The Class: dis/connected learning and the social worlds of young people in the digital age

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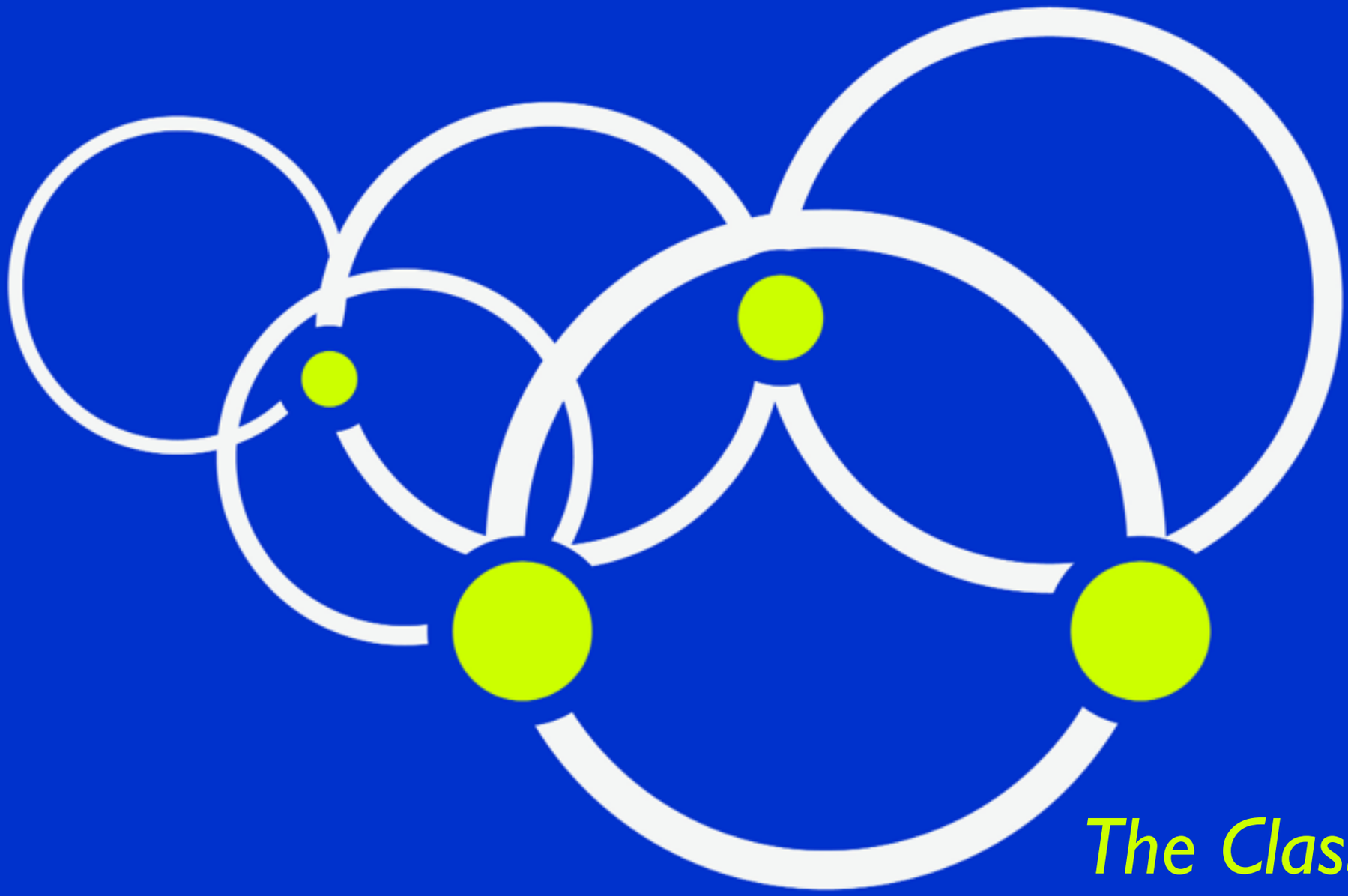
Outline

1. Contexts
2. Project: *The Class* - emerging findings
3. Inside homes - as sites for learning
4. Music, social capital and learning
5. The value of social networks
6. Self-making and the Corporatisation of Learning

1. Contexts.

1. Lifelong learning & Informal learning - Pedagogicization of everyday life
2. Digital culture
3. Standards-based education & growing inequality of provision and outcomes
4. Boundary and domain crossing in research



