

WJEC-3 Syndicate Report, July 5, 2013, Mechelen, Belgium

## **4(b). Young People and the News**

*Meeting summary report by rapporteur Nezih Orhon, Anadolu University, Turkey; syndicate expert/chair and background report author Lynette Steenveld, Rhodes University, South Africa; and team members.\**

Journalism educators representing the continents of Africa, America, Asia and Europe debated the issues in this popular group.

Syndicate chair Lynette Steenveld stated the group's discussion topic as follows: "How journalism education can be used to re-connect young people with the news, based on the assumption that an engagement with news leads to greater civic engagement and thus a deepening of democratic practice. In particular, we are asked to consider how we can best teach future journalists 'to connect with young, new media savvy audiences.'"

The group agreed on nine main points, which follow:

1. Young people need to conduct research and produce news and keep in mind the relationship between the two.
2. Students who cannot learn about the news in person should consider distance learning opportunities.
3. While the social media help young people discuss politics, they don't help them determine whether facts or issues are true or accurately represented.
4. Young people prefer teaching that stresses positive ideas regarding how to solve problems and deal with issues.
5. Game play is important for teaching young people about the news and journalism.
6. Teachers can successfully use sports star and celebrity anecdotes to attract young people to news and to get them involved in its coverage.
7. Teachers need to figure out if trust is an important issue for young people. If so, they can use this connection to reach them.
8. Young people live in their own fragmented world, within social media and social networks.
9. Young people should be encouraged to read books, romance novels, poems and more. There are other worlds to enjoy other than Google.

### ***Recommendations:***

*After its discussions were completed, the group decided on the following nine recommendations for journalism educators worldwide:*

1. Educators need to bridge real life and the social media if they hope to stimulate, attract young people to the news.
2. Look for opportunities to demonstrate diverse opinions among young people. Social media, such as Facebook, could be used to do so.
3. Demonstrate to students the benefit of research and historical knowledge in their work, especially for unique content in terms of process and product.
4. Create an environment of projects and games to enhance pedagogy.
5. Provide distance learning, when possible, for students who cannot easily reach you.
6. Use positive, solution-oriented content to attract and engage young people.
7. Show documentaries when possible to capture students' attention.
8. Use young people's interest in entertainment and sports to create links to other issues and concepts.
9. Help recognize and build identities for fragmented communities, which many young people belong to.

*\*Additional Young People and the News participants: Pamela Tran, University of Alabama, USA; Mary Schaffer, California State University, Northridge, USA; Aaron Mushengyezi, Makerere University, Uganda; Txema Egana, Mondragon University, Spain; Lynn Oeyen, Artevelde University College, Belgium; Mariska Kleemans, Radboud University Nijmegen/Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands; Bartho de Looij, Ede Christian University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands; Piet Kaashoek, Fontys University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands; Samuel Obae, Kilimanjaro Film Institute, Tanzania; Vera Gaikhorst, NHL University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands; Merja Drake, Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, Finland.*