without.

7.2 Marketing ethics and personal privacy

Linked to educational concerns, marketing ethics and new media should be a growing concern for public policy makers. This research confirms burgeoning tensions between the privacy rights of the individual and the growing ambitions of commercial practices. Strauss and Frost (2001) argued that the interactive qualities and unrestricted content access have created a vacuum in ethical policy. Internet and wireless marketing in the UK has been self-regulated by the industry for a number of years, by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), with recent improvements including a new 'one-stop-shop' complaints system designed to reflect the increased integration of media channels (Ofcom 2004b). Ofcom claims this will "ensure that the interests of consumers are properly protected". However, there remains a danger that commercial self-interest and the pressure to use new ways to tap into youth markets may compromise the industry's ability to adequately self-regulate on issues such as the use of personal data and the on-going e-mailing practices.

This ethical dichotomy has been compounded by considerable disagreement over what the concept of 'individual privacy' entails. This has been despite the best efforts of the EU Data Protection guidelines 1998 (European Commission 2005) to protect fundamental rights and freedoms of personal data. Wang *et al.* (1998: 66) suggested that the "privacy rights of the individual should be balanced against the benefits associated with the free flow of information". In this study, privacy concerns were highly prevalent, threatening the continuing enthusiasm of a generation of young people, upon which commercial companies depend for their future livelihood.

8. Future Directions

Through the use of multiple methods of inquiry, this study provides a more complete understanding young people's new media experiences. It is however inevitable that this understanding could be further improved through a number of research directions.

Firstly, alternative or supplementary forms of research method might provide a further understanding of young people's new media consumption. New methods are constantly being developed and one technique known as 'netnography' offers interesting possibilities (Kozinets 2002). This technique is an online version of ethnography allowing researchers to spend extended periods of time studying, in the case of Kozinets, internet communities. An alignment with more traditional ethnographic techniques could ensure that any issues over method bias are overcome.

Secondly, this research has been conducted within the confines of an older adolescent audience, on the cusp of adulthood. Researchers such as Young (1990) have highlighted that experiences of commercialism start at a much earlier age. Indeed, young people's interactions with new media now start at a very early age. No studies have however successfully tracked the experiences of young people as they move from early childhood, through adolescent and then finally full adulthood. Although such a longitudinal study could be time and financially problematic, the findings would provide invaluable insights into the evolving nature of young people's relationships with new media.

Thirdly, the research was only able to give indications of important socio-demographic patterns within the sample. Differences in new media use by gender for example offered only a tantalising glimpse into how gender might influence young people's new media uses. The study also uncovered the emergence of new forms of 'digital-divide' such as quality of access influenced by household affluence; a more detailed study could assess the full impact of this on relationships with marketing practice. This study also highlighted differences in media use depending on rural and urban lifestyles. It has not however been able to take a more culturally-sensitive outlook, studying the differences in new media consumption across different ethnic backgrounds so prevalent in British society.

Fourthly, the research indicates the problems associated with relationships between practitioners and young people. Thought is needed which contributes to this dialogue, providing more sensitive strategies, acknowledging that primary motivations for new media use do not always revolve around commercial concerns. It is hoped that new models of relationship marketing might evolve which place a greater onus on the desires of users rather than the ambitions of practitioners.

Finally, it is acknowledged that the world of new media has moved on from when the fieldwork was completed in this study. The continued evolution of mobile phones with their multiple functions for example, should encourage more research exploring the changing relationship between issues of consumption, identity, and commercial relationships.

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Appendix 1: Assumptions: Positivist and interpretivist

Basic assumptions	Positivist	Interpretivist
AXIOLOGICAL		
Overriding Goal	'Explanation' via submission under general laws, prediction	Understanding
ONTOLOGICAL		
Nature of reality	Objective, tangible Single Fragmentable Divisible	Socially constructed Multiple Holistic Contextual
Nature of Social Beings	Deterministic Reactive	Voluntary Proactive
EPISTEMOLOGICAL		
Knowledge Generated	Nomothetic Time-free Context-independent	Idiographic Time-bound Context-dependent
View of Causality	Real causes exist	Multiple, simultaneous shaping
Research Relationship	Dualism, separation Privileged point of observation	Interactive, co-operative No privileged point of observation
METHODOLOGICAL		
Approaches	Experimental/manipulative Verification of hypothesis Primarily quantitative methods	Hermeneutical/dialectical Researcher immersion Primarily qualitative methods

Source: Adapted from Ozanne and Hudson (1989)

Appendix 2: List of participating practitioner agencies

Agency type	Location	Participant title	Interview type
Youth marketing/research	Glasgow	Creative Director	Face-to-face
	London	Director	Telephone
	London	Head of Planning	Face-to-face
	London	Associate Director	Face-to-face
	London	Managing Director	Face-to-face
Creative advertising	Amsterdam	Planning Director	Face-to-face
	Edinburgh	Planning Director	Face-to-face
	London	Senior planner	Telephone
	London	Senior planner	Face-to-face
Traditional media	London	Researcher	Face-to-face
	London	Media strategist	Face-to-face
	London	Partner	Face-to-face
New media	Edinburgh	Managing Director	Face-to-face
	Glasgow	Director of Planning	Face-to-face
	London	Director	Face-to-face

Appendix 3: Recruitment letter

E·S·R·C
ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL
RESEARCH
COUNCIL

11 December 2002

Dear Sir,

Re: Academic Research into Lifestyle and Media Consumption

My name is Ian Grant, a Marketing Lecturer and Ph.D. student at the University of Edinburgh. I am writing to you to invite your school to participate in a government sponsored research programme entitled *'Lifestyle and media consumption patterns amongst 14-17 year old children'*.

The research is sponsored by the ESRC, a government funded academic body and is part of my Ph.D. studies at the University. It aims to improve understanding of young peoples' media consumption behaviour including use of new media such as the Internet and mobile phones. I have already carried out a successful pilot study at M. C. and am now preparing the groundwork for a larger study. My intention is to conduct the research in three schools across the East of Scotland.

The research involves a series of research exercises with selected pupils. Examples of these include filling in a diary, a self completion questionnaire and conducting a series of mini focus groups called friendship triads. I would be more than happy to expand upon these should your school wish to take part. The experience at M. C. was a very positive one for the pupils, who were able to experience and learn market research techniques relevant to business studies at close quarters. I would welcome giving a presentation to initiate the research, drawing on my 15 years of commercial marketing experience.

Once the research has been completed, I propose to return to the schools concerned, to present the findings. Please note that the anonymity of individuals taking part is always guaranteed. Timings of the research will be dictated by the requirements of participating schools but I hope to have the programme completed by May 2003.

Continued...

And so to cut a long story short, I would welcome a meeting to discuss the research further. My contact details are by e-mail (I.C.Grant-2@sms.ed.ac.uk), by phone (07803 706 994) or by post (address as per letterhead).

Many thanks for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Ian Grant

Marketing Lecturer and Ph.D. Student

Appendix 4: Letter of consent to parents

Date   *State rural headed note paper*

Dear Parent,

I am writing to tell you about a media related project which the pupils of S4, S5 and S6 Business Studies classes are invited to take part in during the Autumn term. The project is being carried out by a researcher from the School of Management at The University of Edinburgh and is being sponsored by the government's Social Science funding body, the ESRC.

The objective of the project is to develop a better understanding of how young people use media as part of their everyday lives, and in particular, newer forms of media such as the internet and mobile phones. The research will take the form of three main stages:

- Stage 1: completion of a 30-minute questionnaire in class time
- Stage 2: completion of a short daily diary, over the period of a week
- Stage 3: participation in one of a number of small group sessions to discuss themes related to media consumption.