The Class

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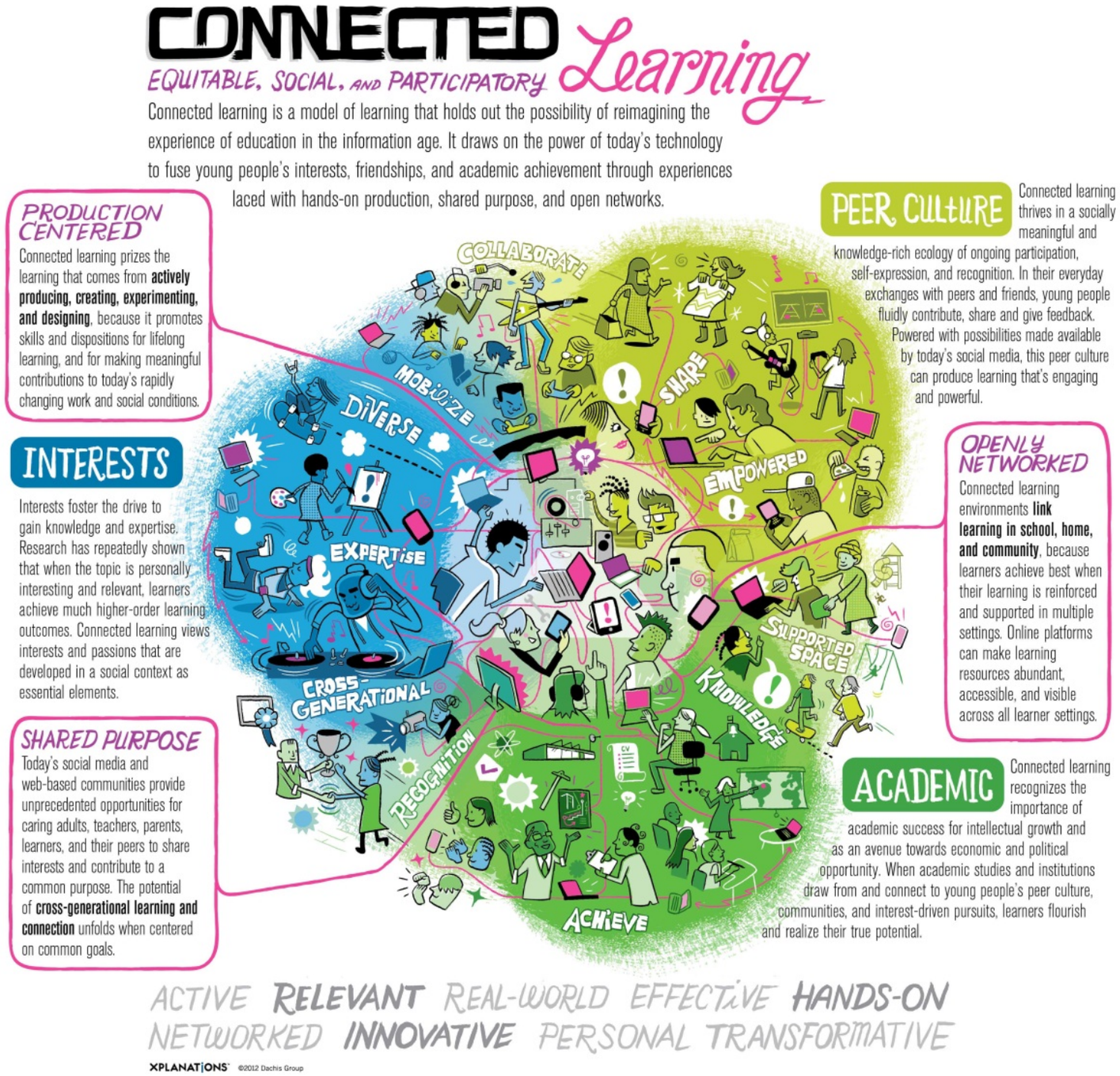
connected learning RESEARCH NETWORK

Connected learning

- "We use the term *connected learning* to refer to learning that integrates an interest-based affiliation, peer friendships, and the learning goals of adult-driven institutions . . .

