

# Multiple Modalities & New Knowledges

Out-of-School Media Literacy and Learning

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2011 Ethnography in Education Conference

Joslyn S. Young  
Stoneleigh Junior Fellow  
Research for Action  
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# Presentation overview

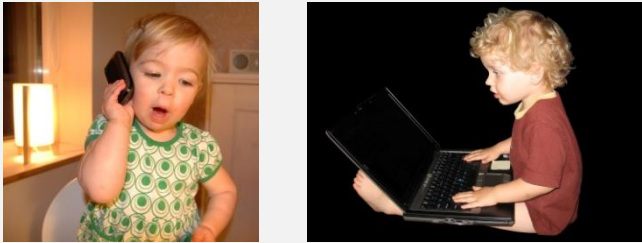


A PSU/On Blast member interviews a striking nurse on a picket line outside Temple Hospital. (J. Brown, 4/10)

- Background
- Research questions
- Methodology
- Preliminary findings
- Further questions

# Background: Changing definitions

•85% of teens communicate electronically



New Communication



•**Media literacy**  
Reading & writing with media

•60% of teens do **not** think of these texts as writing



Traditional Writing



•**Traditional literacy**  
Reading & writing in print

# Research questions

1. How do adolescents learn and master media literacy skills?
2. Why do youth engage in programs that teach these skills?
3. What does this mean for education and educators both in and outside of schools?



2009 VFC participants set up the camera and microphone pole. (J. Young, 7/09)

# Research sites

## Philadelphia Student Union (PSU)

<http://www.phillystudentunion.org>



- Youth organizing
- Empower youth to create change in education
- Emphasis on youth-led
- Focus: Radio production On Blast

## Chester Voices for Change (VFC)

<http://www.chestervfc.wordpress.com>



- I started and ran the program
- Positive youth development
- Community exploration and engagement
- Focus: Film production



# Research methodology

- Qualitative study using participant observation & interviews

## Interpretive research at PSU

- Long-term ( $\approx 7$  months) with deliberate reflection
- Observer > participant



A PSU/On Blast member interviews a student from a suburban school district about school funding inequality. (JJ Tiziou, 3/09, [www.jjtiziou.net](http://www.jjtiziou.net))

## Action research at VFC

- Reflective research while running program for 2<sup>nd</sup> time
- Participant > observer



2010 VFC participants take time to write up character profiles. (J. Young, 10/10)

# Research position: Further questions



One VFC actor prepares for his role while another sets up a camera. (J. Young, 7/09)

1. How do my identities affect relationships and data collection?
  - **Young** adult
  - Community outsider
2. How do my positions within the programs affect the research?
  - Participant vs. observer
  - Mentor vs. researcher

# How do adolescents learn and master media literacy skills?

- Student-centered
- Hands-on
- Experiential
- Apprenticeship Model
  - Model
  - Coach
  - Fade
- PSU: Expert to novice peer instruction



Two On Blast members host a live radio show on WPEB. (J. Morris, 6/10)



# Why do youth engage in programs that teach these skills?

## PSU

- Potential for organizing
- “a natural extension of PSU’s work”
- Media for organizing is the “most direct way to address frustrations I have about my education”

## VFC

- Developing skills and interests
- “It was offering everything I wanted to do.”
- Gain “technical skills...that’ll help me in my career”

- “Raising my voice”
- “Doing something positive”

# What does this mean for education both in and outside of schools?



A PSU member controls the soundboard at a local radio station, WPEB in West Philadelphia. (J. Morris, 8/10)

1. Young people can be engaged and motivated to learn  
**Provide the right context**
2. New literacies must be taught and effectively evaluated for mastery  
**Move beyond testing**
3. Teaching new literacies does not mandate elimination of traditional literacies  
**Build from & support each other**

# What does this mean for educators both in and outside of schools?

1. Integrate and spread support for adolescents

**Collaborate across contexts**

2. Build and maintain respectful relationships with youth

**Value experiences, listen, and support decisions**

3. Provide opportunities for youth to raise their voices

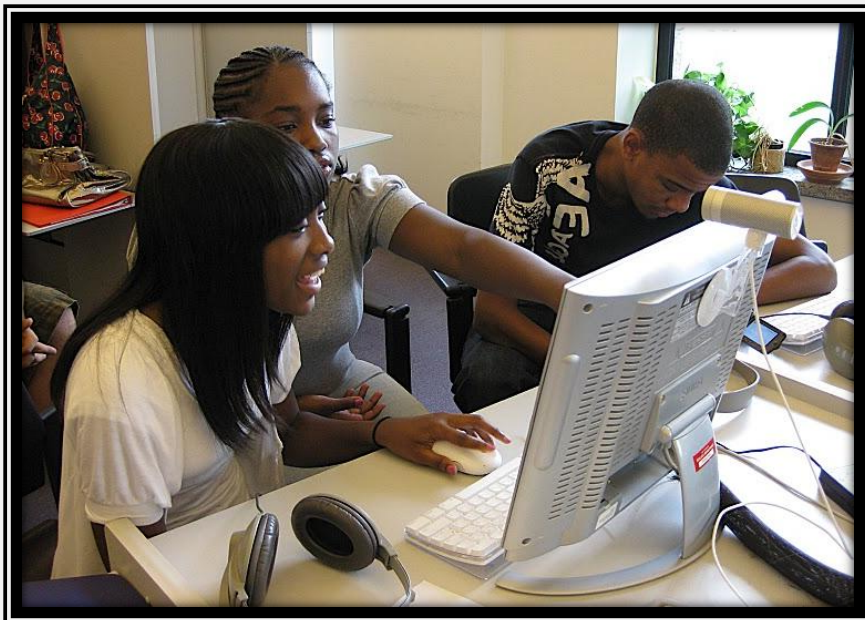
**Build confidence and mentor through active listening**



2009 VFC participants check the sound before filming. (J. Young, 7/09)



# Further Questions



2009 VFC participants collaborate on editing their movie.  
(J. Young, 7/09)



PSU members brought together youth from across the city for a nonviolent flash mob as part of the Campaign for Nonviolent Schools. (M. Velis, 4/10)

- What happens when schools use new literacies in classrooms?

- How can schools and out-of-school programs work together?



RESEARCH for ACTION

# Joslyn Young Stoneleigh Junior Fellow Research for Action

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[jyoung@researchforaction.org](mailto:jyoung@researchforaction.org)

3701 Chestnut Street

Philadelphia, PA 19104

(215) 823-2500 ext. 519

<http://www.researchforaction.org>

**Philadelphia Student Union  
(PSU)**

<http://www.phillystudentunion.org>



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**Stoneleigh Foundation**

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