

new technologies in global societies

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*Practices in the Use of ICTs, Political Attitudes Among Youth, and the Italian Media System**

**Leopoldina Fortunati and
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Rationale

The interest of the survey presented here and the most important results obtained reside in the original research question to which we attempted to respond. What is the influence of the mainstream media (Meyrowitz 2004) on the opinion of young people in the Italy of the year 2002? It should be noted that there is an extraordinary concentration of media power in the hands of Silvio Berlusconi, who as President of the Council of Ministers has virtual control over RAI (the public TV channels) and, as an entrepreneur, possesses, through his family, a media empire made up of Mediaset (the second national TV pole), large publishing houses like Mondadori, dailies, weeklies, publicity agencies and so forth.

That the media have a certain amount of power to condition and orient public opinion (cf., for example, Noelle-Neumann 1984, 1991; Kourvetaris 1997; Bagdikian 2000; Neuwirth and Frederick 2004) is just common sense, even if this is felt intuitively much more than it is scientifically demonstrated. In fact, both the quantity and the modes of expression of this power, and above all its effects, are difficult to measure. The classic question "Can the media create and modify people's opinions, attitudes, and behavior?" is destined even in the most recent literature to remain unanswered for two reasons: the wide range

*The article has been discussed and revised by the two authors. Leopoldina Fortunati wrote pages 125 to 143, Raimondo Strassoldo wrote pages 144 to 152.

of variables involved (Braga 1992¹; McQuail 1992) and the methodologic limits that still afflict us today.

Furthermore, to make this ground even more difficult to explore is the fact that many forms of media (for instance, TV) are still relatively young so the effects of their long-term consumption are impossible to gauge (Clayman 1994). But apart from this, there is also another limit to consider, which is the lack of longitudinal research, which is the only kind that can properly highlight the changes that have occurred during a determined period of time, are quite rare owing to the high costs involved. A similar situation, but even more restrictive, could be described for the computer.

However it must immediately be said that the difficulties that exist in measuring these effects, and therefore the partiality of the studies conducted so far, should not lead us to the conclusion that these effects do not exist or that they are not particularly relevant (Herman and Chomsky 1988; Poppo 1994; Condry 1994; Derrida and Stiegler 1996; Bourdieu 1997; Couldry and Curran 2003). This conclusion, not difficult to find in the literature, leads to a serious logical flaw. It would be more correct to say, as Losito wrote in his book *Il potere dei media* (1994) (*The Power of the Media*), that the influence of mass communications on the public is actually mediated by such a high number of individual and social factors that it is impossible to check them all (always admitting that it is possible to describe them all).

In order to increase our understanding of this phenomenon, there have appeared over the years a series of analyses and theories, more or less properly conducted, that have attempted to explain this or that aspect of the problem (Chomsky 1994; De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach 1995). But none of them have been able to give a suitable answer to the question asked a few lines above. The point is that it is not that these theories are particularly weak, but that the question implies an answer that is so difficult and complex that it still remains unanswered. The influence of the media is mediated by the kind of use that is made of them, by the purpose for which they are used, by the context in which they are used, and by the gender, generation, class, educational and cultural typology of the audience, their styles of life, the personality of the users and so on (Silverstone 1994; Moores 1993). But even if we take this framework

¹Braga (1992) stressed the variables connected to the "importance of the source," "contents of the message," and "audience predisposition." He also gave a survey of the variables connected with the overall mechanisms of the communicative process, such as "selective exposition, perception and memorization" and lastly the "intermediate factors" that can support or contrast with the formation of opinions.

for granted, the Italian situation is so peculiar because of the unusual concentration of media power in the hands of one person (the Premier) that we wondered — and this is our real research question — if by chance this particularly paroxysmal situation of media power was able to add anything new and significant to the same old question of the influence of the media and their role in democracy (McQuail 1992; Thompson 1995).

Aim, Sample, and Methods

Our first step was to reconstruct the use of the media as a background. Our focus was, on the one hand, to investigate the use and quantity of use of ICTs, such as TVs, computers, and other classic cultural instruments, such as books and magazines, among young people; and, on the other, the diffusion of modes of communicative sociality, also verifying if and in what terms practices in the use of ICTs correlate with practices in communicative sociality.

Our second step was to examine what views these young people have on certain socio-political issues on the agenda discussed by the mass media over these years, such as on one's own country (Anderson 1983; Pertierra 2004), peace, war, terrorism (Baudrillard 2002), and their judgment of the events of Genoa, to try to understand the most important dimensions of their attitudes on these crucial issues. The third step was to explore if and how young people's attitudes towards all of these issues correlate with their practices in use of ICTs and their modes of communicative sociality. This step is particularly important to answer the research question set forth in the rationale, that is, if the existence

²Here are more figures relating to the sample: 45.8% were made up of young people between the ages of 18 and 21, and 54.2% between the ages of 22 and 25; 34.7% are students, 14% are working students, 10% are unemployed, 30.4% are full-time workers and 5.3% temporary workers. As for education, 19.6% had little education (only primary), 9.4% a medium level (lower secondary), and 63.6% a high level (high school and university) (7.4% gave no answer). With regard to geographical area, 23.5% lived in the northwest, 16.5% in the northeast, 17.7% in the center, 28.9% in the south, and 13.3% on the islands (Sicily and Sardinia). As to the size of their hometowns, 33.3% lived in towns of up to 10,000 inhabitants, 22.4% in towns of from 10 to 30,000 inhabitants, 21.7% in towns of from 30 to 100,000 inhabitants and 22.6% in towns of over 100,000 inhabitants. As Clemente Lanzetti pointed out in his paper on the methodological aspects of this research (2002), "a status index has been constructed to analyze the distribution of subjects on a social scale and to see if there are significant differences in the replies of the interviewees due to their different positions on the scale itself. The index in this case served to synthesize various items of information, and give each person a score. The variables used for this operation were six and regard the professional qualifications and the level of schooling of the father, the mother and the interviewee. In drawing up the list of professions Max Weber's three components for status were referred to: power, prestige and economic aspect." The status index was divided in the categories of low, medium, and high.

of a "media regime" controlled by Premier Berlusconi, the so-called "Italian anomaly," has a strong conditioning effect on the public opinion of young people.

Our analysis is based on a representative sample of Italian youth (1,500 respondents aged 18 to 25 years, comprised of 764 males and 736 females; margin of error: 2.5%), interviewed by means of a questionnaire administered face to face in June 2002 (Strassoldo 2005).² The data were analyzed by means of descriptive techniques (frequency analysis) and the construction of contingency tables created by crossing observed variables with socio-demographic variables such as gender, age, education, activity, status, geographical area, size of hometown, and others such as political orientation and the dimension of religion. An inferential analysis was conducted by means of an χ^2 test. When the statistics of the χ^2 were significant, the analysis was developed by means of an examination of bi-varied log-linear models (Corbetta 1992). The purpose was to discover the associations between variable modalities that are at the root of the significance of the relation shown by the χ^2 .³ In some cases, t-test and models of one-way variance analysis were used. A factor analysis was applied to the opinions expressed by the 1,500 respondents on the main political issues that were taken into account. The exception was for the clashes in Genoa, which took place in July 2002 when thousands of people demonstrated against the policies expressed by the leaders of the countries belonging to G8. In this case, the study of the structure of relations between the responses obtained with socio-demographic variables and others such as political orientation and the religious dimension was again based on an analysis of bi-varied log-linear models.

The strong point of this research was the accuracy with which the sample was constructed, which made it possible to generalize the data to the Italian youth population aged between 18 and 25. The weak points were that of electronic media, since only TV and the computer were analyzed; and of printed media, where only books and popular magazines were examined. Other important media such as the radio, dailies, and so on, were excluded.

³In presenting the results, we will limit ourselves to referring to the significant points of the interaction between the two variables considered one at a time, and the standard values (points z) relative to the single cells to which a significant association parameter corresponds. In the text we have given in a note the z values with the indication of the significance level. An asterisk indicates a level of $p < 0.05$, two asterisks a level of $p < 0.01$, and three asterisks a level of $p < 0.0001$. We shall only give the figures that refer to the tables of intersections for which the Chi quadro test has given a significant relation.

However, this study is part of an ongoing line of research (Livolsi 1992; Fortunati 1998).

Results

Practices in the Use of TV Among Italian Young People

Almost the whole sample watches TV every day. They are subdivided roughly in the following way: one third watch TV for one hour (low consumption), one third from one to two hours (medium consumption), and the remaining third watch more than two hours (high consumption). The amount of time spent by young people in watching TV during workdays and holidays does not differ statistically (Table 1). Young people's TV consumption is therefore conditioned by various factors.

On the whole, while on holidays there is no gender difference, on workdays women watch more TV than men.⁴ But the only specific difference that emerges is that during workdays more women than men of this age (67% vs. 60.6%) watch TV for more than one hour.⁵ TV consumption during workdays is also influenced by activity, in the sense that students rank first among the young in having a TV consumption that is both medium (34.1%) and high (37.9%). More than half of the unemployed also reported having a high consumption of TV. On the other hand, swelling the number of non-viewers

Table 1. Hours of TV Viewing

Hours	Workdays	Holidays
Up to 1 hour	499 (33.3%)	456 (30.4%)
From 1 to 2	450 (30.0%)	404 (26.9%)
More than 2	500 (33.3%)	538 (35.9%)
No TV	49 (3.3%)	99 (6.6%)
No answer	2 (0.1%)	3 (0.2%)
Total	1500	1500

⁴M = 4.07 versus 3.80; $t_{(1496)} = -3.59$, $p < 0.001$.