- "Connected learning taps the opportunities provided by digital media to more easily bridge home, school, community and peer contexts of learning" (Ito, et al)

- "When the lines that distinguish [sites of learning are] blurred and learning happens fluidly across the different nodes we believe that connected learning -- learning that is social, mobile, engaged, efficacious, student-driven, adult-supported, and civic-oriented -- is happening" (Watkins)



MacArthur, Digital Media Learning and the CLRN

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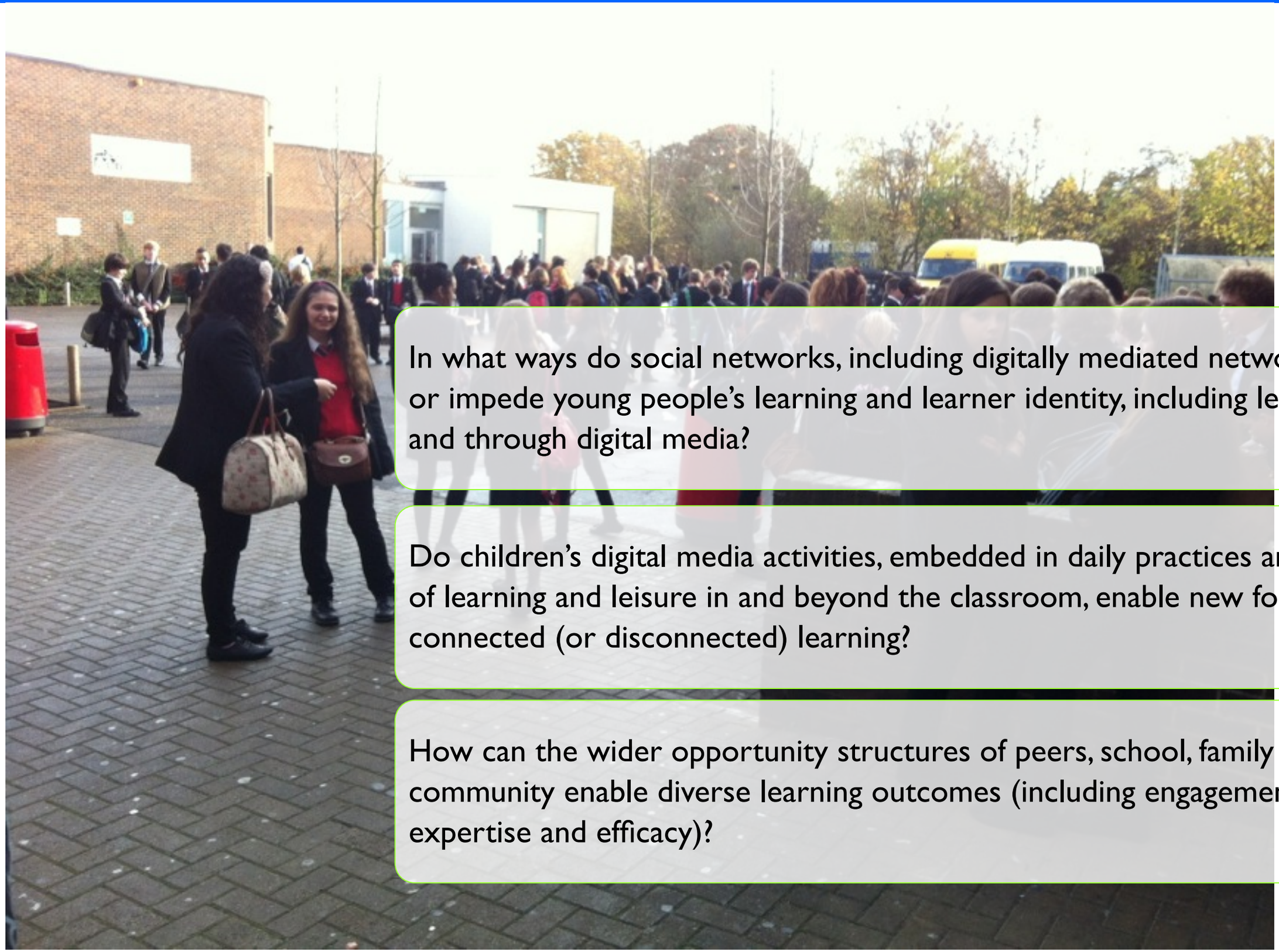
- Is connected learning peculiarly enabled by/ through the design affordances of digital technologies?

- http://connectedlearning.tv/what-is-connected-learning

Research questions



In what ways do social networks, including digitally mediated networks, enable or impede young people's learning and learner identity, including learning with and through digital media?

Do children's digital media activities, embedded in daily practices and regimes of learning and leisure in and beyond the classroom, enable new forms of connected (or disconnected) learning?

How can the wider opportunity structures of peers, school, family and community enable diverse learning outcomes (including engagement, expertise and efficacy)?