All pupils involved in the project will complete Stages 1-2, but only some will be asked to participate in the final stage.

Stage 3 will then involve a smaller number of pupils getting in a group format with a researcher for one hour, on two separate occasions during school hours. Each group will involve three 'self nominated' friends who will meet for the discussion sessions at the school. The final selection of groups will reflect both availability and to ensure a diverse range of media interests are catered for.

The first session of Stage 3 will discuss media in general and how it relates to their daily lifestyles. Participants will be given a disposable camera to take 24 pictures over the course of a week, to bring along to the session (at no cost to themselves). They will then be encouraged to use the pictures taken to talk about some of the 'lifestyle' orientated things they have done that week. The second session will focus more specifically on how young people use the internet.

The project offers a number of benefits to the pupils from Business Studies classes taking part. First of all, it gives them 'live' experience of contemporary marketing research methods which form part of the curriculum in this subject. Participating in the study will also help them develop a better understanding of the relationships between commercial media and society. The researcher, who has a background in marketing and advertising, has offered to return to the school to present the findings of his study and relate these to material addressed in the course.

Continued …

If you would like your child to take part in this research, please could you sign the consent form below. A separate signature is required for Stage 1-2 and then Stage 3.

Yours sincerely

Principal, Business Studies

Appendix 5: Rationale for the Self Completion Questionnaire, section by section

1. Part One: 'Participant details'

Participants were asked to provide details about themselves, their household and family and the media they have access to. Demographic and household questions were based on the structure of the government 2001 census (GROS 2005c). This allowed for direct comparison of sample structure with the Scottish population as a whole.

Participants were also asked to outline which media they had access to and used at home. Information on household media access was important to begin to build up a picture of types of media that young people had access to and actively used. As Livingstone and Bovill (1999) noted, young people are assimilating new as well as traditional media into their everyday lives and it is important to access the extent of that assimilation. Livingstone and Bovill also distinguished between 'bedroom culture' and 'public spaces' in the household and so participants were asked to separate household access from personal bedroom access. Care was taken in this section to ensure that the study remained fully up to date with the inclusion of terms such as 'TV with free digital access (e.g. Freeserve)' to reflect newly available services to UK households. A section on frequency of use of different media options was added after the pilot study to allow for separation of heavier and light users of new media such as the internet. The breakdown of frequency of use was based on the British Market Research Bureau's Target Group Index categories. (BMRB 2001).

2. 'Part Two': 'Your Attitudes and Motivations'

2.1 Part Two Section One: Attitudes about lifestyles, interests, principles and convictions

As the literature review highlighted, 'consumer lifestyles, attitudes and interests' are an important aspect of understanding the context of youth media consumption. Much work has been done in the past looking at a number of linked areas including personal values and lifestyle (Rokeach 1973, Mitchell 1983), 'Activities, interests and opinions' (AIO's) (Wells 1974) and finally the broader area of psychographics (Kahle and Chiagouris 1997). Consideration was given to the relationships between values, attitudes and lifestyles in relation to young people (see Miegel and Johnasson 1992) before this section of the questionnaire was finalised. As a consequence, it was decided that personal values as a construct remained too abstract and removed from the consumption of contemporary media to be included in spite of a few studies linking mass media consumption and cultural values (e.g. Pollay 1983). Given that attitudes are ideals that manifest themselves in objects or specific phenomena (Solomon *et al* 2002), it was decided that greater understandings could be derived from a linked rather than abstract concept.

Attitudinally statements were derived from the three main components: affective, behavioural and cognitive (Soloman *et al* 2002) although no assumptions were made about the ways in which such attitudes influence the individual. Attitudes were selected from a bank of 220 attitudinal statements used by BMRB's TGI Youth study. This list was cross-referred to statements from an American lifestyle list used by Zollo (1995). Finally, the author used his own experience of conducting quantitative youth related research projects to oversee and add to the list of possibilities. A list of forty-five statements were piloted before rejecting six statements on the basis of overlap or irrelevance. A finalised list of thirty-nine statements was used in the research. These can be categorised into statements about lifestyle, interests, principles and convictions.

2.2 Part Two Section 2: Reasons for choosing different types of media

The section on 'Reasons for choosing different types of media' was based on the construct of the 'uses and gratification' tradition. A working definition of this was provided in the literature chapter.

Although the literature review highlighted a number of limitations associated with this theoretical tradition, it also outlined a rationale for using U&G theory in new media research. Its continued appropriateness for new media research, track record as a credible framework and relative simplicity for understanding a new medium provide credible reasons for inclusion in this research, provided it was not used in isolation of other methods of data collection.

For this research study, a U&G theoretical framework allowed the researcher to compare and contrast reasons for using traditional media with new media. It also provided a well-researched set of scaled items consisting of adjectives and descriptive phrases, both for traditional media (Greenberg 1974; Rubin 1981, 1983) and more recently, new media (Eighmey and McCord 1998). To ascertain media consumption motivations (also known as media uses), participants were asked to indicate their agreement with each of 24 different statements, across six different media types. Response options to 'Reasons for media choice' ranged from 'exactly', a lot', 'somewhat', 'not much' to 'not at all'. This was a replication of the method used by Rubin (1981, 1983) on television motivations.

Initially, a pool of forty-five scaled items was identified from the existing U&G literature on traditional and new media. The variables were then subjectively screened by the researcher for potential overlap. Those that had performed poorly in previous studies were rejected if they had little relevance to the research objectives. Consideration was also given to their relevance to a youth audience. A list of thirty statements was then fully tested in the pilot study before six were eliminated to simply the procedure, eliminate possible overlaps and help reduce possible participant boredom. Ultimately, the final selection of twenty-four statements was decided upon, capturing ten underlying constructs. The constructs were derived from the study of television gratifications by Rubin (1981, 1983) but adapted to incorporate specific new media dimensions, as laid out below in Table 41.

Testing of the pilot questionnaire altered the wording of certain variables to ensure greater clarity of meaning. Scaled items were randomly inserted into the questionnaire to ensure that there was no perceptual link between conceptual headings and statements.

Table 41: Final list of gratification statements

I use TV/radio/magazines/ internet/cinema/mobiles …'	Category**	Source*
When there's no one else to talk or be with	Companionship	Rubin
Because it's so convenient	Ease	Adapted from Ebersole
Because it entertains me	Entertainment	Rubin
Because it amuses me	Entertainment	Rubin
So I can forget about school and other things	Escapism	Rubin
So I can get away from what I'm doing	Escapism	Rubin
Because I just like to watch/listen/read/use it	Habit	Adapted from Rubin
Because it is more intimate and personal to me	Identity	Adapted from Eighmey
For the most up to date information and advice	Information	Ebersole
It shows me what society is like nowadays	Information	Svennevig
Because I am curious as to what I am missing	Information	Stafford and Stafford
So I can learn how to do things	Information	Vincent and Basil
Because it helps me learn about myself and others	Information	Rubin
Because it helps me decide what to buy	Information	Kaye
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	Information	Kang and Atkin
Because it relaxes me	Mood Enhancement	Rubin
Because it's exciting	Mood Enhancement	Rubin
Because it gives me a lift	Mood Enhancement	Rubin
When I have nothing better to do	Pass Time	Rubin
So I can talk with other people about what's on	Social Interaction	Rubin
Because it's something I do with friends	Social Interaction	Adapted from Rubin
So I can be with other members of the family or friends	Social Interaction	Adapted from Rubin
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	Social Interaction	Adapted from Svennevig
To be like my friends	Social Interaction	Cohen et al

