
Media practices of young Australians: Tangible and measurable reflections on a digital divide

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luke gaspard¹, Heather Horst¹, Edgar Gómez Cruz² and Sarah Pink³

¹ Department of Media & Communications, The University of Sydney, AUSTRALIA

² School of the Arts & Media, The University of New South Wales, AUSTRALIA

³ Monash Art, Design and Architecture, Monash University, AUSTRALIA

Abstract: This paper presents findings on the household availability of digital media devices and the uses made of this technology by young people aged 12 to 18 living within the Greater Melbourne area of Australia. Drawing upon questionnaire data from a purposive sample of 860 students frequency analysis of this data indicates three dominant factors shape a young person's media experience: gender, siblings present within the home, and parents' highest level of education¹. Moreover, when examining the types of software programs and the social network services used by young people age emerges as an additional layer to understanding these practices. In order to help contextualise these digital engagements, a comparative analysis with youth in the UK and the USA is undertaken to explore the ongoing validity of previous research claiming Australian youth as being some of the most digitally connected youth in the world.

Keywords: Devices; Digital; Gradation; Software; Youth

¹ Research indicates completed level of education is an important determinant to earning potential – better qualified people have higher incomes (ABS, 2017; OECD, 2019)

Address for Correspondence: luke gaspard, email: luke.gaspard.70@gmail.com

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