Research design

Our approach

- Year-long ethnographic study of a class of 28 year 9 (13-14 year olds)
- Focus on ordinary, everyday experiences of learning and friendship
- Contextualised in terms of school, home, social networks

The school

- Non-selective state secondary school, c. 1800 11-18 years
- Green city suburb, diverse local community (by ethnicity, SES)
- Average level of academic achievement; school positively evaluated

The class

- More boys than girls, some special educational/social needs
- One third poor (free school meals); half speak English as first language
- Nearly half black/mixed; one third white/English; rest white/other

Four phases

- In school: observation in/around class, interview teachers/pupils
- At home: media tour, interview parents/child, Social Network (Facebook friends)
- Follow up: interests, groups, in locale; plus track attainment

dis/connected learning and the social worlds of young people .....

		March-July 2011	Sep-Dec 2011	Jan-Mar-2012	April-Aug 2012	Sep-Dec 2012
	Preparation & Orientation (Ethics)					
PHASE 1	General Public information about school and locale					
	In School Observations		100 hours			
	At School Interview Students		24 (some in pairs)			
	At School Interview Teachers		2	12	2	
	In School Media Surveys		3			
	At School Tracker Data		1	1	1	1
	At School Options Process			1 x Assembly Access to choices		
P2	At Home parent interview			26		
	At Home child interview			26		
	At Home Facebook			26		
	At Home Media tour			26		
	At Home Whole/Ego Network			26		
E 3	Theme led Observation/Interview at home or a community setting or school				21	
	At School focus groups				2	
	Digital footprint					
P 4	At School Interview Students					
	SPSS					
	UCINET/Java					
	NVIVO					

3. Inside Homes (findings about learning out of school)

What might learning look like in non-schooled environments?

a. How can it be identified?
b. How is it imagined?
c. How is it 'organised' (habituated) in domestic spaces and/or practices?

Talk in the family

Domestication/educationalization of media in the home and

Habits and discipline

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unplanned

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chaos, planning
& everyday life

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technology prominent/unimportant

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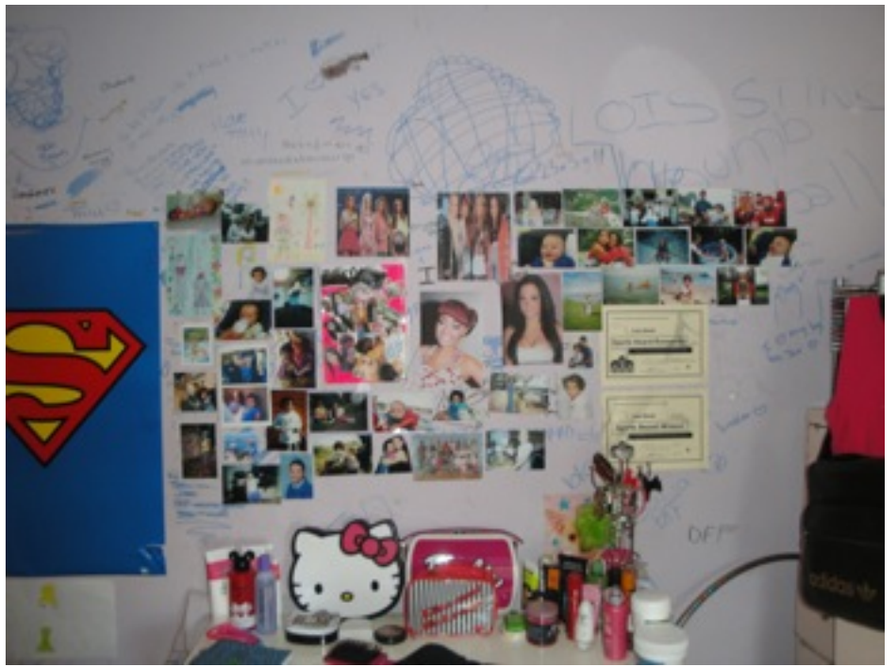