⁵The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations between TV use and gender $\chi^2_{(2)} = 8.61$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.91^{**}$, activity $\chi^2_{(12)} = 62.51$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 3.55^{**}$; $z = 2.17^{*}$; $z = 2.04^{*}$ e $z = 3.59^{***}$, TV use during workdays and geographical area $\chi^2_{(12)} = 31.23$, $p < 0.0002$, $z = 2.42^{**}$ e $z = 2.56^{**}$, on holidays $\chi^2_{(12)} = 29.09$, $p < 0.004$, $z = 2.88^{**}$ e $z = 2.12^{**}$, TV use during workdays and status $\chi^2_{(6)} = 16.21$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.82^{**}$, and TV use on holidays and status: $\chi^2_{(6)} = 14.00$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.06^{*}$ e $z = 2.52^{**}$.

is in proportion the number of temporary workers. It would seem that students and the unemployed have more time to dedicate to TV, so that a high consumption of TV seems to indicate a workday that is relatively stable or organized.

On TV consumption during workdays, geographical area also has quite an expected (it must be expected because this data confirm many other research data) influence. Among the respondents who indicated that their TV consumption is low, the highest percentage is concentrated in the Northwest (28.3% vs. 18.4% in the Northeast, 15.4% in the Center, 26.9% the South, and 11% the Islands), which is an area notable for the presence of large industries. Among the inhabitants of the islands (Sicily and Sardinia) the most widespread practice (40.7% of the local respondents) is quite a high level of TV consumption. The islands are also confirmed as an area of high TV consumption on holidays. In this they are joined by the south. Both are areas that are economically and industrially underdeveloped. Lastly, the amount of time spent in front of the TV screen depends on social status. From this research, not surprisingly, it emerges that for those with a low social status the most widespread practice both on workdays (40.8%) and holidays (41.1%) is to spend two hours or more in front of the TV every day. The unexpected fact is that on holidays, among those whose TV consumption is average, more than half are youth of high status. This reveals a picture of Sunday home life that is quite homely and sedentary even for young people from a background of strong cultural, social, and economic possibilities. In general, however, TV is a particularly lively resource in areas where a low income is associated with situations of social exclusion or geographical and/or cultural isolation. Neither age, education, nor size of hometown seem to condition TV use.

Obviously, what is important is not only the amount of the TV consumption, but also the contents to which young people are exposed. This is because the media go to create a doubling of reality, as shown by Luhmann (1996) and Baudrillard (1999). With regard to TV contents, the results illustrated in Table 2 show that young people essentially watch films, TV news (cf. Calabrese and Volli 1995), and sports. It is interesting to observe that more than half of young people do not follow information on TV at all (in part because, as we shall see later, they look for information on the internet; Magrini 2002). As for TV programs, young people's preferences are influenced by several factors, as we shall see below.

Starting from gender, we find that there is no gender difference as to TV news, documentaries, talk shows (Minnini and Ghiglione 1995), cartoons, and televideo. On the contrary, in general, men of this age watch much more

Table 2. TV Programs Chosen by Young People

Programs	First choice	2nd choice	No choice
Films	617 (41.1%)	344 (22.9%)	516 (34.4%)
TV News	329 (21.9%)	254 (16.9%)	894 (59.6%)
Sports	222 (14.8%)	202 (13.5%)	1053 (70.2%)
Fiction	76 (5.1%)	127 (8.5%)	1274 (84.9%)
Documentaries	76 (5.1%)	125 (8.3%)	1276 (85.1%)
Talk shows	49 (3.3%)	77 (5.1%)	1351 (90.1%)
Cartoons	39 (2.6%)	75 (5.0%)	1363 (90.9%)
Variety shows	34 (2.3%)	129 (8.6%)	1314 (87.6%)
Teletext	23 (1.5%)	44 (2.9%)	1410 (94.0%)
Quiz	19 (1.3%)	87 (5.8%)	1371 (91.4%)

This question was not answered by 23 respondents

sports than women, both as a first and second choice (26.9% vs. 2.9% and 22.1% vs. 5.1%). Women are more sensitive to narrative: in fact they watch, more than men, films as first choice (50.3% vs. 33.5%) and fiction as a first and second choice (8.5% vs. 1.9% and 14.5% vs. 2.8%). Again, there are more women among the audience that follows variety shows as a second choice (12.1% vs. 5.5%) and in general quizzes (9.2% vs. 5.2%).⁶ This means that in TV consumption the difference in gender is not the result of a different interest on the part of men and women with regard to the informative function of TV, but relates to different preferences for the various entertainment programs. By articulating the analysis of TV programs with respect to other structural variables, it emerges that with regard to films (the type of program

⁶The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between gender and watching sports $\chi^2_{(2)} = 336.06$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 7.22^{***}$, $z = 3.01^{**}$ and $z = 15.31^{***}$; films $\chi^2_{(2)} = 46.78$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 4.80^{***}$ and $z = 6.21^{***}$; TV films $\chi^2_{(2)} = 111.30$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 9.02^{***}$, $z = 2.47^{**}$ and $z = 3.54^{***}$; variety $\chi^2_{(2)} = 21.95$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 3.24^{***}$ and $z = 2.49^{**}$; quizzes $\chi^2_{(2)} = 9.61$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 2.76^{**}$; between TV news and age $\chi^2_{(2)} = 15.44$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 2.77^{**}$ and $z = 3.49^{***}$; political leaning $\chi^2_{(6)} = 27.56$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 2.24^*$; $z = 2.06^*$ and $z = 2.46^{**}$, between talk shows and education $\chi^2_{(4)} = 14.68$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 2.47^{**}$; $z = 2.36^{**}$, political leaning $\chi^2_{(6)} = 17.60$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 3.25^{***}$, between gender/age and film $\chi^2_{(6)} = 50.70$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 4.86^{***}$; $z = 2.39^{**}$ $z = 2.11^*$ and 3.66^{***} , TV films $\chi^2_{(6)} = 115.77$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 4.42^{***}$; $z = 4.02^{***}$ and $z = 2.36^{**}$, $z = 2.62^{**}$ and $z = 2.26^*$, variety shows $\chi^2_{(6)} = 23.10$, $p < 0.0009$, $z = -2.80^{**}$, sport $\chi^2_{(2)} = 6.94$, $p < 0.05$, between education and sports $\chi^2_{(4)} = 12.74$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.03^*$; $z = 2.53^{**}$, cartoons $\chi^2_{(4)} = 13.03$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.28^*$, between information use of TV and gender/age $\chi^2_{(3)} = 13.80$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 2.57^{**}$ and $z = 2.32^*$, political leaning $\chi^2_{(3)} = 11.04$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 3.05^{**}$, and computer use $\chi^2_{(2)} = 16.55$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 2.95^{**}$ and $z = 3.82^{***}$.

overwhelmingly the most followed by young people), the girls of both age groups give them as their favourite programs more than do the boys (29% and 30.5% vs. 19.8% and 20.7%). The situation is similar for TV films (Liebes and Katz 1988), even if they are followed much less by our respondents (only 13.6% give them as their first or second choice). Women make up 82.5% of their audience: in particular, girls of both age groups are an overwhelming majority among the few respondents (76 in all), who give it as first choice, while above all the more grown-up girls (42.5%) give it as second choice.

As for news (which however, it must be remembered, is seen only by 38.8% of the respondents), it is the young people from 23 to 26 that give it in most cases (26.1%) as a first choice, as opposed to the younger ones from 19 to 22 (17.7%) of whom 64.7% do not watch it at all, despite the increase in the narrative quality of the news (Bird and Dardenne 1988). Still on the subject of news, those of different political leanings also have a different interest in the news.⁷ In fact, 68.8% of young people who are centrists and 66.8% who are apolitical (and they are the highest percentages) never follow TV news. Among those who give it as a second choice there are proportionally more young people of the right (20.7%). With regard to TV debates (watched only by 8.4% of young people), one variable that is important is education: the vast majority of those who have a low level of education express a total disinterest in talk shows, while among the few that give them as their favourite programs more than half have a medium level of education. To complete the picture, we add that almost all of the young people who are uninterested in politics avoid it completely.

By putting together preferences for TV news, teletext (consulted only by 4.4% of respondents), documentaries (followed by 13.4%), and debates (8.4%), with the aim of determining the overall use of TV for obtaining news, the picture so far described is reconfirmed. The use of TV to obtain information is much higher among the more grown-up young people, both males (30.6%) and females (30.4%), than with the younger ones from 18 to 21 years of age (respectively 20.6% and 18.3%). This means that TV information has little meaning below a certain age (22 years). In fact it is more functional to the world of work, family and social responsibilities, and civil society, while the

⁷These are the frequency figures for political leaning and the importance of the religious dimension among respondents. It emerged that 27.1% are left-wing and 27.7% are right-wing; only 7.4% are centrists, while the highest percentage (37.2%) is made up of those who are not interested in politics. As for the religious dimension, 7.5% consider it fundamental to their lives, 24.2% important, 33.4% quite important, 23.9% not very important, and 10.4% irrelevant.

world in which adolescents and young people live tends to concentrate rather in a more familial and local sphere. They are still at that stage in which they have to learn and reinforce their secondary socialization in environments that are strongly rooted in the surrounding territory, such as school, the district, etc. As for politics, an analysis of the use of TV for information reinforces what was said before, that three quarters of those who do not like politics never use TV for that purpose. By examining, on the other hand, how the use of the various media is mixed and combined by young people, we observe that among those who use TV for information the highest percentage (38.5%) is constituted of young people who usually make great use of the computer, while 71.3% of those who make little use of it, but whose use is aimed at obtaining news and information, do not use the TV at all for this purpose. So there is a consistent percentage of young people who just have a quick look at information on the internet, while another segment uses both means of communication intensively in a synergistic manner, probably to extract the best from both modalities.