Sources*: Cohen *et al* (1988), Ebersole (2000), Eighmey and McCord (1998), Kang and Atkin (1999), Kaye (1998), Rubin (1981), Stafford and Stafford (1996), Svennevig (2000), Vincent and Basil (1997)

Categories**: Based on Rubin (1981) and Kaye (19980 factor analysis, and pilot study findings (Grant 2002)

To ensure that U&Gs were considered for both new and traditional media choices, participants were asked to tick boxes for six different media choices; television, radio, cinema, the internet, magazines and mobile phones. The selection of the six choices was based on a number of considerations. Firstly, given the importance of the findings for marketing academics and practitioners, only commercial media were considered. This excluded media choices that do not feature commercial advertising such as books. Secondly, only the most relevant media choices for young people were considered. A ranked list of youth media choices, using BMRB's Target Group Index (2001) for 15-17 year olds was sourced from a media consultancy, FeatherBrooksbank. From this list, only those choices with a high level of youth penetration were included. Newspapers, for example, were excluded on this basis. Finally, only 'personal' media were considered because the emphasis on new media which are intrapersonal in character (see Chapter Four). This ruled out commercial media such as outdoor posters that could not be considered 'personal'. Mobile phones were added to the list after the pilot study as their importance as a source of youth media use became increasingly apparent.

3.3 Part Two Section 3: Internet specific questions

A final section sought to establish the barriers to internet use as a consequence of the findings of the pilot research. The pilot research highlighted that numerous barriers were hindering young peoples' uses of the internet (see Grant and Waite 2003). It was decided that quantifying some of these aspects would add to an understanding of the subject matter. The questions and statements were based on a study called Digital Glasgow: 2002 Household Study accessed privately from Scottish Enterprise. After discussions with the commercial research company concerned, some statements were altered to suit the contextual nature of this study.

Appendix 6: Self completion questionnaire format

'STATE RURAL' SCHOOL MEDIA SURVEY

A RESEARCH STUDY CONDUCTED IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

PART 1&2

Introduction

First of all, I would like to thank you for volunteering to take part in this research programme.

The objective of the research is to help build a better understanding of what types of relationships people such as you have with the variety of media you come across in your daily lives. By media, I include everything from your television(s) at home to the more recent forms of communication such as the mobile phones and the internet. Essentially, anything you use for information and entertainment purposes.

Any information you give us will be treated with utmost confidentiality. The information will be used for academic purposes to help researchers learn more about young peoples' media choices and attitudes towards the media.

The Format of the Research

You will be asked to complete **three** questionnaire parts for this research.

The **first** part is called **ABOUT YOURSELF**. It asks you to give some personal details about yourself. This type of information helps us to compare and contrast your answers with answers from other participants.

The **second** part is called **YOUR ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATIONS**. It asks about your attitudes on lifestyle, interests, principles and convictions, your reasons for choosing different types of media and some specific questions about the Internet.

You will be asked to complete **ABOUT YOURSELF** and **YOUR ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATIONS** as a class lesson. Take your time to answer each and every question asked. They are all important for a successful research exercise.

The **third** part is called **YOUR DAILY DIARY.** It is designed so that you can keep an on-going record of the types of media you watch, listen to or use throughout the week. It therefore requires you to fill in a form for each day of the week. You will be given two identical forms for Saturday & Sunday and five identical forms for Monday through to Friday. The diaries are designed to be completed at home, rather than in class time.

The easiest way to do complete the diary is to develop a routine throughout the week. Try to fill in Mornings/Early Afternoon hours as soon as you get home and then Late Afternoon/Evening hours before you go to bed. From my own experience of filling in such a diary, it can be quite easy to forget what you have been doing, if you leave it too long to fill in. So to help with accurate recording of information, try to develop a regular routine twice a day. It only takes ten to fifteen minutes each time once you become familiar with the format.

And finally, many thanks for your help in enabling this research to take place.

'STATE RURAL' SCHOOL MEDIA SURVEY

PART ONE

ABOUT YOURSELF

A: ABOUT YOURSELF

B: ABOUT YOUR HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY

C: ABOUT THE MEDIA YOU HAVE ACCESS TO

A: ABOUT YOU

A1. **What is your name?**
First name and surname

_____

A2. **What is your home address and postcode?**

_____

Postcode:
_____

A3. **What is your sex?**

☐ Male ☐ Female

A4. **What age were you on 1st January 2003?**

☐ 13 ☐ 14 ☐ 15 ☐ 16 ☐ 17 ☐ 18

A5. **What is your country of birth?**

☐ Scotland ☐ England ☐ Northern Ireland ☐ Wales

☐ Elsewhere, please write in present name of country. _____

A6. **What is your ethnic group?** Choose one section from A to E then tick the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background.

A White

☐ British ☐ Irish ☐ Other White background

B Mixed

☐ White and Black Caribbean ☐ White and Black African ☐ White and Asian ☐ Any other Mixed background

C Asian or Asian British

☐ Indian ☐ Pakistan ☐ Bangladeshi ☐ Any other Asian background

D Black or Black British

☐ Caribbean ☐ African ☐ Any other Black background

E Chinese or other ethnic group

☐ Chinese ☐ Any other, please write in _____

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B: ABOUT YOUR HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY

B1 **How many adults, <u>aged 18 or over</u>, live most of the time at your house?**
(i.e. more than 40 hours a week).

☐ Please write in total

B2 **Which of the following people would you include in the total above (B1) Please tick?**

☐ Mother   ☐ Father   ☐ Other Male adult   ☐ Other Female adult

B3 Could you detail what is the current working status for each of the person counted above (B2) ?

Please tick appropriate box for <u>each</u> person. Tick more than one box if required.

	Mother	Father	Other Male adult (1)	Other Female adult (1)	Other Male adult (2)	Other Fer adult (2
Working full time (30+ hours/week)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working part time (8-29 hours/week)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Not working/unemployed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Long term sick	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Retired	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If none of the persons considered in question B3 are working, go to question B5.

Otherwise, continue on to question B4

B4 **For each of the working people ticked for question B3, what is (are) the title(s) of their job(s)?**
For example: Primary School Teacher, State Registered Nurse, Car Mechanic, Television Service Engineer

Father _____   Mother_____   Other Male adult (1)_____

Other Female adult (1)_____   Other Male adult (2)_____   Other Female adult (2)_____

B5 **How many people <u>under</u> the age of 18, live at your house?**
Please write in total for female and male

Female ☐   **Male** ☐

B6 **What is the current marital status of your parents?** (as of 1st January 2003)

☐ Single   ☐ Married   ☐ Widowed

☐ Separated   ☐ Divorced   ☐ Other

B: ABOUT YOUR HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY

B7 **What type of accommodation does your household occupy?**

☐ **Detached house/bungalow**   ☐ **Semi-detached house/bungalow**

☐ Terraced house (include end terrace)   ☐ A flat, maisonette, or apartment

☐ Other

B8 **Does your household own or rent the accommodation?**

☐ Owns outright   ☐ Owns with a mortgage or loan

☐ Pays part rent   ☐ Rents   ☐ Lives here rent free
and part mortgage
(shared ownership)

C: ABOUT THE MEDIA YOU HAVE ACCESS TO

C1 Do you have at least one television in your home?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If Yes, proceed to C2

If No, proceed to C3

C2 How many televisions does your household have at home?

None   ☐

One   ☐

Two   ☐

Three or more ☐

C: ABOUT THE MEDIA YOU HAVE ACCESS TO

C3 Which of the following do you have access to at home?