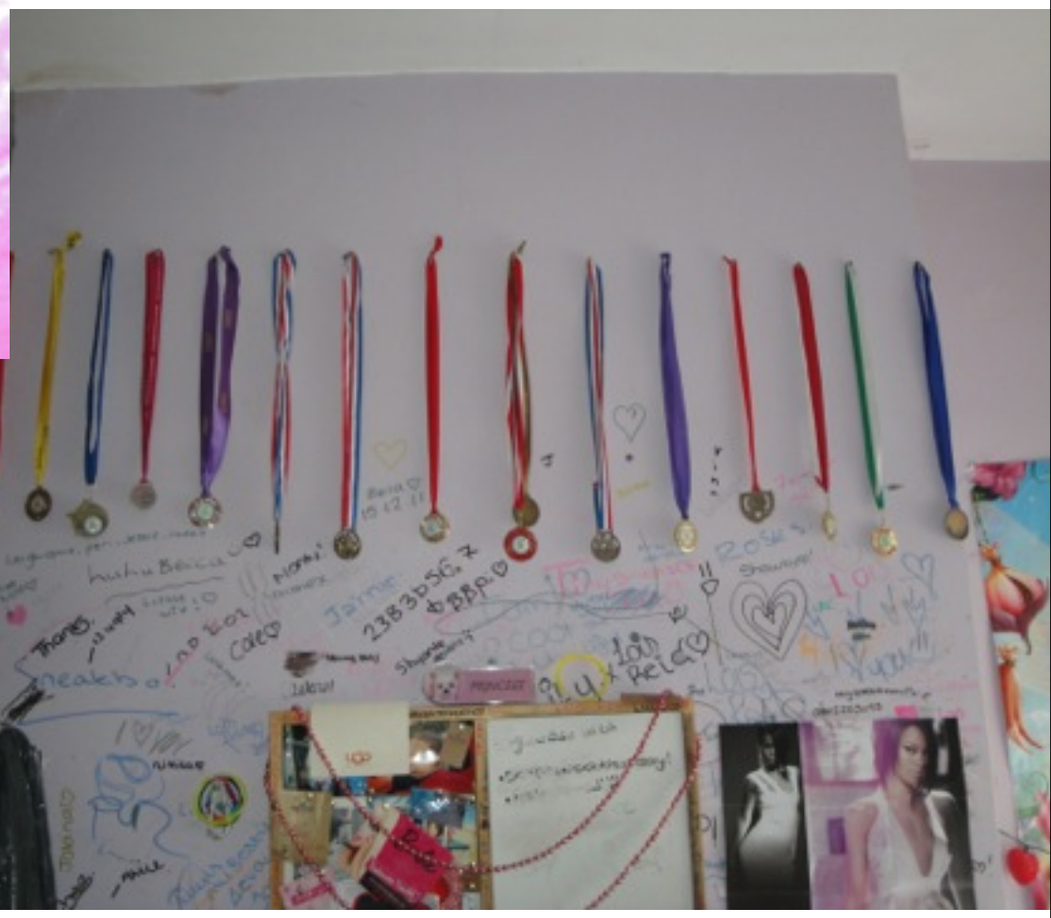

resistance

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scarcity/plethora

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scarcity/plethora

School at home

Yusuf -

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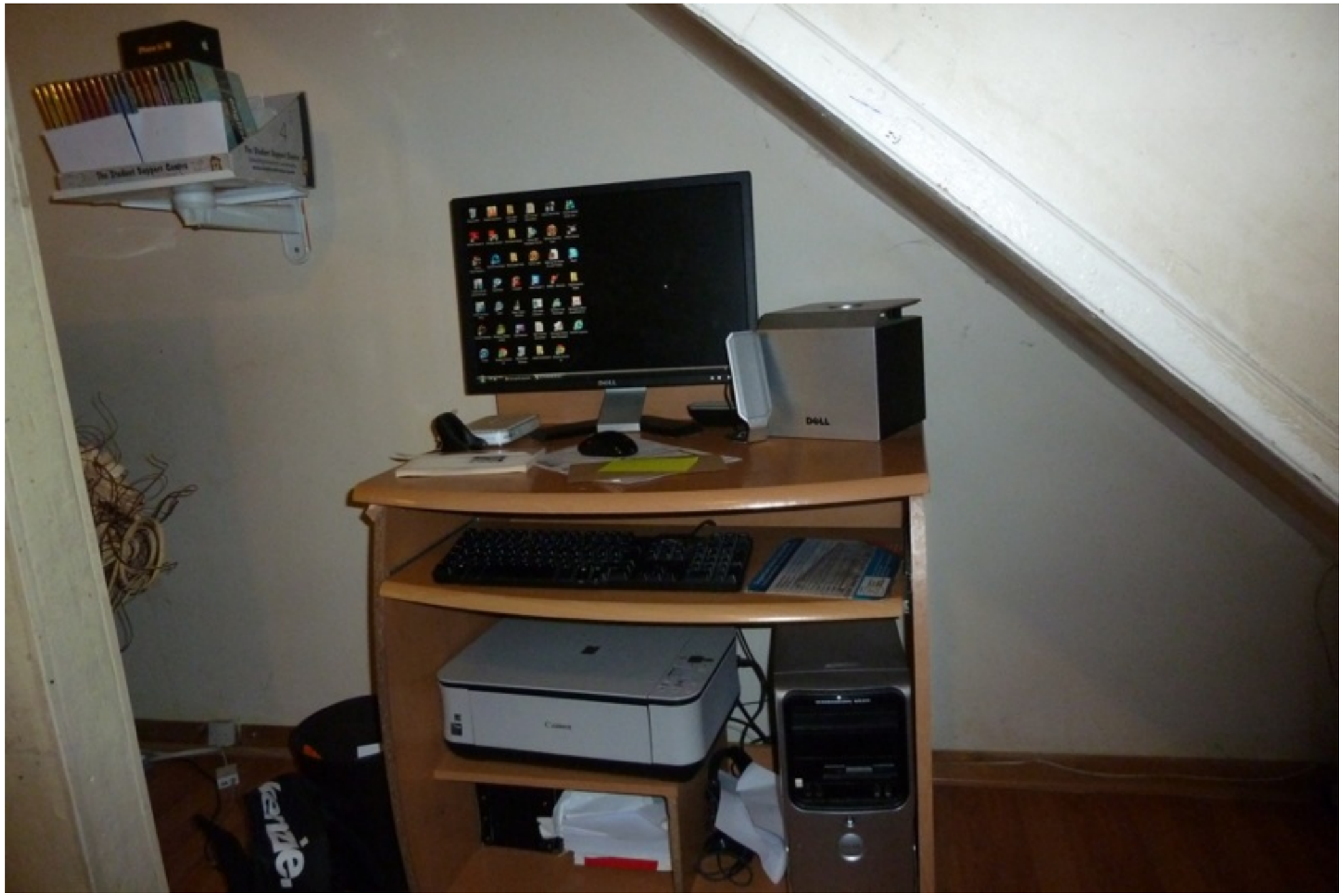