Variety shows, on the other hand, clearly have little attraction for young people (they are watched by only about 10.9% of the respondents), but are rejected even more by girls between the ages of 18 and 21, most likely because of the stereotyped image of the women depicted in such shows. With respect to sports (seen in general, remember, by less than one third of the respondents) it emerges that three quarters of the youngest respondents never watch sports programs on TV (probably because they are more involved in playing the sports directly), while one third of the older young people cite them as their first or second choice of program. It is interesting to observe that those with a medium level of education make up about one-fifth (but this is the highest percentage) of those who state that sports are their favorite program, while three quarters of the more educated respondents do not give sports programs as their first choice. Lastly, it is again the education variable that distinguishes the behavior of the respondents with respect to cartoons: the less educated are in proportion the most numerous (8.3%) among the few that give them as their second most favorite type of program. Therefore, TV sports and cartoons are reconfirmed as the programs that manage to entertain young people of culturally lower levels.

Practices of Computer Use in Italy

In Italy 71.6% of young people between the ages of 18 and 25 use a computer. For the first time, there is no significant gender difference in computer use

(cf. Fortunati 1998, but also at a European level, Mante-Meijer *et al.* 2001). This means that among young people 18–25 years of age the gender divide for this instrument has disappeared. Neither is there any difference in the use of this technology between the younger (19–22) and older (23–26) respondents. Many other factors, on the other hand, continue to differentiate the use of this instrument. For example, different degrees of education mean significant differences in practices of use: young people with a high level of education use the computer more than others (80.4% vs. 46.3% and 58.9%).⁸ Status is another variable that can differentiate computer use: over half of those with a low level of education do not use it, while 87.7% of those with a high level do. In computer use, the size of one's hometown also has a significant influence: it is in towns with over 100,000 inhabitants that the percentage of young people who use the computer is higher (78.7%), while it is lower in towns of from 30,000 to 100,000 inhabitants. With regard to specific parts of the country (Nielsen distinguished the following areas: Northeast, Northwest, Centre, South, Islands), it emerges that the area where the computer is used significantly less by young people between the ages of 18 and 25 is the South (63.4%), and where it is used most is Central Italy (77.4%). In the end, political leanings also affect computer use, in the sense that more than three quarters of left- and right-wing youth use the computer, while more than a third of young people not interested in politics do not. To conclude, the factors that seem to influence the persistence of the digital divide are, apart from social, cultural, and political and economic ones, also those connected with the different development of urban infrastructure.

There are several reasons why the computer is used by young people in Italy between the ages of 18 and 25: play, study, search for news, work, and as pastime (Table 3). What is noticeable is that, while the number of young people who use the computer for play or to search for news decreases in relation to the length of time dedicated to these activities, the study has, on the contrary, a positive progression. But of all of the reasons, let us isolate for reasons of space, the data concerning the use of the computer to search for news. As can be seen from Table 3, almost three quarters of the young people who use the computer use it also or only for the purpose of obtaining information.

⁸The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between computer use and education $\chi^2_{(3)} = 135.18$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 7.68^{***}$, $z = 2.62^{**}$, $z = 6.80^{***}$; status $\chi^2_{(3)} = 137.42$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 11.03^{***}$, $z = 8.88^{***}$; size of hometown $\chi^2_{(3)} = 12.40$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 2.11^*$ and $z = 3.28^{***}$, and geographical area $\chi^2_{(4)} = 25.12$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 1.98^*$ and $z = 4.30^{***}$.

Table 3. Computer Use

Duration of use	Play	Study	News	Work	Pastime
Never	429 (40.7%)	330 (31.2%)	302 (28.7%)	499 (48.2%)	175 (16.5%)
Less than one hour	336 (31.8%)	196 (18.6%)	429 (40.7%)	115 (11.1%)	338 (31.9%)
One hour	182 (17.2%)	196 (18.6%)	214 (20.3%)	94 (9.1%)	284 (26.8%)
More than one hour	108 (10.2%)	334 (31.6%)	108 (10.2%)	326 (31.5%)	263 (24.6%)
Total	1055	1056	1053	1034	1060

The number of people using the computer drops in inverse proportion to the time dedicated to looking for news on the internet. So there is light use of the computer as a source of information. The intersection with the structural variables tells us that the map on this specific use is quite articulated: almost half of the young women (19–22) — and it is the highest percentage — are concentrated in medium use category (one hour a day).⁹ The unemployed and 40.7% of the young people from the South instead, in greater proportion than other groups, declare heavy use (from one hour upwards), even if it must be pointed out that more than half of the young people who make great use of the computer are of medium status. As for the specific use of the computer for the purpose of obtaining information, it is not used in this way by one third of the respondents from hometowns of under 10,000 inhabitants. To this must be added more than one third of the young people with little education or low status. Our reading of the data suggests that the computer can constitute an important source of information for young people in search of employment or who are trying to shake off geographical and/or cultural isolation, as long as they have at least some strong resources from their family background.

By crossing the use of the computer with the TV, where in both cases the purpose is to seek news, it turns out that more than one third of the young people who make regular use of the computer for information have the habit of also using the TV for that purpose, while almost half of those who do not use the TV for information are light users of the computer as a means of obtaining information. So apart from the hard core of young people who

⁹The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between computer use for news and gender/age $\chi^2_{(6)} = 14.48$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.15^*$, education $\chi^2_{(6)} = 16.78$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.19^*$ activity $\chi^2_{(8)} = 16.06$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.25^*$, size of hometown $\chi^2_{(6)} = 14.10$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.36^{**}$, status $\chi^2_{(4)} = 11.29$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.73^{**}$, $z = 2.20^*$, geographical area $\chi^2_{(8)} = 25.01$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 4.01^{***}$, political leaning $\chi^2_{(3)} = 32.61$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 2.56^{**}$, $z = 2.37^{**}$, $z = 4.50^{***}$, and TV use for news $\chi^2_{(2)} = 16.55$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 3.82^{***}$, $z = 2.95^{**}$.

want to be informed and also check information in various ways, many more young people have shifted to the internet, which they are using as a source of obtaining information rapidly.

Practices of Reading Books and Magazines and Listening to Music

Listening to music is the most widespread behavior among young people, as is reported in Table 4. Three quarters of respondents do so often, while a significant percentage indicated that they read books and magazines sometimes (44.2% for books and 49.5% for magazines). Music seems to have found a new energy in the new technologies and has expanded in an extremely transversal way among the young, showing once again that it is the most universal language that exists.

By crossing these three variables with socio-demographic variables, media behavior variables, and attitudes, an interesting map emerges of the media-consumption behavior of young people. By starting with the listening to music, it turns out that 81.7% of those who live in urban centers dedicate themselves to this activity often, while half of those who never listen to music (24 respondents in all) live in hometowns that do not have more than 10,000 inhabitants.¹⁰ As to status, the great majority of those of high status listen to music regularly, while the highest percentage of those who never listen to music (6%) are of low status. Political attitudes can also condition the listening of music: the majority of those who are left-wing declared that they listen to music often, while nearly half of those who listen to it only sometimes stated that they are not interested in politics. To conclude, listening to

Table 4. Book and Magazine Reading and Music Listening among Young People

Programs	Books	Magazines	Music
Never	293 (19.5%)	499 (33.3%)	47 (3.1%)
Sometimes	663 (44.2%)	743 (49.5%)	311 (20.7%)
Often	537 (35.8%)	246 (16.4%)	1135 (75.7%)
No answer	7 (0.5%)	12 (0.8%)	7 (0.5%)
Total	1493	1488	1493

¹⁰The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between listening to music and hometown $\chi^2_{(6)} = 13.10$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.39^{**}$; $z = 2.43^{**}$, status $\chi^2_{(4)} = 14.73$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 2.90^{**}$; $z = 2.42^{**}$, and political leaning $\chi^2_{(6)} = 17.54$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 2.03^*$; $z = 2.79^{**}$.

music is an extraordinarily widespread activity among young people and the few who do not listen to it show signs of their social isolation in the fact that they, more than others, are from small hometowns, have low status, and are quite indifferent to politics.

But how is the activity of reading resisting the advance of the electronic media? In Italy, which is a country that is less keen on reading than other industrially advanced European countries, how much do the young people read? Half of the young people in Italy are still students and so, as a matter of course, can be expected to be more involved in reading (ISTAT 1998; Fortunati and Manganelli 1998). From an examination of reading, it emerges that among the non-readers, three quarters are men, while 64.2% of keen readers are women.¹¹ In particular, more than one third of the younger male respondents and almost a third of the less young ones never read books. On the contrary, nearly half the women from the age of 23 to 26 years read a book once every now and then, while the other half, accompanied by 42.4% of the younger ones, dedicate themselves to reading often. This research therefore confirms a fact that is already well-known, which is that reading is an activity engaged in by women more than by men. But if we continue with the analysis of the other structural variables, we discover that education, activity, status, and size of hometown also weigh on the propensity to read. Almost half of those who never touch a book are not very well educated, while the majority of those who read with regularity have a high level of education. It is, however, interesting to observe that in Italy more than one third of those with a medium level of education never read books, showing that the phenomenon of a return to illiteracy might also affect those levels of the population that have a medium level of education. Among the non-readers we find in the first place full-time workers (46.2%) (followed at a distance by temporary workers and the unemployed), while it is students, also those who work, who in almost half of the cases are frequent readers of books. Also a small hometown is associated