Please fill in both columns, ticking appropriate boxes for each media type. The first relates to the household as a whole <u>includi</u> your personal bedroom. The second relates specifically to your personal bedroom <u>only</u>.

	Household in general	Your personal bedroom
Television with terrestrial access (e.g. BBC/ITV)	☐	☐
Cable TV (e.g. NTL/Telewest)	☐	☐
Satellite TV (e.g. BSkyB)	☐	☐
VHS Video	☐	☐
DVD Player	☐	☐
Music system/hi-fi	☐	☐
Stand alone radio/stereo	☐	☐
Walkman and/or MP3player	☐	☐
Computer (with Internet access)	☐	
Computer (without Internet access)	☐	☐
Gaming machine/console (e.g. Playstation)	☐	☐
Electronic personal organiser (e.g. Palm Pilot)	☐	☐
Normal telephone	☐	☐
Mobile phone (yours)	☐	☐
Mobile phone (household/parental)	☐	☐
Digital camera	☐	☐

C4 If you ticked either box for mobile phone, what type was it? (tick for your own, and any additional household mobi

	Your mobile	Household/parental mobile
Text and voice only	☐	☐
WAP enabled (i.e. Internet access)	☐	☐
Picture enabled (new 'picture style' mobiles)	☐	☐

C5 Which of the following <u>best </u>describes your use of mobile phones?

I never use a mobile phone ☐

I use my parents mobile phone ☐

I use my own mobile phone ☐

I borrow my friends mobile phone ☐

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SECTION C: ABOUT THE MEDIA YOU HAVE ACCESS TO

C6 Which of the following have you ever used, and which do you actively use nowadays?

Please fill in both columns, ticking appropriate boxes for each media type.

	Have you ever used	Actively use nowadays
Television with terrestrial access (e.g. BBC/ITV)	☐	☐
Cable TV (e.g. NTL/Telewest)	☐	☐
Satellite TV (e.g. BSkyB)	☐	☐
VHS Video	☐	☐
DVD Player	☐	☐
Music system/hi-fi	☐	☐
Stand alone radio/stereo	☐	☐
Walkman and/or MP3player	☐	☐
Computer (with Internet access)	☐	☐
Computer (without Internet access)	☐	☐
Gaming machine/console (e.g. Playstation)	☐	☐
Electronic personal organiser (e.g. Palm Pilot)	☐	☐
Normal telephone	☐	☐
Text and voice only mobile	☐	☐
WAP enabled mobile	☐	☐
Picture enabled mobile	☐	☐
Digital camera	☐	☐

C7 Consider the following types of media options. About how often do you use each one?

	Daily	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less than once a month	Don't use nowadays
Television (include Cable/Satellite)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Radio	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Magazines	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cinema					
Internet (from whatever source)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mobile Phone(s) (include using your parents/friends)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

'STATE RURAL' SCHOOL MEDIA SURVEY

PART TWO

YOUR ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATIONS

SECTION 1 Attitudes about lifestyles, interests, principles and convictions

SECTION 2 Reasons for choosing different types of media

SECTION 3 Internet specific

SECTION 1: ATTITUDES ABOUT LIFESTYLES, INTERESTS, PRINCIPLES & CONVICTIONS

This section of the study covers your general attitudes about your lifestyles, interests, principles and convictions. The questions just require a tick in the appropriate box. Please try to answer all of them as quickly and honestly as you can. Remember that all of your answers are confidential so don't worry if you feel that some are personal in nature.

Here is a list of statements that other people have made about lifestyle, leisure and media activity. For each one, could you indicate how much you yourself agree or disagree with each of these statements by ticking the appropriate box. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement for every statement in the list.

	agree strongly	agree slightly	neither agree nor disagree	disagree slightly	disagree strongly
I do not have as much time as I would like to pursue leisure activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I buy clothes for comfort not style	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It's important to avoid buying things that will harm the environment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am increasingly concerned about keeping healthy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like to stay in touch with new trends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Computers are anti social and take away interaction with other people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel I have plenty of money to spend on leisure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I find advertising highly intrusive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It's not how much money you spend but how you spend it that matters	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It's important to get involved in things that help others and help to make the world better, even if it's not that important to others my age	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In my leisure time, I am very happy to stay at home and watch TV or videos rather than go out	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I care a lot about whether my clothes are "in style"	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe most of what I read, watch or listen to	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 1: ATTITUDES ABOUT LIFESTYLES, INTERESTS, PRINCIPLES & CONVICTIO[N]

	agree strongly	agree slightly	neither agree nor disagree	disagree slightly	disagree strongly
I enjoy having lots of music and entertainment available to me at the touch of a button	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It's important for me to "fit in" with my friends and others like me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advertising just manipulates your views and attitudes to products and brands	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I worry about the amount of personal information that could be held on computers about me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My religion/faith is one of the most important aspects of my life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I wish I were more popular. I watch the young people who are more popular and wish I was more like them	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I really enjoy current advertising	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I tend to arrange my nights out at the last minute	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Success in life means making lots of money	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I prefer to spend money on durable things that I can keep, rather than on things that give me temporary enjoyment like holidays or clubbing etc	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Most people who know me or just see me think I'm cool	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I try to have as much fun as I can and let the future take care of itself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I'm often first to try something new	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It's more important to have one or two close friends than many acquaintances	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think I will earn more money than my parents as my career progresses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Computers and the Internet are now an important part of everyday lives	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I dress more fashionably than most people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 1: ATTITUDES ABOUT LIFESTYLES, INTERESTS, PRINCIPLES & CONVICTION

	agree strongly	agree slightly	neither agree nor disagree	disagree slightly	disagree strongly
Scientific breakthroughs and new technology are our main hopes for a better life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would rather make something than buy it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like outrageous people and things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The more money you spend, the more fun you have	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like to spend a year or more in foreign countries	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I consider myself an intellectual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like to learn about art, culture and history	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
You have to work hard to get what you want in life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have more ability than most people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Guidelines

I would now like you to ask you about your own views on why you watch, listen or use certain types of media.

On the following pages, you will find a list of statements for six <u>different</u> types of media. Each statement is a reason other people have given for why they watch, listen or use particular kinds of media.

Taking each of the media choices in turn, starting with television, indicate <u>how closely</u> you think each statement matches <u>your reason(s)</u> for watching/listening/using that specific media. Responses range from 'exactly' through to 'not close at all'. The first page is about television, and subsequent pages cover the other media mentioned.

Please ensure that you only tick one box per statement and try to give an answer for <u>every</u> statement listed.

