

dealing with digital inequality: rethinking young people, technology and social inclusion

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challenging current thinking over young people and digital inclusion

- young people are naturally aligned to new technologies
- ICT use is an inevitably empowering activity for young people
- ICTs can prompt new patterns and types of behaviour amongst young people
- young people who are currently deemed to be digitally excluded will necessarily benefit from ICT use

so where now? towards a new digital inclusion agenda

- social problems require social solutions
- meaningful change in young people's behaviour derives from genuinely 'bottom-up' activity
- the state and other bodies should adopt more facilitative and supportive roles in addressing digital inclusion
 - commercial interests must play a wider role in addressing digital inclusion

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“ these [young people] say that they feel they are ‘falling behind with their futures’ and ‘falling behind society’; they say that computers might help them ‘catch up’, but it is probably too late. Indeed, if the future has passed them by, as they perceive it to have done, then it might already be too late for catching up. Equally intriguing – if more disturbing – is [the young people’s] impression that they have fallen behind society, that they are somehow outside of society” (Monahan 2005, p.156)

“no amount of digital interactivity with thirteen to twenty-three year olds is likely to change the fact that the current establishment is devoid of a vision for the future that can appeal to either young or old” (Earle 2005, p.2)

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