¹¹The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between reading books and gender $\chi^2_{(2)} = 128.32$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 9.46^{***}$; $z = 10.04^{***}$, gender/age $\chi^2_{(6)} = 133.84$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 6.73^{***}$; $z = 6.02^{***}$, $z = 2.19^*$, $z = 4.09^{***}$ and $z = 7.38^{***}$, education $\chi^2_{(6)} = 191.62$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 8.10^{***}$; $z = 4.24^{***}$, $z = 7.54^{***}$, activity $\chi^2_{(8)} = 145.38$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 4.92^{***}$; $z = 2.60^{**}$, $z = 4.34^{***}$ and $z = 7.48^{***}$, size of hometown $\chi^2_{(6)} = 31.53$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 3.36^{***}$; $z = 2.50^{**}$, $z = 2.33^{**}$ and $z = 3.56^{***}$, status $\chi^2_{(4)} = 137.02$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 9.71^{***}$; $z = 9.28^{***}$, TV use for news $\chi^2_{(2)} = 21.50$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 3.08^{**}$; $z = 4.61^{***}$, computer use for news $\chi^2_{(4)} = 37.59$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 5.84^{***}$; $z = 2.20^*$, $z = 2.71^{**}$ and $z = 2.23^*$, and political leaning $\chi^2_{(6)} = 50.98$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 4.92^{***}$; $z = 3.15^{***}$, $z = 3.90^{***}$.

with a low propensity to read: 41% and more than a quarter of non-readers are from hometowns with up to 10,000 or 30,000 inhabitants, respectively. By contrast, of those from larger hometowns (over 100,000 inhabitants) half read books occasionally and the other half regularly. Non-readers are associated with low status in 40.8% of cases and, vice versa, more than half of the young people with high status are keen readers. These data confirm that factors such as the scarcity of cultural instruments, belonging to a low status bracket, the heaviness of a full workday or the lack of it, and living in a small hometown, are associated — as was easy to predict — with a low propensity to read.

Crossing with ICT use reveals an articulated relationship between TV and computer use for information purposes and reading activity. Let us start by saying that among non-readers three quarters are uninterested in following the news on TV and half do not use the computer to obtain information. But at the same time, nearly half of those who watch TV and make heavy use of the computer to obtain news are keen readers. More specifically, among light users of TV to obtain information almost one half read sporadically, the other half frequently. In conclusion, the habit of reading is also connected to a certain interest in following the news both on TV and the computer, which is why, with regard to the news, the use of these three technologies is reinforced rather than excluded. Lastly, there is also a significant connection between political leaning and reading: nearly half of the leftist young people read often, while more than half of the centrist respondents read only occasionally. Furthermore, among non-readers, almost half are not interested in politics at all.

If this is the reading behavior among the respondents of our sample, what is the situation with activities that involve less engaged reading, that is, that involve the products of mass culture such as popular magazines? Among the socio-demographical variables, only three — education, activity, and status — can differentiate reading behavior with regard to popular magazines. Let us start with the first: more than one third of the young people with little education and with low status never read them,¹² while more than half of the

¹²The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between reading popular and educational magazines $\chi^2_{(6)} = 15.59$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 3.16^{***}$, activity $\chi^2_{(8)} = 15.66$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.58^{**}$; $z = 2.51^{**}$, status $\chi^2_{(4)} = 15.80$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 1.96^*$; $z = 3.32^{***}$, TV use for news $\chi^2_{(4)} = 11.72$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.38^{**}$; $z = 2.42^{**}$, TV use during holidays: $\chi^2_{(6)} = 27.56$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 2.52^{**}$; $z = 2.92^{**}$ $z = 1.99^*$, computer use for information purposes: $\chi^2_{(4)} = 18.21$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 3.41^{***}$; $z = 2.40^{**}$ and $z = 2.47^{**}$, and computer use for pastime: $\chi^2_{(4)} = 9.85$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.05^*$; $z = 2.69^{**}$.

students, 44.2% of the temporary workers and 58% of those with high status confess to reading them occasionally. The scarcity of cultural and economic resources, therefore, as was easily predictable, is associated with less of a propensity to read not only books, but also popular literature. However, there was no automatic association between reading this kind of publication and readers with a low level of education and low status.

As for the use of ICTs, more than half of average users of TV sometimes happen to read popular magazines, but as many as 39.4% and 41.5% of frequent readers are made up respectively of heavy users of TV and average users of TV specifically during holidays. At the same time, almost half of those who never watch TV and a little more than half of the light users of TV, again during holidays, never read them. The use of computers also differentiates this popular magazine-reading behavior, in the sense that 39.5% of those who do not use the computer to search for news do not read them, while 57.2% of light computer users and one-fifth of heavy computer users read them with this aim respectively sometimes and often. Instead, more than half of the heavy users of the computer as a pastime often read them, while 40% of the non-users of the computer as a news source do not read them. We may conclude by saying that we note a clear convergence between the reading of popular magazines and the regular use of TV and the computer probably because they are used in some cases to relax from more important activities, and in others as a different form of entertainment that is synergic with the other forms.

Practices of Communicative Sociality

The most widespread practices of communicative sociality among young people in Italy are reported in Table 5.

The most common activities are being with friends, going to the disco, the bar, clubbing and, to a lesser extent, sports (Eurobarometer 2004).¹³ The activities engaged in less assiduously are shopping, excursions, and going to the cinema and to shows. Those activities that are far less widespread are political activities and trade union activities, parish activities, volunteer service, hobbies, the theater and, in general, creative artistic activities. But how is the picture of the practices of sociality among Italian youth structured?

¹³We define sports as a social practice of communication because among the principal benefits of sports expressed by respondents in the European survey "The Citizens of the European Union and Sport" is the fact of being with friends (31%). Moreover, in 2004 sports continued to interest more men and young men than women in Europe (Eurobarometer 2004), exactly as we found in this Italian survey.

Table 5. Practices of Communicative Sociality

Activity	Sports, gym	Excursions	Being with friends	Theater	Shopping	Artistic and creative activities	Hobbies	Volunteer service
Base	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500
Never	287 (19.1%)	714 (47.6%)	14 (0.9%)	946 (63.1%)	202 (13.5%)	888 (59.2%)	1060 (70.7%)	1072 (71.5%)
Sometimes	633 (42.2%)	655 (43.7%)	243 (16.2%)	476 (31.7%)	869 (57.9%)	388 (25.9%)	324 (21.6%)	322 (21.5%)
Often	578 (38.5%)	115 (7.7%)	1235 (82.3%)	65 (4.3%)	417 (27.8%)	212 (14.1%)	102 (6.8%)	95 (6.3%)
Missing	2 (0.1%)	16 (1.1%)	8 (0.5%)	13 (0.9%)	12 (0.8%)	12 (0.8%)	14 (0.9%)	11 (0.7%)

Activity	Bar, clubbing, etc.	Political, trade union, cultural activities	Parish activities	Disco	Cinema, shows	Others
Base	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500
Never	139 (9.3%)	1258 (83.9%)	1108 (73.9%)	136 (9.1%)	175 (11.7%)	90 (6.0%)
Sometimes	599 (39.9%)	178 (11.9%)	283 (18.9%)	550 (36.7%)	909 (60.6%)	10 (0.7%)
Often	752 (50.1%)	50 (3.3%)	93 (6.2%)	804 (53.6%)	404 (26.9%)	39 (2.6%)
Missing	10 (0.7%)	14 (0.9%)	16 (1.1%)	10 (0.7%)	12 (0.8%)	1361 (99.3%)

How are the social communicative practices associated and harmonized by young people, who at the same time make quite lively use of these means of communication and information? Let us say immediately that for reasons of space our analysis will obviously concentrate on the most widespread forms of communicative sociality among young people, in the hope of finding some interesting indications to explain the relations that are being established today in the social body between mediated and non-mediated aspects of communicative practices among Italian youth.

Let us start by analyzing activities related to spending time with friends, a practice — let us remember — that is covered in 83.5% of cases with “regularity.” More young men than women (86.4% vs. 79%) spend time with friends

often,¹⁴ confirming in this a practice that is most common among men of a more socialized style of life. With regard to age, the only significant association is related to those who spend time with friends only sometimes: among them, 65.8% belong to the 23–25 year group. So, as time passes and they become more adult, young people lose the capacity for steady relations with friends. With regard to status and activity, it emerges that among those who never spend time with friends, half are of a low status and more than half are full-time workers. This means that a scarcity of resources and regular work hinders the possibility of being with friends. Regarding the use of ICTs, heavy users of the computer for study often find more time to spend with friends than others, while users of TV for purposes of information have less time to spend with friends. Thus, a “serious” use of the computer is compatible with being with friends, while the use of TV for purposes of information may lead to a certain de-socialization.

Another widespread practice of communicative sociality is going to the disco. More women than men (58.9% vs. 49.2%) declare that they go rarely or never, reinforcing yet again the picture of a less socialized female life. As to age, it emerges that it is young people from the age of 23 to 26 more than others (58.1% vs. 49.6%) who never or rarely go to the disco; in particular, one third of those who never go to the disco are made up of women from the age of 22 to 25.¹⁵ Therefore, the more you become an adult, the less you go to the disco. Also the size of one’s hometown has an influence on this social communicative practice. It is in fact definitely less common in small hometowns (under 10,000 inhabitants), while nearly one third of respondents who go to the disco very frequently (that is, more than once a week) live in medium-to-large towns (that is, over 100,000 inhabitants). Thus, going to the disco turns out to be more of an urban than rural custom, and looking

¹⁴The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between spending time with friends and gender $\chi^2_{(2)} = 14.18$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 2.08^*$, age $\chi^2_{(2)} = 15.85$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 2.09^*$, status $\chi^2_{(4)} = 10.97$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.12^*$, activity $\chi^2_{(8)} = 21.53$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 2.02^*$, computer use for study purposes $\chi^2_{(4)} = 10.26$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.05^*$ and TV use for news $\chi^2_{(2)} = 8.23$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.55^{**}$.