SECTION 2: REASONS FOR CHOOSING TELEVISION (1)

I watch TV	EXACTLY	VERY CLOSE	QUITE CLOSE	NOT VERY CLOSE	NOT CLOSE AT ALL
Because it relaxes me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's so convenient	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
For the most up to date information and advice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I have nothing better to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it entertains me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's something I do with friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me learn things about myself and others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can forget about school and other things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps form my moral/ethical values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I am curious as to what I am missing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I just like to watch it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can talk with other people about what's on	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can learn how to do things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's exciting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be like my friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When there's no one else to talk to or be with	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it amuses me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can be with other members of the family or friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It shows me what society is like nowadays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it gives me a lift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can get away from what I'm doing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because is more intimate and personal to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me decide what to buy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 2: REASONS FOR CHOOSING RADIO (2)

I listen to radio	EXACTLY	VERY CLOSE	QUITE CLOSE	NOT VERY CLOSE	NOT CLOSE AT ALL
Because it relaxes me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's so convenient	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
For the most up to date information and advice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I have nothing better to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it entertains me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's something I do with friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me learn things about myself and others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can forget about school and other things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I am curious as to what I am missing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I just like to listen to it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can talk with other people about what's on	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can learn how to do things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's exciting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be like my friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When there's no one else to talk to or be with	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it amuses me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can be with other members of the family or friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It shows me what society is like nowadays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it gives me a lift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can get away from what I'm doing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it is intimate and personal to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me decide what to buy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I go to the cinema	EXACTLY	VERY CLOSE	QUITE CLOSE	NOT VERY CLOSE	NOT CLOSE AT ALL
Because it relaxes me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's so convenient	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
For the most up to date information and advice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I have nothing better to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it entertains me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's something I do with friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me learn things about myself and others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can forget about school and other things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I am curious as to what I am missing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I just like to go along and watch	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can talk with other people about what's on	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can learn how to do things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's exciting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be like my friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When there's no one else to talk to or be with	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it amuses me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can be with other members of the family or friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It shows me what society is like nowadays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it gives me a lift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can get away from what I'm doing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it is intimate and personal to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me decide what to buy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 2: REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE INTERNET (4)

I use the internet	EXACTLY	VERY CLOSE	QUITE CLOSE	NOT VERY CLOSE	NOT CLOSE AT ALL
Because it relaxes me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's so convenient	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
For the most up to date information and advice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I have nothing better to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it entertains me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's something I do with friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me learn things about myself and others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can forget about school and other things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I am curious as to what I am missing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I just like to interact with it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can talk with other people about what's on	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can learn how to do things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's exciting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be like my friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When there's no one else to talk to or be with	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it amuses me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can be with other members of the family or friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It shows me what society is like nowadays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it gives me a lift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can get away from what I'm doing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it is intimate and personal to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me decide what to buy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 2: REASONS FOR CHOOSING MAGAZINES (5)

I read magazines/comics...	EXACTLY	VERY CLOSE	QUITE CLOSE	NOT VERY CLOSE	NOT CLOSE AT ALL
Because it relaxes me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's so convenient	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
For the most up to date information and advice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I have nothing better to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it entertains me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's something I do with friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me learn things about myself and others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can forget about school and other things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I am curious as to what I am missing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I just like to read them	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can talk with other people about what's on	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can learn how to do things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's exciting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be like my friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When there's no one else to talk to or be with	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it amuses me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can be with other members of the family or friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It shows me what society is like nowadays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it gives me a lift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can get away from what I'm doing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it is intimate and personal to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me decide what to buy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 2: REASONS FOR CHOOSING MOBILE PHONES (6)

I use mobile phones......	EXACTLY	VERY CLOSE	QUITE CLOSE	NOT VERY CLOSE	NOT CLOSE AT ALL
Because it relaxes me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's so convenient	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
For the most up to date information and advice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I have nothing better to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it entertains me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's something I do with friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me learn things about myself and others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can forget about school and other things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me form my moral/ethical values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I am curious as to what I am missing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because I just like to read them	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can talk with other people about what's on	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can learn how to do things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it's exciting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To be like my friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When there's no one else to talk to or be with	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it amuses me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can be with other members of the family or friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It shows me what society is like nowadays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it gives me a lift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can get away from what I'm doing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it is intimate and personal to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
So I can share experiences and ideas with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because it helps me decide what to buy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 3: INTERNET SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

The final section asks you to complete two questions more specifically linked to the Internet.

The first is about types of things you use the Internet for. The second concentrates on reasons for stopping using the Internet.

3.1 Which of these have you ever used the internet for? (tick as many as are applicable)

Information for school/college ☐

Finding out about goods/services ☐

To send or receive e-mails ☐

Playing/downloading games ☐

Local, national or international news ☐

Weather/travel information ☐

Chatrooms ☐

Looking for jobs ☐

Access to University/College information ☐

Personal banking and money issues ☐

Listening to/downloading music/MP3s ☐

Helping with grocery shopping ☐

Other shopping (e.g. books, music, clothes) ☐

Learning new skills for employment ☐

Cinema/concert/theatre tickets ☐

Hobbies/personal interest ☐

Access to local or government services ☐

Access to health services and information ☐

Other (please specifiy) _____

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SECTION 3: INTERNET SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

3.2 'I use the internet <u>less</u> than I might do because...?'

For <u>each</u> of the statements listed below, indicate (by ticking) how much you agree or disagree that it is the answer to the question above.

	agree strongly	agree slightly	neither agree nor disagree	disagree slightly	disagree strongly
The cost of telephone calls	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The price of equipment to my parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I need to improve my surfing skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I don't have enough time to be able to use it more often	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I'm not interested in what is available on the Internet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My computer does not have good enough software	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The quality of information is not good enough for my needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It takes too long to find things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I'm unsure of how to get the best from the Internet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I don't know many people with an e-mail address	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I don't know many people who use chat rooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The speed of connection/computer is too slow	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am unable to get access to computer outside of school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have to share a computer with other members of family and/or friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I get annoyed or irritated by online advertising	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shopping on the Internet is not secure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have strong concerns about the availability of unsuitable materials – such as pornography	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix 7: Diary questionnaire format
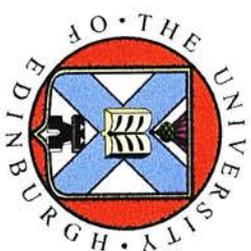
STATE RURAL SCHOOL MEDIA SURVEY

PART 3

YOUR DAILY DIARY

Please indicate what is your name (first name and surname) _____

Could you complete this daily diary according to how you spent your time each day.

First of all, indicate which day the diary is for: Saturday ☐   Sunday ☐

The diary is filled into three sections and is easy to fill in. Please indicate for each time period, where you were and who you were with by filling in the appropriate boxes with a tick for the first two sections. If you have done several things at the same time, please record information for everything you did during that time.

For the final third section on media use, could you estimate how much time you spent on each media type for each hour. Try to estimate to the nearest five minutes. *For example, during Monday, from 9.00–9.59am I spent 10 minutes watching TV, 5 minutes listening to the radio and 5 minutes gaming on a console.*

1. WHERE WERE YOU...? (Please tick)

	7.00-7.59am	8.00-8.59am	9.00-9.59am	10.00-10.59am	11.00-11.59am	12.00-12.59pm	1.00-1.59pm	2.00-2.59pm	3.00-3.59pm	4.00-4.59pm	5.00-5.59pm	6.00-6.59pm	7.00-7.59pm	8.00-8.59pm	9.00-9.59pm	10.00-10.59pm	11.00-11.59pm	12.00am-6.59am
In your family living room																		
In your own bedroom																		
Somewhere else in your home																		
Someone else's home																		
Travelling																		
School/college																		
Social/after school club																		
Work																		
Pub/bar/café																		
Night Club																		
Theatre/concert venue																		
Sporting event																		
Shops																		
Other – please state in box																		

2. WHO WERE YOU WITH…? (Please tick)

	7.00-7.59am	8.00-8.59am	9.00-9.59am	10.00-10.59am	11.00-11.59am	12.00-12.59pm	1.00-1.59pm	2.00-2.59pm	3.00-3.59pm	4.00-4.59pm	5.00-5.59pm	6.00-6.59pm	7.00-7.59pm	8.00-8.59pm	9.00-9.59pm	10.00-10.59pm	11.00-11.59pm	12.00am-6.59am
With no-one																		
With one of best friends																		
With group of friends																		
With boyfriend/girlfriend																		
With family																		
Other																		

3. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MEDIA TYPES WERE YOU USING…? (Please estimate to the nearest five minutes, for <u>each</u> hour marked)

Media types	7.00-7.59am	8.00-8.59am	9.00-9.59am	10.00-10.59am	11.00-11.59am	12.00-12.59pm	1.00-1.59pm	2.00-2.59pm	3.00-3.59pm	4.00-4.59pm	5.00-5.59pm	6.00-6.59pm	7.00-7.59pm	8.00-8.59pm	9.00-9.59pm	10.00-10.59pm	11.00-11.59pm	12.00am-6.59am
TV (terrestrial) (i.e. BBC/ITV/C4/C5)																		
Satellite TV (i.e. BSkyB)																		
Cable TV (i.e. Telewest/NTL)																		
Video																		
DVD																		
Music (CDs, tapes, MP3 player)																		
Radio (ex. Internet)																		
Cinema																		
Magazine/Comic																		
Newspaper																		
Book																		
Gaming on Computer or Console																		
Surfing Internet on Computer (ex e-mail)																		
E-mailing on Computer																		
Schoolwork/other on Computer																		
Talking on Mobile																		
Talking on normal Telephone																		
Texting on Mobile																		
E-mailing on Mobile/PDA																		
Surfing Internet on Mobile/PDA																		

Please indicate your name (first name and surname) _____

Could you complete this daily diary according to how you spent your time each day.

First of all, indicate which day the diary is for:

Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐

The diary is filled into three sections and is easy to fill in. Please indicate for each time period, where you were and who you were with by filling in the appropriate boxes with a tick for the first two sections. If you have done several things at the same time, please record information for everything you did during that time.

For the final third section on media use, could you estimate how much time you spent on each media type for each hour. Try to estimate to the nearest five minutes.
For example, during Monday, from 9.00–9.59am I spent 10 minutes watching TV, 5 minutes listening to the radio and 5 minutes gaming on a console.

1. WHERE WERE YOU…? (Please tick)

	7.00-7.59am	8.00-8.59am	9.00-9.59am	10.00-10.59am	11.00-11.59am	12.00-12.59pm	1.00-1.59pm	2.00-2.59pm	3.00-3.59pm	4.00-4.59pm	5.00-5.59pm	6.00-6.59pm	7.00-7.59pm	8.00-8.59pm	9.00-9.59pm	10.00-10.59pm	11.00-11.59pm	12.00am-6.59am
In your family living room																		
In your own bedroom																		
Somewhere else in your home																		
Someone else's																		
Home																		
Travelling																		
School/college																		
Social/after school club																		
Work																		
Pub/bar/café																		
Night Club																		
Theatre/concert venue																		
Sporting event																		
Shops																		
Other – please state in box																		

2. WHO WERE YOU WITH....? (Please tick)

With no-one	
With one of best friends	
With group of friends	
With boyfriend/girlfriend	
With family	
Other	

3. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MEDIA TYPES WERE YOU USING...? (Please estimate to the nearest five minutes, for each hour marked)

Media types	7.00-7.59am	8.00-8.59am	4.00-4.59pm	5.00-5.59pm	6.00-6.59pm	7.00-7.59pm	8.00-8.59pm	9.00-9.59pm	10.00-10.59pm	11.00-11.59pm	12.00am-6.59am
TV (terrestrial) (i.e. BBC/ITV/C4/C5)											
Satellite TV (i.e. BSkyB)											
Cable TV (i.e. Telewest/NTL)											
Video											
DVD											
Music (CDs, tapes, MP3 player)											
Radio (ex. Internet)											
Cinema											
Magazine/Comic											
Newspaper											
Book											
Gaming on Computer or Console											
Surfing Internet on Computer (ex e-mail)											
E-mailing on Computer											
Schoolwork/other on Computer											
Talking on Mobile											
Talking on normal Telephone											
Texting on Mobile											
E-mailing on Mobile/PDA											
Surfing Internet on Mobile/PDA											

Appendix 8: Methodological overview of factor analysis

First steps

Factor analysis is a "generic name given to a class of multivariate statistical methods whose primary purpose is to define the underlying structure in a data matrix" (Hair Jr. *et al* 1998: 90). Tabachnick and Fidell (2000) add that its specify goal is to summarise patterns of correlation amongst observed data to a smaller number of factors. It does this by analysing the interrelationships between the variables defined and then defining common sets of underlying dimensions. It has been used widely to either summarise or reduce down large sets of interval type data, typically attitudinal or motivational variables in the fields of marketing and media studies. It assumes that not all variables are identical and so identifies separate underlying dimensions, known as factors. Variables are given loading with each factor; the size of each loading explains the degree of importance each variable contributes towards that factor.

Factor analysis can either be exploratory or confirmatory. In this study, exploratory factor analysis was chosen because of the relative paucity of research into comparisons between new and traditional U & G (Ebersole 2000). Researchers also face the choice between two main types of data extraction, principal component analysis or (PCA) or factor analysis (FA). For the purposes of this study, PCA was selected as the extraction method. PCA has historically been used in numerous U&G studies (Rubin 1983, Ebersole 2000, Eighmey and McCord 1998, Kaye 1998, Leung and Wei 2000, Luo 2002. It does not assume *a priori* model for the data set and allows for ease of comparison with previous studies.

Criteria for application

There are several criteria researchers must consider before embarking on a factor analysis. Data must be of the interval scale type and is often in the form of a likert style scale. Five, six or seven point scales are most typical in U&G studies using cluster analysis. Secondly, consideration must be given to the research sample. There

is consideration debate on the absolute size of sample needed for cluster analysis. Gorsuch (1983) recommend no fewer than 100 cases per analysis whilst Comrey and Lee (1992) note that 200 is a fair size. Absolute size however is never used in isolation of the number of variables being considered. Hair et al (1998) maintains that the number of cases for each variable should never be less than three whilst Gorsuch suggests a minimum of five. Other researchers prefer higher ratios to ensure that findings are statistically valid. Finally, the individual loading for each factor can give indications of acceptable sample sizes. Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988) for example acknowledge that sample sizes of 150 cases are permissible with lower loading per factor. Finally, a number of tests should be conducted on the data before deciding to apply factor analysis. They include examining (1) the correlation matrix and latent roots to ensure variable coefficients are not too small; (2) the plot of the latent roots to ensure that breaks in the curve appear; (3) testing for the independence of populations of variables using Bartlett's test of sphericity (1950, 1951); (4) testing sampling adequacy to ensure that variables belong together using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure.

Rotation of factors

Choice of rotation of factors is an important tool in helping to interpret factor analysis. Rotation implies that the reference of the axes is turned about the origin until some other position has been reached (Hair *et al* 1998). It is possible to analysis factors using unrotated data. However, unrotated data results in the first factor becoming a general factor with almost every variable loaded significantly and each subsequent factor giving decreasing residual amounts of variation. Hair *et al* suggest that rotating factors provides for a simpler factor structure and improves the interpretation by removing any ambiguity, which can accompany unrotated solutions.

Rotations can either be orthogonal or oblique. Orthogonal rotation maintains a 90-degree angle in rotation and so provides for the simplest method of rotation. Of the different orthogonal variations, varimax is the most popular (Gorsuch 1974) as it gives a clearer separation of the factors presented and is used widely in U&G studies. However, there are sometimes justifications for using the more complex oblique method of rotation. Oblique rotations assume that that factors are already correlated

and so underlying factors must also be correlated. In the case of orthogonal rotation, variables are assumed to be independent throughout the process of factoring. One of the pioneers of media U&G (Rubin 1983) argued for the use of oblique rotation, assuming that television motivations are already interrelated. However, orthogonal rotation using varimax was selected for this study to allow for ease of interpretation and because of its proven track record across a range of research studies (Dielman *et al* 1972).