work/pleasure

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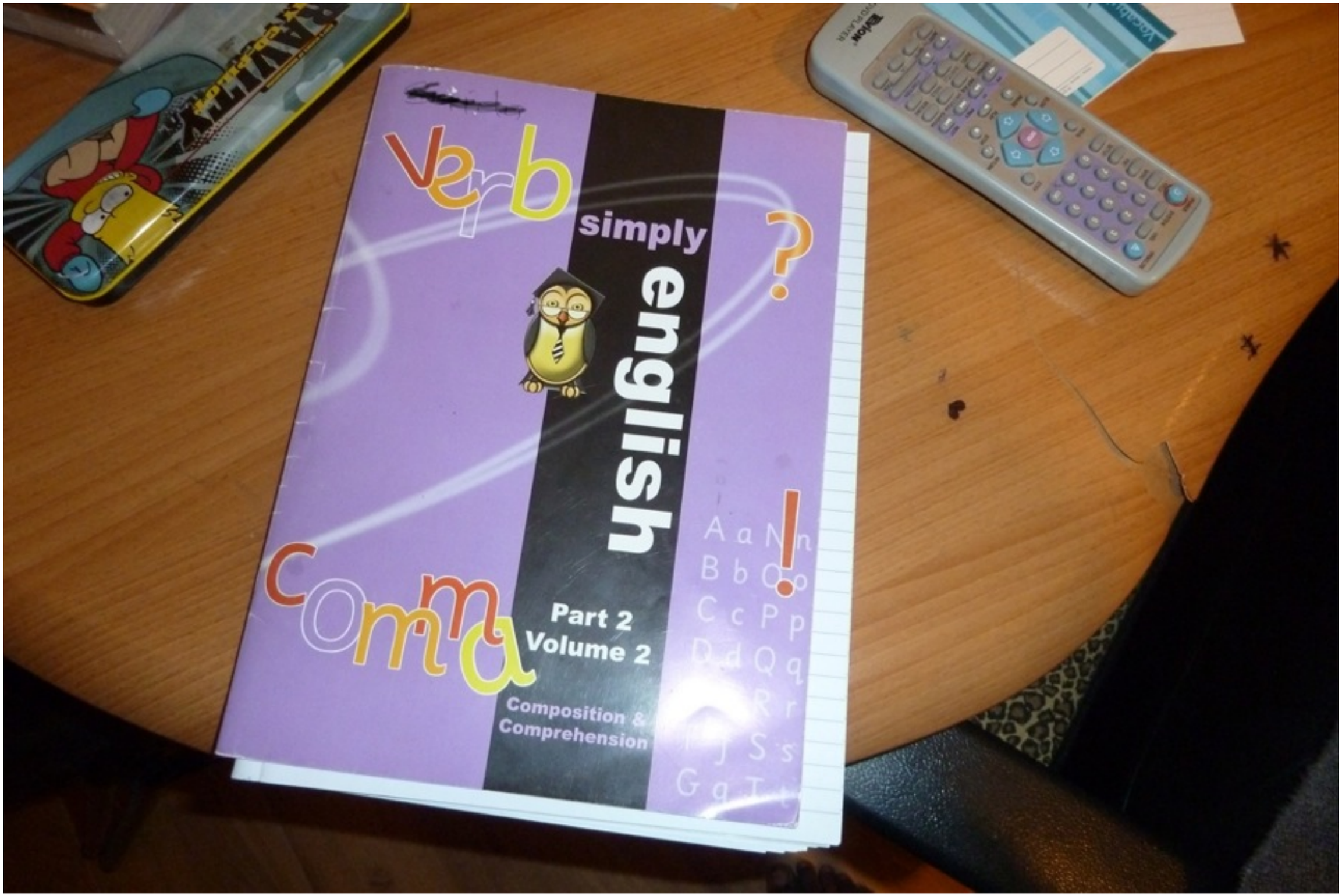