¹⁵The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between going to the disco and gender $\chi^2_{(2)} = 14.81$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 3.68^{***}$, age $\chi^2_{(2)} = 10.08$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 3.01^{**}$, gender/age $\chi^2_{(6)} = 26.25$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 4.11^{***}$, size of hometown $\chi^2_{(6)} = 16.80$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.50^{**}$ and $z = 2.23^*$, geographical area $\chi^2_{(8)} = 16.70$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.58^{**}$, TV use $\chi^2_{(4)} = 10.32$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.16^*$ and $z = 2.40^{**}$, TV use during workdays $\chi^2_{(6)} = 15.34$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 2.90^{**}$, $z = 2.12^*$ and $z = 2.63^{**}$, political leaning $\chi^2_{(6)} = 20.65$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 2.24^*$.

at geographical area, it is in proportion more common among young people who live in central Italy than in other parts of the country (13.3% vs. 10.6% in the Northwest, 8.5% in the Northeast and 7.2% in Sicily and Sardinia). As for TV consumption, the results show that the more you go to the disco the less you watch TV: in particular, nearly half of light TV users (less than one hour a day) go to the disco more than once a week, while more than half of heavy TV users (more than two hours a day) go to the disco rarely or never. This trend is also confirmed by examining workdays only. In the end, as in politics, the only significant relation is with left-wing youth, who in more than half of the cases (and it is the highest percentage) never (or rarely) go to the disco.

Yet another practice, spread over half of the sample with "regularity," is going to the bar or clubbing. Among assiduous bar-frequenters are significantly more men than women (56% vs. 45.1%), reconfirming once again the less socialized life style of women. In particular, in first place are found young males between 18 and 23 (57.8%) followed by older ones (53.9%).¹⁶ Nearly one third of sporadic frequenters and non-frequenters of bars and clubs live in small and medium-sized (from 30,000 to 100,000 inhabitants) towns, while more than half of the inhabitants of medium/large towns go to them habitually. Geographical area is also a variable with a great influence on this practice of communicative sociality: more than half of assiduous frequenters live on the Islands, while 40.3% of Southerners and nearly a quarter of those who live in central Italy never go. Of the young inhabitants of the North-west, 41.3% do go sometimes. Therefore, going to the bar or a club is an urban more than a rural habit, and is especially common in highly industrialized areas and the Islands (perhaps to overcome the geographic isolation). With regard to ICT use, it emerges that more than half of assiduous frequenters on the one hand do not watch news on TV and, on the other, make heavy use of the computer as a pastime.

As for sports (distributed among young people in 50.1% of cases often and 38.5% sometimes): in general, more young men than women participate in sports often (45.3% vs. 31.6%), while among non-sporting types women take

¹⁶The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between going to bars/clubbing and gender $\chi^2_{(2)} = 16.87$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 3.74^{***}$, gender/age $\chi^2_{(6)} = 26.06$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 1.98^*$ and $z = 2.22^*$, size of hometown $\chi^2_{(6)} = 18.64$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 2.07^*$, $z = 3.59^{***}$ and $z = 2.39^{**}$, geographical area $\chi^2_{(8)} = 33.29$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 2.50^{**}$, $z = 2.72^{**}$, $z = 3.10^{***}$, $z = 2.30^*$ and $z = 2.20^*$, TV use for news $\chi^2_{(2)} = 9.63$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 3.12^{***}$ and $z = 2.46^{**}$, computer use as pastime $\chi^2_{(4)} = 13.28$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 3.09^{***}$, and political leaning $\chi^2_{(6)} = 16.38$, $p < 0.05$, $z = 3.07^{**}$ and $z = 3.41^{***}$.

first place. In particular, this greater propensity on the part of males to engage in sports involves young men of both of the age groups considered, while a refusal to engage in sports activities is higher among the younger women (almost a quarter of younger women never take part in sports, which is the highest percentage).¹⁷ Probably a lower propensity on the part of women for sport is reinforced by a lifestyle that is, as we have seen, less socialized. Swelling the ranks of the non-sports lovers more than others are temporary workers (28.7%) and full-time workers (24.1%). On the contrary, almost half of students engage in sports sometimes, and another 41.3% participate in sports often, preceded in this by worker-students (44%). Increasing the number of non-sporting people by one-third are those with low status, while 44.9% and 45.9% of those with high status, more than the others, engage in sporting activities occasionally and frequently, respectively. The highest concentration (more than one-fifth) of non-sportsmen/women is located in small/medium towns, while 43.4% and 45.7% of those who live in medium/large towns, more than the others, engage in sports sometimes and often, respectively. Evidently, the urban environment leads to greater involvement in sports activities, perhaps because it is an environment that imposes less daily movement. With regard to the use of the computer, almost half (47.3%) of those who never take part in sports are young people who never use the computer for study purposes, while more than half of those who engage in sports sometimes are heavy users of it for study purposes. Among the non-sporting types, the greatest number (40.7%) is made up of young people who never use the computer to search for information. Thus, computer use is associated with a certain disinclination to engage in sporting activities only when such use is heavy. As regards political leanings, right-wing youth engage in sports more often than others (45.3% vs. 36.5% of those on the left, 33.9% in the center, and 36.2% who are apolitical), while among the non-sporting young people the highest percentage are apolitical (45.4%).

¹⁷The analysis of log-linear models has shown the following significant relations: between engaging in sports and gender $\chi^2_{(2)} = 31.43$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 5.56^{***}$; $z = 3.26^{***}$, gender/age $\chi^2_{(6)} = 35.84$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 4.67^{***}$; $z = 1.98^*$, $z = 2.30^*$, activity $\chi^2_{(6)} = 34.31$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 2.17^*$; $z = 3.13^{***}$, $z = 2.71^{**}$, $z = 2.61^{**}$ c 2.24^* , status $\chi^2_{(4)} = 50.72$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 6.15^{***}$; $z = 3.25^{***}$, $z = 5.13^{***}$, size of hometown $\chi^2_{(6)} = 29.88$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 2.31^*$; $z = 2.19^*$, $z = 2.02^*$, $z = 3.81^{***}$, computer use for study purposes $\chi^2_{(4)} = 24.27$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 4.55^{***}$; $z = 2.16^*$, $z = 2.24^*$, computer use for information: $\chi^2_{(4)} = 13.55$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 3.68^{***}$, and political leaning $\chi^2_{(6)} = 18.22$, $p < 0.01$, $z = 3.29^{***}$; $z = 2.41^{**}$.

Computer and TV Use and Opinions about One's Country, War, Peace, and Terrorism

After delineating the practices in the use of the various means of information and communication, and the social communicative practices and the relations that exist between the former and the latter, we went on to assess the fundamental dimensions of young people's attitudes to political issues so greatly debated in the world of information, such as one's country, peace, war, and terrorism. We also tried to determine whether these dimensions of attitude are in some way influenced by structure variables, forms of communicative sociality and, above all, the use and contents of the media.

To obtain these opinions, the respondents were asked the following questions: (1) Recently, the Italian government — starting from President Ciampi — has been speaking increasingly of patriotism, respect for the national flag, singing the national anthem, etc. How far do you agree with the following statements? (2) Recently there has been much talk of the legitimacy or not of war, and how to build the peace. How far do you agree with the following statements? (3) What are the conditions for the possibility in the future of abolishing wars and arriving at a real and lasting peace? (4) Last July, there were violent clashes between demonstrators and the police. What is your opinion of these events? (5) In your opinion, were the United States and their Allies right to carry out military actions against terrorism after September 11? Each question was proposed together with a battery of items (one's country: 8 items; peace: 7 items; war: 10 items; terrorism: 9 items). For each item, the respondents had to express their degree of agreement/disagreement on a scale of 4 points, where 1 = I do not at all agree, and 4 = I am in total agreement.

The data were elaborated by applying to the matrices of correlation among the items factorial analysis with the main components method.¹⁸

One's Country

Let us begin from young people's attitude towards their country. Two factors emerge from a factorial analysis: the first is defined as "refusal of

¹⁸The factors that emerged from the various factorial analyses were then rotated by the Varimax system and Kaiser's normalization process. Therefore, for each dimension the composite factorial scores were calculated by considering the items with saturations higher than 0.400 in one single factor. The reliability of each of the factors was then assessed by means of Crombach's α coefficient. The relation between these psychological variables was then studied with behavioral variables (consumption of means of communication and forms of communicative sociality), with other attitudinal variables (referring to politics and religion), and with some structural variables, by applying Student's t-test for gender and univariate variance analysis with a between-factor for all of the other variables.

patriotism;"¹⁹ the second, which has more of an emotional character, expresses an "appreciation of national symbols."²⁰ As for the whole sample, the overall factorial score for the first factor is 1.88 (d.s. = 0.56), and for the second 2.52 (d.s. = 0.71). This means that, with regard to the first dimension, the respondents share the refusal of patriotism to a small degree, but at the same time, in relation to the second factor they show that they have a certain appreciation of national symbols.

In relation to these two factors (which together explain 52.53% of the total variance), we must say immediately that there are no differences in the scores for the amount of TV seen daily. Apart from this, as regards the first factor F1, the profile of those who share the refusal of patriotism is mostly composed of those who have a low level of education²¹ (in fact, refusal of patriotism is strengthened as the level of education drops), those of medium status, those who live in the Northeast and Northwest, those who live in towns of more than 100,000 inhabitants, those who never engage in sports, those who never use a computer, those who go to the theater often, those who never do shopping, those who do not take part in the life of the parish, those who consider the religious dimension irrelevant, those who give debates as

¹⁹The first factor F1 saturates the items: these manifestations are only a kind of consolation for the loss of real sovereignty and national identity, owing to the European Union, globalization, etc. = 0.733; these manifestations are only tactics to conceal the real problems of Italy, such as unemployment, injustice, exploitation, etc. = 0.732; these manifestations are a counter-balancing of federalist policies, regional autonomy, etc. = 0.732; these manifestations of nationalism in Italy are only an indication of the return of the old values of the right = 0.602; and this is only a passing fashion = 0.512.