Selecting the number of factors

There are a number of ways for deciding on the number of factors to be extracted using PCA factor analysis. The two most common methods are analysis of the latent root or eigenvalue and the Cattell (1966) scree test criterion. The latent root is the column sum of squares for each factor. The rational for this according to Hair et al (1998: 103) is that any individual factor should account for the variance of at least a single variable if it is to be retained for interpretation. So, only factors containing latent roots or eignevalues greater than 1 are considered significant. This is known as the 'cut of point'. However, if the numbers of variables are above 50, it is dangerous to rely exclusively on this technique as too many factors may be excluded. The second method is then to additionally consider the scree test criterion. Latent roots are plotted against the number of factors in order of extraction resulting in a curve shaped plot. The point at which the curve first begins to flatten off is considered the optimum point to observe the maximum number of factors. Cattell (1996) notes that the scree test will often result in the inclusion of at least one additional factor as considered significant beyond the eigenvalue of 1 criterion. The technique has been criticised however because it relies on the subjective visual judgement of researchers and so is rarely used in isolation. The third method for determining the number of factors is to observe the factor loadings for factors being considered. Factor loadings show the correlation between the original factors and each variable. For sample sizes of between 150 and 200 in common with this study, researchers have used a minimum factor loading of 0.4 to 0.5 to indicate significance (Comrey and Lee 1992, Luo 2002). The higher the degree of variance, the more satisfactory the outcome. A final consideration is the overall amount of variance that the extracted factors account for. The higher the degree of variance for a factor solution, the more significant it is.

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Solutions of 60% and above are considered satisfactory although this criterion is not rigidly held (see Cureton and D'Agostino 1983).

Labelling the factors

Labelling of factor solution is a subjective activity and has been described as an art as much as a science (Tabachnick and Fidell (2000). The researcher is required to give a label to the group of labels which load on that particular factor. Guidance should be taken from the variables which offer the highest factor loadings and offer the greatest indication of properties. Rummel (1970) suggest that consideration also be given also to uniqueness of factor, match to existing theory, place in hierarchy of explanations and understandability. Care is needed to ensure that the reader is able to fully understand the essence of the uses and gratifications that are expressed within the factor being captured.

Appendix 9: Three guiding principles of phenomenological research

Firstly, the researcher's own experiences and theoretical notions are always secondary to the participants' experiential ones (Thompson *et al* 1990). This in effect meant adopting what Hussell described as 'bracketing': holding pre conceived notions in abeyance. In practice this meant the author setting aside the initial findings from the quantitative research and attempting to come to the interview process and data analysis with an open mind. Dukes (1984: 201) warned of the dangers of "seeing what we want to see". This phase of the research was an attempt to follow the suggestion of Spradley (1979), thinking of participants as an 'alien culture' and wherever possible, looking for participants to describe their experiences in full.

Secondly, the dialogue was set by the participant rather than guided by pre set questions. Initial discussions were aimed at bringing about descriptions of experiences, not at confirming the researchers' own theoretical hypotheses. In following this, it is hoped that participants would feel they were on an equal footing with the researcher (Kvale 1983) and so more likely to open up and not feel intimidated. Questions and probes used by the researcher were descriptive, avoiding judgmental questions such as the use of 'why'. Thompson *et al* (1989) argued that 'why' type questions are ineffective at generating rich responses because they are perceived by participants as a request for rationalisation and could result in prejudgement and defensive behaviour. The interviewing procedure was therefore designed to be more flexible than traditional structured interviewing techniques, allowing greater depth of feedback and intended to be relatively free of researcher bias.

Thirdly, respondents' descriptions are held to be fully autonomous, with no attempt to corroborate descriptions with external descriptions. As a consequence, the emphasis is very much on the individual. According to Dukes (1984), it is theoretically possible and consistent with phenomenological principles, to present a sample size of one. Although this was never the case in this study, there was no attempt to verify findings through replication of interviews.

Appendix 10: Example of researcher notes before making qualitative sampling decisions

State rural school

Overview

From all those that completed the consent forms for part three, I studied the individual forms of each request and drew up a long list of 55 possible combinations. From this overlap was eliminated. Individuals who were not nominated by the people they nominated were also eliminated. A final short list of thirteen sets of possible triads was arrived at.

The aim at Berwick was to reduce the number down to five sets of three individuals. The next stage was then to profile the thirteen sets of individuals. What I was looking for a diverse mix of groupings. This included firstly, a spread of S4,S5,S6. Secondly, it included a gender spread with some single sex and then some mixed sex groups.

The final criterion was to look at the self-complete questionnaires. In particular, it is envisaged that the media sections will be scrutinised to look for diverse groupings. Should there be missing grouping from one school, Glazier & Strauss suggest a method of constant comparison, and so missing groups will be made up with the other three schools.

Example Notes: Male, S5, state rural

Participant 1
Father estate foreman, mother pharmacist, rent-free in terraced house, one TV only
Only hi-fi, MP3player, mobile in bedroom.
Doesn't believe everything read, likes lots of ents, wants to work hard.
Daily TV, radio, internet and mobile user. Occasional cinema user.
Into the internet; lots of gratifications for use. Not so into mobile phones; lots of 'quite close' reasons.

Participant 2
Father farmer, mother shopkeeper. Live rent free in detached house, three or more Tvs.
TV/vhs/dvd/hifi/telephone/mobile in bedroom.
Daily TV/radio/mobile phone. Internet at least once a week. A
Concerned about health, new trends, how spend money, helping others, happy to stay at home and watch Tv, lots of ents, enjoy adverts, durables, acquaintances, computers important, likes outrageous people, wants to work hard, not abroad.
Again, lots of very strong reasons for using the internet.

Participant 3

Father paper mill worker, mother bar maid. Rent detached house, three or more TVs. Has virtually ever-conceivable media in house. Claims to use all media options daily except radio (including cinema!)

Do not have enough leisure time, buys for comfort, ads intrusive, care about style (contradictions), important to fit in, religion not important, lots of other attitudes ticked strongly … how well filled in??

Very into TV, not really into radio, very into cinema, very into internet. Just ticked exactly for some of the columns. Watch out for how well filled in.

Appendix 11: Friendship consent form

STATE RURAL SCHOOL MEDIA SURVEY

This form asks you whether you would like to be involved in the **third part** of the media survey. This will involve a smaller number of pupils getting together with myself (Ian Grant). I will be looking for five separate groups, each one involving three friends, to take part.

Each group will take part in 2 one-hour discussion sessions, to be held during school hours over the next 4-6 weeks.

For the first session, those selected will be given a disposable camera to take some pictures over the course of one week (at no cost to yourselves). The photos will then form the basis of the first discussion session. The second session will talk more about the internet and mobile phones.

So, if you would like to take part, **please sign and write your name** below.

Signature   First and Surname (block capitals please)

_____   _____

We also need you to nominate **two friends** you would like to take part with you, and **one reserve**. Please write in block capitals with first and surnames to avoid any confusion.

1:      _____

2:      _____

Reserve: _____

Many thanks again for your interest shown.

Appendix 12: Photo diary instructions

WELCOME TO YOUR PHOTO AND MULTI MEDIA PROJECT

This project forms part of a multi media project organised by University of Edinburgh. If you haven't done this sort of project before, don't worry. All the information you need is on this page. Read points 1 to 4 carefully and follow the instructions.

