

dren actually do online and the meaning it carries for them. In her doctoral thesis, Terhi Tuukkanen explores children's use of online environments from the viewpoint of participation and the children's own experience in order to develop a theoretical framework for children's online participation. With her thesis, she increases our understanding of Finnish children's online lives and participates in a broader debate on the internet's meaning in everyday life. The volume includes an introductory section and four published articles, leading up to four main conclusions. Every article is based on its own data, consisting mainly of interviews, but also a survey dataset and analysis of children's online discussions.

are a part of FCP.

Focusing on virtual worlds, the second article is based on a survey sample of 126 respondents (mostly aged 11–15). It was found that in virtual worlds, children are mostly interested in socializing with friends and creating or updating their virtual personas or avatars. Virtual worlds do not seem to be primary places for children to express their opinions and have an influence on something.

Continuing her discussion of virtual worlds, in the third article, Tuukkanen interviews 21 children (aged 11–15). The interviews revealed seven online participation types: playing, creating virtual personas, social interaction, commercial activities, expressing oneself, community activities and organizational activities. Tuukkanen also found that in virtual worlds children feel they have a freedom to do things they wouldn't be able to in "real" life. However, this also leads to misbehaviour.

Finally, the fourth article is based on interviews of 13 children (aged 11–13), seven parents and seven teachers. Tuukkanen found that online environments create opportunities for children, such as learning, socialization, sense of community and empowerment. However, they also contain risks, such as an-

Children's Online Lives

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Spending time online has become a normal part of children's daily lives. New virtual environments are emerging constantly, making it difficult to fully understand what chil-

The first article is based on a sample of 61 members (children aged 10–13) of the Finnish Children's Parliament (FCP), and more precisely, their 566 postings on the FCP discussion forum. Tuukkanen found that they deal with both everyday issues and global matters. The children did not talk about issues regarding home or family life, but instead had a more general take on things – which may be expected, considering the context. As the author herself states, there is also a difference between Finnish children as a population and the ones who

tisocial behaviour and threats to safety. The main conclusion of the article is that children and adults mostly agree about online risks and opportunities. The differences that did come up concerned the role of online environments in the future and in school, but also online bullying.

With her thesis, Tuukkanen has contributed to knowledge about children's online lives, especially in the Finnish case. By developing a framework for children's online participation, she also brings about conceptual contributions. Even though her main interest is on children's participation online, she does not only describe their behaviour, but examines it in a broader context. Parents' and teachers' viewpoints are valuable too, even though the adults' interviews were so few in number that they were dealt with almost as side notes. The generation gap and its effects on children's and adults' perspectives are also well addressed in the volume.

Through her thesis, Tuukkanen examines children's agency and discusses the problems of studying children through a polarizing analytical lens: either as active participants or as passive victims. Rather, it should be understood that children also play and socialize online in an everyday fashion, reminding us of

the proverb "play is the work of the child". Nevertheless, playful online activity can act as a way to increase children's societal participation. In Tuukkanen's view, if virtual spaces are utilized accordingly, they have "the potential to serve a place for children to fulfill their child-sized citizenship".

While the articles work well as separate publications, it is more difficult to trace a coherent argument for the whole thesis. Moreover, the author's main focus is on children's own viewpoints and experiences, but the children chosen to participate in the research do not form a consistent group. They comprise a broad scope in terms of age (10–15 years), but also different social contexts. With respect to this, we would have wished to see comparisons between age groups.

One of the most fascinating outcomes of the thesis is that while children are aware of the importance of keeping their personal information safe online, they also emphasize the freedom to do whatever they want in virtual worlds. As an unsettling result, children talked about problems that adults did not address, especially online bullying. Such problems show that even though children know how to operate online, they do need adults' advice and support

on how to deal with some of the issues they encounter. However, the impacts of the generation gap leave us pondering about the difficulties adults may have in truly understanding what actually happens in children's online environments.

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