²⁰The second factor F2 saturates the items: at last in Italy, too, we can be proud of our own country = 0.804; for too long patriotism, the national flag, the national anthem, etc. were neglected by the old parties = 0.753; when I see the national flag fluttering, hear the national anthem being sung and played and I think of my country, I am overwhelmed by emotion = 0.736. For F1 the alpha coefficient is 0.68 and for F2 is 0.70.

²¹With regard to the first factor F1, the results of a one-way variance analysis with between the factor of education are as follows: education $F_{(3,1489)} = 4.34$, $p < 0.01$; status $F_{(2,1490)} = 3.46$, $p < 0.05$; geographical area $F_{(4,1488)} = 3.65$, $p < 0.01$; size of hometown $F_{(3,1489)} = 3.95$, $p < 0.01$; sports $F_{(2,1488)} = 5.01$, $p < 0.01$; computer use $F_{(1,1489)} = 9.46$, $p < 0.01$; go to theater $F_{(2,1477)} = 3.05$, $p < 0.05$; go shopping $F_{(2,1488)} = 6.84$, $p < 0.01$; participate in parish life $F = 14.21$, $df 2,1474$, $p < 0.001$; religious dimension $F_{(4,1481)} = 8.79$, $p < 0.001$; talk shows $F_{(2,1469)} = 3.12$, $p < 0.05$; and political leaning $F_{(3,1479)} = 19.14$, $p < 0.001$.

As to the second factor F2, geographical area $F_{(4,1488)} = 14.62$, $p < 0.001$; size of hometown $F_{(3,1489)} = 4.31$, $p < 0.01$; sports $F_{(2,1488)} = 6.84$, $p < 0.01$; popular magazines $F_{(2,1479)} = 8.89$, $p < 0.001$; shopping $F_{(2,1478)} = 10.11$, $p < 0.001$; creative activities $F_{(2,1478)} = 5.89$, $p < 0.01$; parish life $F_{(2,1474)} = 11.80$, $p < 0.001$; religious dimension $F_{(4,1480)} = 16.59$, $p < 0.001$; talk shows $F_{(2,1467)} = 3.32$, $p < 0.05$; TV use for information $F_{(1,1468)} = 5.09$, $p < 0.05$; cartoons $F_{(2,1467)} = 6.09$, $p < 0.01$; films $F_{(2,1467)} = 3.91$, $p < 0.05$; and political leaning $F_{(3,1479)} = 14.12$, $p < 0.001$.

their first choice of TV program, and those who are left-wing or do not have a precise political orientation. So the first profile of an urbanized youth, who is from the North, has an average income, is sedentary, lay, politically engaged, informed, and culturally lively, even if with a low educational profile.

As for the second factor F2 (a positive attitude towards national symbols), the profile of those who take this attitude is of a person who lives in the South, in a small/medium-sized town, often engages in sports, often reads popular magazines, often does the shopping, never does creative work, participates in parish activities and considers the religious dimension fundamental, gives TV debates as his/her second choice, but who on the whole also uses TV to obtain information and who belongs to the Center-right. This second profile of young people is in some ways opposite to the first, in that it is of a type from the South, rural, religious, informed, politically tending to the Right and more disengaged politically, but socially active.

Peace

Let us now consider the attitude towards peace (Giuliano 2004). Here, two factors emerge: the first factor can be defined in terms of "peace as the abolition of the causes of war,"²² and the second sees "education towards peace" as the most effective strategy to follow in order to eliminate war.²³ These two factors together account for 49.8% of the total variance. As for the whole sample, the composite factorial score is 2.22 (d.s. = 0.47) for the first factor and 2.78 (d.s. = 0.38) for the second. This means that the respondents maintain, with regard to the first dimension, that they do not believe so much in the concrete possibility of removing the causes of war in order to promote peace, but instead are quite agreed in considering the educational strategy important.

As for the first factor F1, here too, TV consumption does not make any difference, while what does make a difference are other factors. More than others it is those who go to the cinema rarely or never as well as those who

²²The first factor F1 saturates the following items: on the condition of the economic and social equality of all men in the whole world = 0.756; on the condition of the abolition of cultural and religious differences = 0.666; on the condition of the end of capitalist exploitation = 0.630; on the condition of forbidding the production of arms and the abolition of armed forces = 0.592; on the condition of the abolition of states, of the unification of humanity and one world government = 0.432.

²³The second factor F2 saturates the following items: on the condition of education for peace, brotherhood, solidarity, and universal love = 0.856; and on the condition of the abolition of racial inequality = 0.730. For F1 the alpha coefficient is 0.61 and for F2 it is 0.52. Thus, we must bear in mind that this second factor has a slightly weak level of reliability.

give cartoons as their second choice among their favourite TV programs, who believe that to promote peace the right strategy is to remove the causes of war. Therefore, it would seem that those who believe more in the removal of the social and economic causes of war are young people with a propensity for iconic narration. With respect to the second factor, the longer the time that is spent daily in front of the TV,²⁴ the more it is thought that there is a possibility that the causes of war can be removed to promote peace. In the same way, those who use TV for the specific purpose of obtaining information, those who use the computer, who read books often, who have left-wing political leanings, are more convinced of the validity of the educational strategy. Therefore, the profile of those who favor more education on peace as an antidote to war is young people on the left, who are quite well-informed and of a good cultural level.

War

With regard to young people's attitude to war, two factors emerge: the first can be defined as "refusal of war,"²⁵ and the second as "war as an inevitable evil."²⁶ By verifying the reliability of each of the two factors by means of Crombach's α coefficient, it emerged that for F1, the alpha coefficient turned out to be 0.72, while for F2 it was 0.62. Overall, the two factors together

²⁴With regard to the first factor F1, the results of the one-way variance analysis with between factor cinema are as follows: $F_{(2,103)} = 3.52$, $p < 0.04$; cartoons $F_{(1,107)} = 6.69$, $p < 0.05$. As to the second factor F2, the results are: TV use $F_{(2,105)} = 4.40$, $p < 0.05$; TV use for information $F_{(1,1468)} = 5.09$, $p < 0.05$ computer use $F_{(1,107)} = 5.45$, $p < 0.03$; reading books $F_{(2,104)} = 4.52$, $p < 0.02$; political leaning $F_{(3,104)} = 3.68$, $p < 0.05$.

²⁵The first factor F1 saturates the following items: we must always be against every war = 0.764; just wars do not exist; all wars are unjust = 0.727; history shows that wars only cause death and destruction, and create more problems than they solve = 0.707; the threat of external enemies must be combated with diplomacy, dialogue, openness, being open to compromise = 0.654; wars happen above all because there is economic and social injustice.; and to abolish wars we must abolish all forms of inequality among men = 0.492.

²⁶The second factor F2 saturates the following items: in the course of history wars have also had positive effects, for example by freeing oppressed peoples and destroying criminal political regimes, such as Nazism = 0.751; at times there are situations in which it is necessary to use armed forces for humanitarian interventions, in defence of civil rights, to protect against catastrophes, etc. = 0.714; when a nation is threatened or attacked by enemy forces from outside, it has the right to defend itself also with arms = 0.611; in the course of history, the needs of war and the armed forces have stimulated scientific, technical, and organizational progress = 0.559; wars happen only because there are armies and armed forces; and to abolish wars, and bring peace to the world, it would be enough to abolish armed forces = -0.442 (the scores of this item have been inverted).

explain 44.9% of the total variance. As for the entire sample, it turns out that the composite factorial score for the first factor F1 is 3.06 (d.s. = 0.58), while for the second factor F2, it is 3.00 (d.s. = 0.48). This means that some of the respondents maintain that it is quite right to refuse war, while others think fatalistically that war is a necessary evil.

Those who reject war are mostly women²⁷ (thus continuing the traditional feminine hostility towards war), those who live in small/medium-sized towns, who live on the Islands, who are keen readers, who listen to music frequently, who regularly take part in artistic activities who rarely or never go to the disco, who do not give sports as their favourite TV programs, who do not play with the computer, who use the computer for the purpose of study often, who often or sometimes do volunteer work, who often participate in the life of the parish, who consider the religious dimension important or fundamental to their lives, who work in politics quite frequently, and who have left-wing leanings. The profile of those who are against war is therefore constituted of women, young people from a rural background, from the Islands, who take themselves seriously, Catholics but of the Left, and those who are socially and culturally active.

Those who tend to maintain that war is a necessary evil are men,²⁸ in particular those between 22 and 25 years, who live in the Northwest, are politically oriented to the right, often meet up with their friends, often go to the bar or clubbing, go to the disco several times a week, often engage in sports, often go in for political activities, never read, never listen to music,

²⁷With regard to the first factor F1, the results of the t-test are: $t_{(1477)} = -5.69$, $p < 0.001$, while the results of a one-way variance analysis with between factor geographical area are as follows: $F_{(4,1474)} = 2.61$, $p < 0.05$; size of hometown $F_{(3,1475)} = 2.78$, $p < 0.05$; books $F_{(2,1470)} = 5.26$, $p < 0.01$; music $F_{(4,1470)} = 4.31$, $p < 0.05$; artistic activities $F_{(2,1466)} = 6.98$, $p < 0.01$; disco $F_{(2,1467)} = 8.64$, $p < 0.01$; sport programs $F_{(2,1456)} = 4.67$, $p < 0.01$; computer for play $F_{(2,1040)} = 3.13$, $p < 0.05$; computer for study $F_{(2,1041)} = 3.54$, $p < 0.05$; volunteer work $F_{(2,1466)} = 6.54$, $p < 0.05$; parish life $F_{(2,1461)} = 3.46$, $p < 0.05$; religious dimension $F_{(4,1467)} = 5.25$, $p < 0.001$; and political leaning $F_{(3,1467)} = 37.84$, $p < 0.001$.