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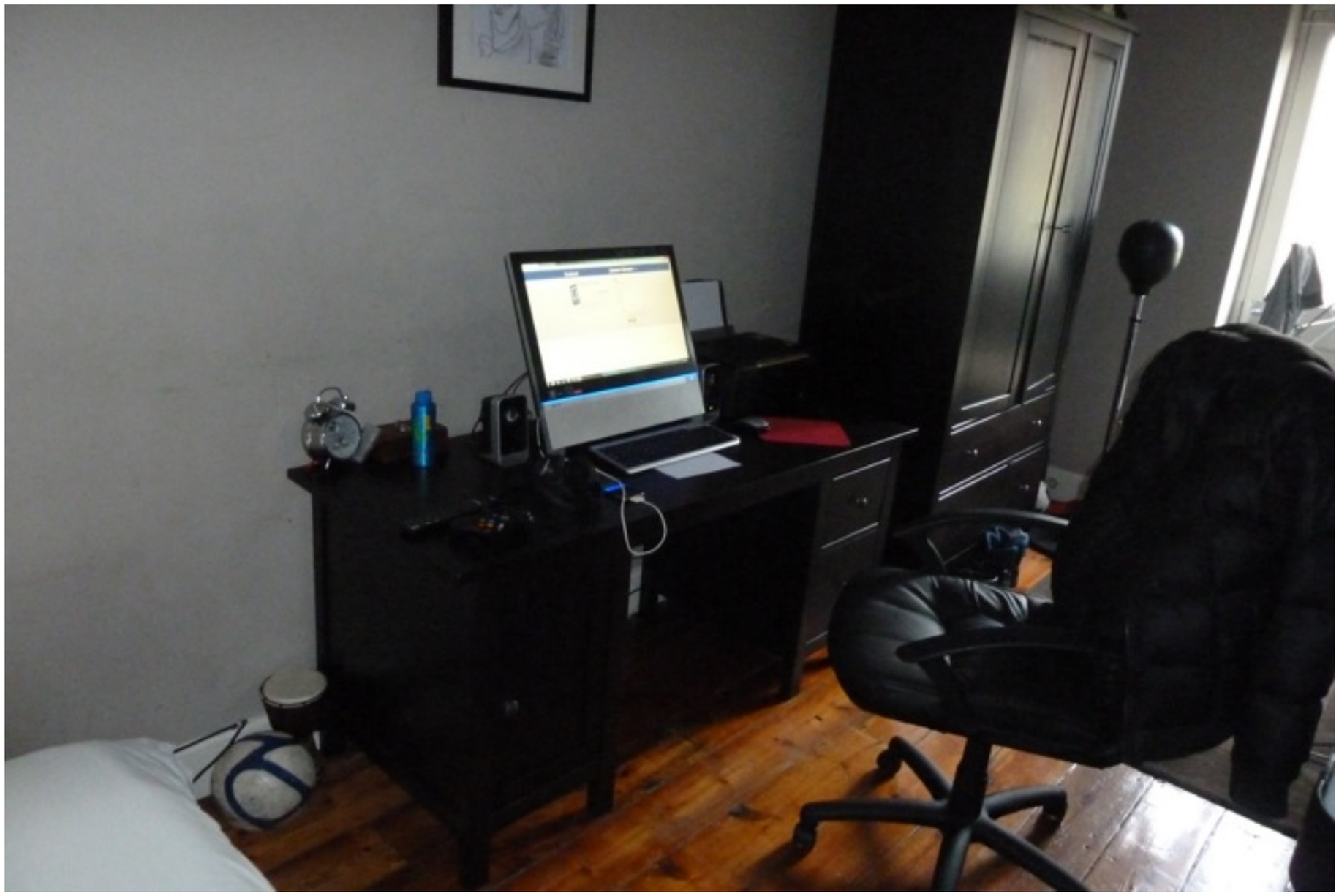
Looking like School