1. Camera

You have been given a camera with 24 shots in it to use for the project. The idea is for you to take photos that will illustrate your lifestyle and a bit about who you are. Take photos of the types of things you do throughout your week. This will be your own photo diary.

2. Bedroom photos

Start by taking some photos of your bedroom. (no more than five or six). Include any pictures, clothes and things you enjoy each corner of your room plus 2 or 3 extra shots to include all the contents.

3. Photo diary editing
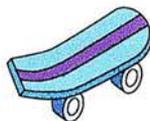
Use the rest of the film to create a photo diary. Form a picture record of who you are by including people, interests and activities in your everyday life. Ask a friend to take some photos so you are included. Take the camera with you when you go out and spread the photos over the course of the week.

4. Processing and

You will be given a local shop in Duns that will process your film free of charge. Mare sure you leave enough time to get the images back. Go through and select **10-12** images that highlight different aspects of your bedroom & lifestyle. Bring photos along for discussion session on date given.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART!

Appendix 13: Qualitative discussion guide(s)

'STATE RURAL' MEDIA PROJECT

INITIAL DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Re-introductions, welcome

- Introductory remarks e.g. *'how did you get on ?'*

- Prompt (if required)...e.g. *'tell me about any problems you experienced then?'*

- Probe about method for selecting images ....

    e.g. *'how did you decide which photos to bring along?'*
    'give me some examples of the kinds of things you left in/left out'

- Make sure that each photo has the person's name on the back (supply marker pen if required)

- Get the group to lay all photos out on a table try to sort them into piles that seem to go together

- Give help only if group is struggling to sort them out themselves (with a few suggestions). Once this 'bonding' task has been completed, ask group to nominate a pile of photos to discuss.

- For each photo in the pile, use the following style of questioning:

    e.g. *'tell me about this picture you have taken'*

- Follow up with:

    e.g. *'tell me anything you feel is important in this picture'*

- Grand tour themes to explore during discussions:

    - favourite/personal possessions
    - things they really enjoyed doing
    - media choices (traditional vs. new)
    - in vs. out of the home (and within home such as bedroom)
    - relationships with peers and family
    - attitudes to technology and electronic items
    - spending patterns
    - underlying beliefs and values
    - pressures of time
    - socialising vs. privacy

- If time allows, return to discussions on media choices and expand on themes picked up.

SECOND DISCUSSION GUIDE

Introductions, reminder of confidentiality. First names for the tape.

To start off, get each participant to think about their favourite kind of media. Ask them to select a **favourite moment** using that media which highlights why they like it so much and tell the group in turn.

Participants are each asked to use their imagination and **sketch out** something on an A4 that illustrates how they **feel about the internet**, both positive and negative. *Allow ten minutes*

Show an unrelated example from a previous project to help hem understand what is required. Emphasise that this requires no great skill in drawing and there are no rules. As few or as many aspects of each can be drawn.

Then ask how they got on with the sketches. Get each participant to talk about what is in the pictures. Initiate with:
> *'Can you tell me what is going on in the picture?'*

Topics to probe through projective technique or supplementary questions:

Internet
- Tell me how you currently use the internet; describe some of those occasions. *(probe for types of activity vs. occasions e.g. chatrooms, searching/buying, e-mailing, designing websites, file sharing, online gaming etc)*
- Tell me about the kinds of things you really like <u>most</u> and <u>least</u> about the internet?
- Do you think about internet differently at home, as opposed to school? – expand.
- What kinds of things frustrate you about the internet? *(use barriers list from questionnaire as prompt)*
- Do you ever use more than one identity on the internet – discuss
- Is the internet a sociable experience - discuss (probe for peer influence)

Moving onto mobile phones …

Mobiles
- Having thought about the internet, how do mobiles differ from other forms of media?
- Do you think of mobile phones as a kind of media?
- Again, what do you like and dislike
- Memorable experiences and frustrations

Relationships with organisations

- Tell me about some of your experiences in dealing with brands/companies over the internet.
- Do you welcome or reject such advances? Explain.
- Companies/brands sometimes refer to this as relationship marketing. How do you feel about companies/brands wanting a relationship over the internet? Positive/negative examples?
- What kinds of things do you <u>like</u> about how companies or brands use the internet to try to attract your attention?....and <u>dislike</u>?
- Do you prefer to find out about companies and brands through the internet or other forms of media we have been discussing? Expand.
- Tell me about other forms of non-conventional advertising media that you have come across?
- How do you feel about the idea of brands targeting you generally?
- What kind of responsibilities (if any) do you think companies/brands have in this respect?
- How could companies/brands improve the way they communicate with people such as yourselves?

If not covered: Experiences of targeting through mobiles?
- Tell me a bit about texting commercial organisations. How often/kinds of occasions.
- How do you feel about companies/brands texting you?
- Have you any experience of companies contacting you though picture format?

General issues to discuss (if not already)
- Degree of perceived honesty/transparency
- Degree of perceived sophistication in companies targeting young people
- Impact on perceived privacy
- Ownership of personal information
- Level of desired interaction
- Anticipated future

Many thanks

Appendix 14 Research Sequence of Main Schools Fieldwork

The following was the designed sequencing for conducting the fieldwork in each school. Inevitably, there was variation from the timings planned but table shows how each phase of the research was planned.

Week	Activity
1	Initial meeting with all participants Presentation of talk and research objectives
1-3	Meeting with teacher to discuss forward planning of research Sending out of parental consent forms Confirmation of all participants with teacher
4	Initial briefing of all participants **Quantitative 1**: Completion of questionnaire in class Handing out of diaries in class
4-6	**Quantitative 2**: Return of lifestyle diaries Initial analysis of questionnaires and diaries (including appropriateness for qualitative phase three Handing out of friendship consent forms (Appendix 11)
6	Confirmation of sample of friendship triads for phase three
7	**Qualitative 1**: Briefing sessions (with each friendship triad) Handing out of cameras and briefing sheet for photo diary (over 7 days)
8	Handing back of cameras and film processing
9	**Qualitative 2**: Photo diary sessions
11-12	**Qualitative 3**: Psycho drawing session
TBA	Presentation of findings (if required)

Appendix 15: Publications

Published Papers

Grant, I. C. 2005, 'Young people's relationships with online marketing practices: An intrusion too far?, *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 21, no. 5, pp. 607-623.

Grant, I. C. 2004, 'Communicating with young people through the eyes of marketing practitioners', *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 20, no. 5-6, pp. 591-606.

Academic Conference and Workshop Papers

Grant, I. C. 2005, 'Young peoples' relationships with online marketing practices: An intrusion too far?', *Academy of Marketing*, July. Awarded best paper in track.

Grant, I. 2005, ' "From individual melodies to collective harmony": Using multiple methods to explore young peoples' internet experiences", *EIASM Workshop on Interpretative Consumer Research*, May.

Grant, I. 2004, 'Methodological considerations when interviewing ICT practitioners", ESRC ICT Workshop, *British Academy of Marketing*, July [Online]. Available http://webdb.ucs.ed.ac.uk/management/research/projects/project_entry3.html

Grant, I. 2004, 'Young peoples' relationships with the internet: the good, the bad and the ugly', *Digital Generations International Conference*, London, July.

Grant, I. C. 2004, 'Communicating with young people through the eyes of marketing practitioners', *Academy of Marketing*, July. Awarded best paper in track.

Grant, I. 2004, 'Uses and gratifications theory in the digital era', paper accepted for *Corporate and Marketing Communications Conference*, April.

Grant, I, 2002, 'Lifestyle and media consumption patterns of young adults in the digital era', *Academy of Marketing* doctoral colloquium, July 2002.