²⁸With regard to the first factor F2, the results of the t-test are: $t_{(1484)} = 7.78$, $p < 0.0001$, while the results of a one-way variance analysis with between factor gender/age are as follows: $F_{(3,1482)} = 20.72$, $p < 0.001$; geographical area $F_{(4,1481)} = 2.84$, $p < 0.05$; political leaning $F_{(3,1476)} = 29.71$, $p < 0.001$; sport $F_{(2,1481)} = 7.31$, $p < 0.01$; books $F_{(2,1477)} = 5.45$, $p < 0.01$; music $F_{(2,1476)} = 3.30$, $p < 0.05$; friends $F_{(2,1476)} = 4.03$, $p < 0.05$; theater $F_{(2,1471)} = 7.47$, $p < 0.01$; creative activities $F_{(2,1473)} = 4.78$, $p < 0.01$; volunteer work $F_{(2,1473)} = 5.92$, $p < 0.01$; bar, clubbing $F_{(2,1475)} = 4.27$, $p < 0.05$; political activities $F_{(2,1470)} = 3.24$, $p < 0.05$; disco $F_{(2,1475)} = 6.73$, $p < 0.05$; sports on TV $F_{(2,146)} = 4.68$, $p < 0.01$; variety $F_{(2,1462)} = 3.66$, $p < 0.05$; computer use for study $F_{(2,1048)} = 3.72$, $p < 0.05$.

never go to the theater, are not accustomed to dedicating themselves to creative activities, never do volunteer work, give sports programs on TV as their first and second choices, never watch variety programs on TV, and use the computer to study less than one hour a day or never. The profile that emerges is of an adult male, who is a right-wing militant, is sports-minded, is sociable, and has a low cultural level.

Strategies Against Terrorism

Examining the attitudes of young people regarding strategies to use against terrorism three factors emerge: the first factor is one that we will call "the Afghanistan war as the only solution to terrorism";²⁹ the second is what we might call "the real reasons (economic and for revenge) of the Afghanistan war";³⁰ and the third is "terrorism is to be fought with counter-espionage and the international police."³¹ When we verified the reliability of each of the three factors by means of Crombach's α coefficient, for F1 the alpha coefficient turned out to be 0.74, for F2 is 0.68, and for F3 is 0.23. So the third factor, not having an acceptable level of reliability, will not be considered in the following analyses. The first and the second factors together explain 48.4% of the total variance. The composite factorial scores are, for the first factor, 2.38 (d.s. = 0.68) and for the second 2.25 (d.s. = 0.70). This means that a larger portion of the respondents quite agree with the view that the Afghanistan war was the only possible solution to terrorism, but also that another part of respondents quite agree with the view that the Afghanistan war was dictated by economic reasons, by revenge, and to sanction political and military superiority.

With respect to the first factor F1, it emerges that those who are in greater agreement than others with the view that the Afghanistan war was the best

²⁹The first factor F1 saturates the items: the oppressive and criminal Taleban regime must be destroyed by every means = 0.826; there was no other way to destroy the terrorist groups = 0.824; terrorism is beaten by abolishing injustice = -0.619; and we should have used diplomacy and carried on a dialogue with the Taleban government = -0.589 (the scores of these last two items have been inverted).

³⁰The second factor F2 saturates the following items: the Afghanistan war was waged only to show the superiority of the western/Christian world over the Muslim one = 0.831; the Afghanistan war only satisfies a desire for revenge = 0.798; the Afghanistan war was waged only for reasons of economic strategy (oil pipelines, etc.) = 0.637.

³¹The third factor F3 saturates the following items: terrorism is fought only with counter-espionage, the police, etc. = 0.732; in Afghanistan it was not a war, but only an international police operation = 0.724.

response against terrorism were men,³² young people aged 22 to 25, those with a lower level of education, the unemployed and temporary workers, those who live above all in the Northwest, who live in towns of medium size (from 30,000 to 100,000 inhabitants), who are politically right-wing, who often meet up with their friends, who go to bars and clubbing, who go to the disco several times a week, who often engage in sports, who never do volunteer work, who never do militant work for a political party, who never or rarely go to the cinema, who never go to the theater, who never take part in any creative activities, who never read books, who listen to music sometimes, who do not follow talk shows on TV, who give as their first choice TV sports programs, who give films as their second choice, and who do not use the computer even for study or to search for news. The profile that is delineated by this factor is that of a young adult, with little education, with work problems, from the North, who is quite urbanized, leans politically to the right, is very sociable, is culturally and technologically backward, and poorly informed.

With respect to the second factor F2, it emerged that those who are most convinced that the Afghanistan war was dictated by precise economic reasons, reasons of revenge, as well as to sanction political and military superiority³³ were working students, those who live in the Northeast, those who live in medium/large-sized towns, those who often go on trips, who often go to the theater, who go to the cinema more than once a week, who take parts artistic activities more often than most, who read often, who make great use

³²As to the first factor F1, the result of the t-test is: $t_{(1476)} = 8.93$, $p < 0.001$, while the results of the one-way variance analysis with between factor gender/age are as follows: $F_{(3,1474)} = 27.74$, $p < 0.001$; education $F_{(3,1474)} = 6.46$, $p < 0.001$; activity $F_{(4,1470)} = 7.26$, $p < 0.001$; geographical area $F_{(4,1473)} = 3.05$, $p < 0.05$; size of hometown $F_{(4,1473)} = 3.05$, $p < 0.05$; political leaning $F_{(3,1467)} = 59.60$, $p < 0.001$; friends $F_{(4,1468)} = 4.15$, $p < 0.05$; bar/clubbing $F_{(2,1467)} = 4.13$, $p < 0.05$; disco $F_{(2,1465)} = 7.69$, $p < 0.001$; sport $F_{(2,1473)} = 3.34$, $p < 0.05$; volunteer work $F_{(2,1466)} = 9.43$, $p < 0.001$; political activity $F_{(2,1462)} = 4.11$, $p < 0.05$; cinema $F_{(2,1463)} = 8.36$, $p < 0.001$; theater $F_{(2,1463)} = 13.25$, $p < 0.001$; creative activities $F_{(2,1464)} = 20.86$, $p < 0.001$; books $F_{(2,1469)} = 30.03$, $p < 0.001$; music $F_{(2,1469)} = 3.88$, $p < 0.05$; talk shows $F_{(2,1455)} = 4.35$, $p < 0.05$; sport on TV $F_{(2,1455)} = 12.96$, $p < 0.001$; films $F_{(2,1455)} = 4.43$, $p < 0.05$; computer use $F_{(1,1474)} = 9.20$, $p < 0.01$; computer use for work $F_{(2,1041)} = 9.83$, $p < 0.001$; and computer use for searching for news $F_{(2,1038)} = 4.12$, $p < 0.05$.

³³With regard to the second factor F2, the results of the one-way variance analysis with between factor activity are as follows: $F_{(4,1461)} = 3.65$, $p < 0.01$; geographical area $F_{(4,1464)} = 2.65$, $p < 0.05$; size of hometown $F_{(3,1465)} = 5.24$, $p < 0.01$; excursions $F_{(2,1458)} = 5.78$, $p < 0.01$; theater $F_{(2,1453)} = 8.66$, $p < 0.001$; cinema $F_{(2,1454)} = 3.69$, $p < 0.03$; creative activities $F_{(2,1455)} = 4.95$, $p < 0.01$; books $F_{(2,1459)} = 4.30$, $p < 0.02$; computer use for study $F_{(2,1037)} = 4.95$, $p < 0.01$; shopping $F_{(2,1455)} = 7.22$, $p < 0.01$; volunteer work $F_{(2,1457)} = 3.02$, $p < 0.05$; parish life $F_{(2,1458)} = 3.33$, $p < 0.05$; political leaning $F_{(3,1458)} = 32.28$, $p < 0.001$; religious dimension $F_{(2,1457)} = 3.73$, $p < 0.01$; and political activity $F_{(2,1453)} = 11.51$, $p < 0.001$.

of the computer for study, who never go shopping, who do volunteer work more often than most, who do not take part in the life of the parish, and who consider the religious dimension not very important or irrelevant to their daily lives, who are left-wing and are active politically often or at least sometimes. Thus, the profile of those who believe that the war in Afghanistan was dictated by reasons completely different from those that were is that of a young person who is a working student, lives in the Northeast, is very urbanized, active, socially committed, secular, politically left, and very lively culturally.

The Events of Genoa

With regard to the clashes in Genoa, which took place in July 2002 when thousands of people demonstrated against the G8 leaders, the young people's opinions were ambivalent. Of the sample, 71.3% stated that police behavior was correct on that occasion and 66.9% that the police violence was justified. But, at the same time, 72.6% said that the police were not professional enough in handling the events that took place, 66.5% that this was the reason that they hit out at everyone indiscriminately, and 77.3% that in any event the police were wrong to strike young demonstrators. One thing, however, is certain: for 88.5% of the young people interviewed, the events of Genoa were not exaggerated by the media. What were the factors that conditioned these opinions? Let us proceed in order and start from the conviction expressed by the majority of interviewees (71.3%) that the police behaved correctly. Of the young people who hold firmly to this conviction, 86% are right-wing, 76.1% quite religious, 77.3% of low status; while among those (nearly a third) who think the opposite, almost half are left-wing, more than third not at all religious, and about one third of high status and urbanized. If we go on to analyze the conviction expressed by 66.9% of the sample that the police violence was unwarranted, it emerges that over half of the left-wing youth, almost half of the a-religious youth (44.2%), and the young people with university degrees (45.5%) and urbanized youth (39.6%), think exactly that the police violence was unwarranted. On the contrary, 86.9% of right-wing youth, 71.5% of those who live in small towns, and 69.2% of those with a medium level schooling maintain that the police violence was justified. Going on now to analyze the conviction shared by 72.6% of the sample that the police were unprofessional and not up to the task, it turns out that 78% of the left-wing youth took this position, 76.2% of girls, 77.9% of those of high status, 84.8% of those young people who live on the islands, and 76% of the urbanized youth; while those

who claim that the police were up to the task included 35.4% of the right-wing youth, almost one-third of boys (29.7%), about one-third of those of low status (31.7%), those who live in central Italy (30.7%) and those who live in rural centers (30%) and about one-fifth (22%) of those who live in centers with from 30,000 to 100,000 inhabitants. Analyzing now the assertion shared by 77.3% of the sample that "the police hit out indiscriminately," it turns out that 78% of left-wing youth, 73.9% of those who live in towns, and 69.3% of those who do not use TV for information, share this claim; while almost half of the right-wing youth, 39.1% of urbanized young people in medium-to-small towns (from 10,000 to 30,000 inhabitants), and 37.3% of those who use TV for information think, on the contrary, that the police did hit out indiscriminately. This is the only case in which TV consumption for the purpose of obtaining information turns out to be associated with a conviction by the respondents that the case corresponds to the official version of events as given by the government. As for the consideration, shared by 77.3% of the young people interviewed, that the police had in any case been wrong to beat up the young people, it emerges that 38.7% of the right-wing youth, 27.1% of the young people of low status, and 29.5% of the young people with a low level of schooling (and they are always the highest percentages in relation to the other categories of response) are convinced of the contrary. Lastly, concerning the conviction, shared by 88.5% of the sample, that the Genoa events were not an exaggeration by the media, it emerges that 94.3% of the left wing youth and 95.5% of the a-religious share this belief. Furthermore, among those who think this, 64% are made up of the less young (22–25 years old). On the contrary, 91.5% of the younger ones (18–21 years) and almost one-fifth (17.9%) of the right-wing youth are convinced of the contrary. On the whole, we may conclude that the use of means of communication such TV or the computer definitely had little bearing on the opinions of young people in Italy on the events of Genoa; rather, political and religious convictions, status, degree of urbanization of home town, and level of schooling were the important factors. The weight of variables such as gender, age group and geographical area were less significant.

Conclusions

This research draws above all an interesting picture of, on one hand, the use of TV and the computer, as well as music, books, and popular magazines; and on the other hand, practices of communicative sociality. Television emerges on the whole as a particularly active resource in those areas where a low income is

associated with situations involving the risk of social exclusion or geographical and/or cultural isolation, and possibly an organized workday relatively stable. We must not, however, forget that only one half of the world of young people is in some way affected by TV information. This limited exposure to TV information does not denote differences of gender, but shows an interesting generational split between those in the age group of 18 to 21 years, who turn out to be quite uninterested in news, and those between 22 and 25, who shows a certain interest towards the world of information. This split is not surprising, because information is employed in the world of work, family and social responsibilities, and civil society. Instead, the horizon of the world in which adolescents and young people live is necessarily largely familial and local. They are still in the stage of life in which they have to understand and reinforce their secondary socialization in environments that are strongly rooted in the surrounding territory, such as school, the neighborhood, etc. It is this specific condition of theirs that leads them, more than adults, to perceive the dimension of present public events as extraneous.

Even more surprises are revealed with regard to the computer. Perhaps the most relevant fact is that 2002 signals the transition from a period marked by a clear digital divide between men and women to one in which this discrepancy has been completely overcome, at least with the age group of from 18 to 25 years. Another aspect still is that the computer appears to be an instrument for information that is important for young people, who in half the cases are shifting to the internet and using it as a source of information for rapid consultation. The computer is especially important for young people in their search for employment or attempts to overcome geographical and/or cultural isolation, as long as they have some strong resources from their family environment.

Music seems to have found a new strength in the new technologies to expand transversally among the young, showing once again that it is the most universal language. Listening to music is a form of cultural behavior that is extraordinarily widespread among young people. The few who do not listen to it show signs of social isolation and, more than others, live in small hometowns, have a low status, and are quite indifferent to politics.

As for reading, this research reconfirms that factors such as the scarcity of cultural instruments, having low status, the heaviness of a full workday or a lack of it, and living in a small town, are associated — as was easy to predict — with a low propensity to read. Furthermore, it highlights an already known fact, which is that reading is an activity that involves more females than males. Lastly, this research underlines how the habit of reading is also related to

a certain interest in following the news both on TV and the computer, so that these three technologies, if filtered through a transversal interest in news, are mutually strengthened, rather than exclusive. And the scarcity of cultural and economic resources turns out to be associated, as was easily predictable, also with a low propensity to read popular literature. However, there is no automatic association between the reading of this kind of publication and readers with little education and low status. In fact, there is no clear convergence between the reading of popular magazines and even the sustained use of TV and the computer, probably because they are used in some cases during moments of relaxation from more taxing activities, and in others as a different form of evasion that becomes synergic with the other forms.

An analysis of the practices of communicative sociality also confirms an already well-known fact, but we may be permitted to have doubts as to its persistence: the practice of a socialized life being more widespread among men. This trend does, however, persist: women spend less time with friends, go less to the disco, go less to the gym, go less to bars and clubs, and so on. Another well-known element of the dynamics of communicative sociality is the fact that the more time that passes and we become adults, the less often we will meet with friends, go to the disco, and so forth. Lastly, another quite well-known element is that the "serious" use of the computer may be compatible with seeing friends, while the use of the TV also for purposes of information risks developing into a situation of greater de-socialization.

If this is the picture of the use of ICTs and the practices of communicative sociality among young people, what is their effect on their political attitudes? In particular, has this examination of the use of TV and the computer in Italy, in the present context of an increasing concentration of media power, been able to highlight any new elements with respect to the perennial question of the influence of the media?

Let us briefly reconsider the profiles of the young people with regard to the various political dimensions that have emerged. Those who reject patriotism a little more than the others and identification with its symbols are urbanized young people, from the North, with an average income, who do not move much, a secular, politically committed, informed, and culturally lively, even if with a low educational profile. By contrast, those who have positive attitude towards national symbols are Southern young people, rural, religious, informed, politically right-wing and less committed culturally, but socially active. Television seems important therefore for supporting the building of a strong national identity more than for criticizing the drift towards nationalism.

Those who believe more than others that the right strategy to promote peace is to remove the social and economic causes of wars are young people with a propensity towards iconic narration. Those who tend to show greater support for education on peace as an antidote to wars are young persons with leftist leanings, who are well-informed and of a high cultural level. Therefore, TV is important also for supporting the idea of the importance of education for peace, while the computer is not.

The profile of those who are against war is made up of women, rural young people, Island dwellers, the very serious-minded, Catholics who are also leftist, and those who are socially and culturally committed. With respect to war, those who consider it a necessary evil are adult males, right-wing militants, and sportsmen, who are sociable and culturally not very accomplished. On the opinions common among young people concerning war, neither the TV nor the computer seems to be completely non-influential.

The young people who consider the Afghanistan war to be the only solution against terrorism are between 22 and 25 years of age, have little education, and have employment problems; they are Northerners, come from small hometowns, are politically oriented to the right, take part in a wide range of social activities and are popular, are culturally and technologically backward, and little informed. Those who instead interpret the Afghanistan war as dictated by reasons completely different from those given officially are young people who are working students, those who live in the Northeast, are from medium-sized hometowns, are active, socially engaged, secular, politically to the left, and very active culturally. It may be interesting to note that the two dimensions that emerge on strategies against terrorism — the Afghanistan war as the only solution to terrorism and the Afghanistan war as dictated by reasons quite different from those given officially — while representing opposing viewpoints, are characterized by virtually absent TV information (or deriving from the internet).

Lastly, as regards the events of Genoa, the profile of those who approve of police behavior on that occasion is made up mainly of those politically oriented to the right, who are religious, of low status and cultural attainment, who are poorly informed, and who are from rural areas. On the other hand, among the less numerous ranks of those who disapprove of the behavior of the police on that occasion are left-wing, a-religious, of high status and education, and urbanized. Again, the influence of TV information on these two different attitudes towards the events of Genoa is marginal.

From the analysis of all of the data we collected, we may sum up by underlining at least four elements: (1) the greater hostility of women to wars;

(2) the double soul of the Catholic world constituted of both young people of the left and right;³⁴ (3) the weight of the rural/urban infrastructure in the modeling of diffusion and use of electronic media (De Certeau *et al.* 1981); and (4) the fact that television (and the computer) have had only a marginal influence on the political attitudes of the young. The present results belie the views of those who had hypothesized that the so-called "Italian anomaly" would directly strengthen the political consensus on the part of the young on government programs being carried out. On the whole, the use of the media has little relation with what young people think politically. Thus, we find that not even Berlusconi's media empire is able to condition young public opinion. What creates public opinion is not so much the direct influence of the various media, but rather the overall informational environment, where the media are important actors, certainly, but not the only ones. As many writers on the subject have shown (Lazarsfeld *et al.* 1944; Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955; Katz 1957), to be effective, a single medium must be mediated by other factors, such as the family, school, the social environment, religion, politics, and other media (Meyrowitz 2003).

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³⁴ Actually, the Catholic world corresponds to the large majority of the sample: 78.9%. Inside this world, one quarter is left-wing, one third is right-wing, and 36.8% are a-political. On the other hand, 93.7% of young people of the political center are Catholic, while atheists and agnostics, who are in general very few (11%), are more highly concentrated (46.7%) among the ranks of the left $\chi^2_{(6)} = 57.78$, $p < 0.0001$, $z = 3.95^{***}$; $z = 3.31^{***}$.

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