Shane -



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dedicated space/multiuse

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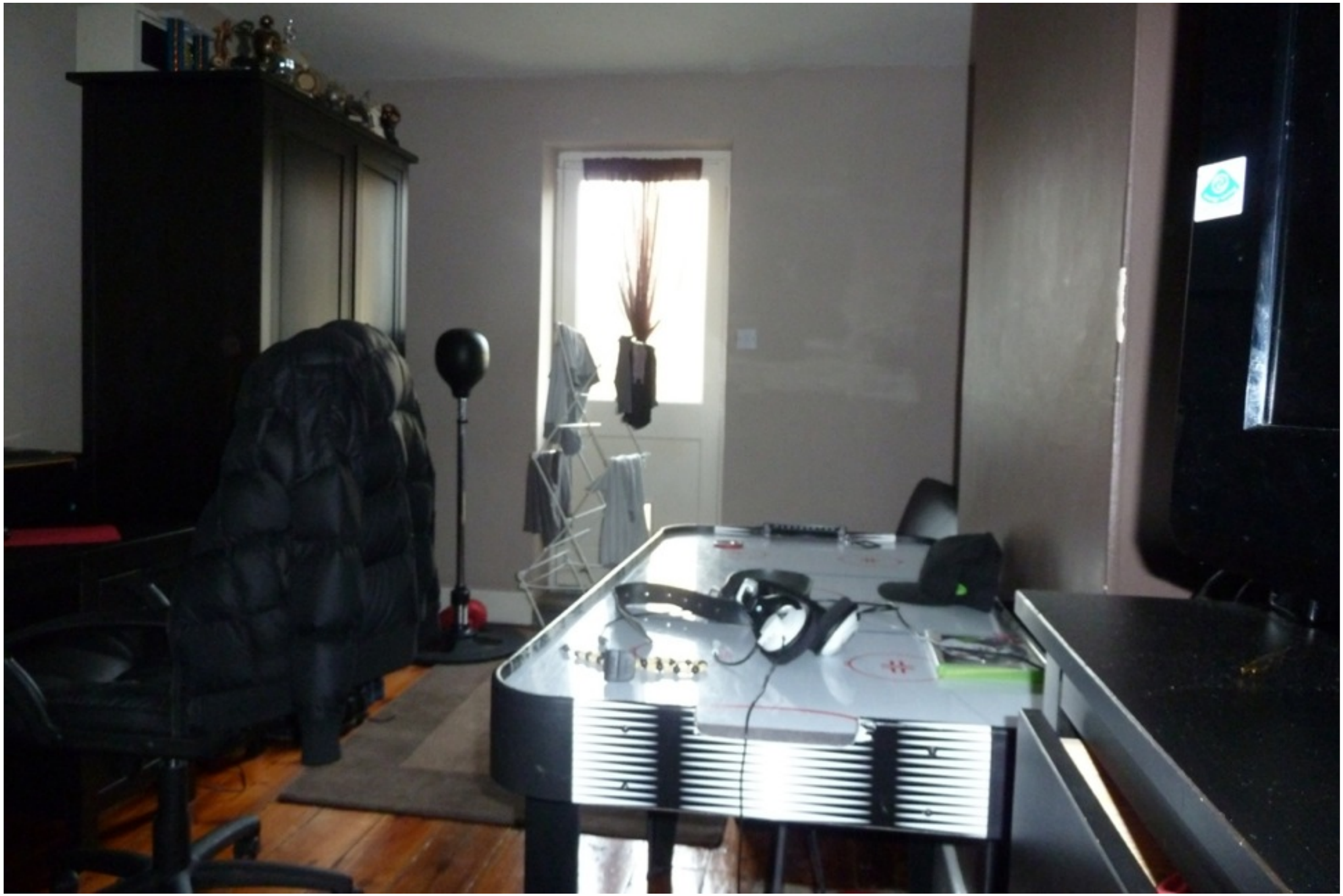

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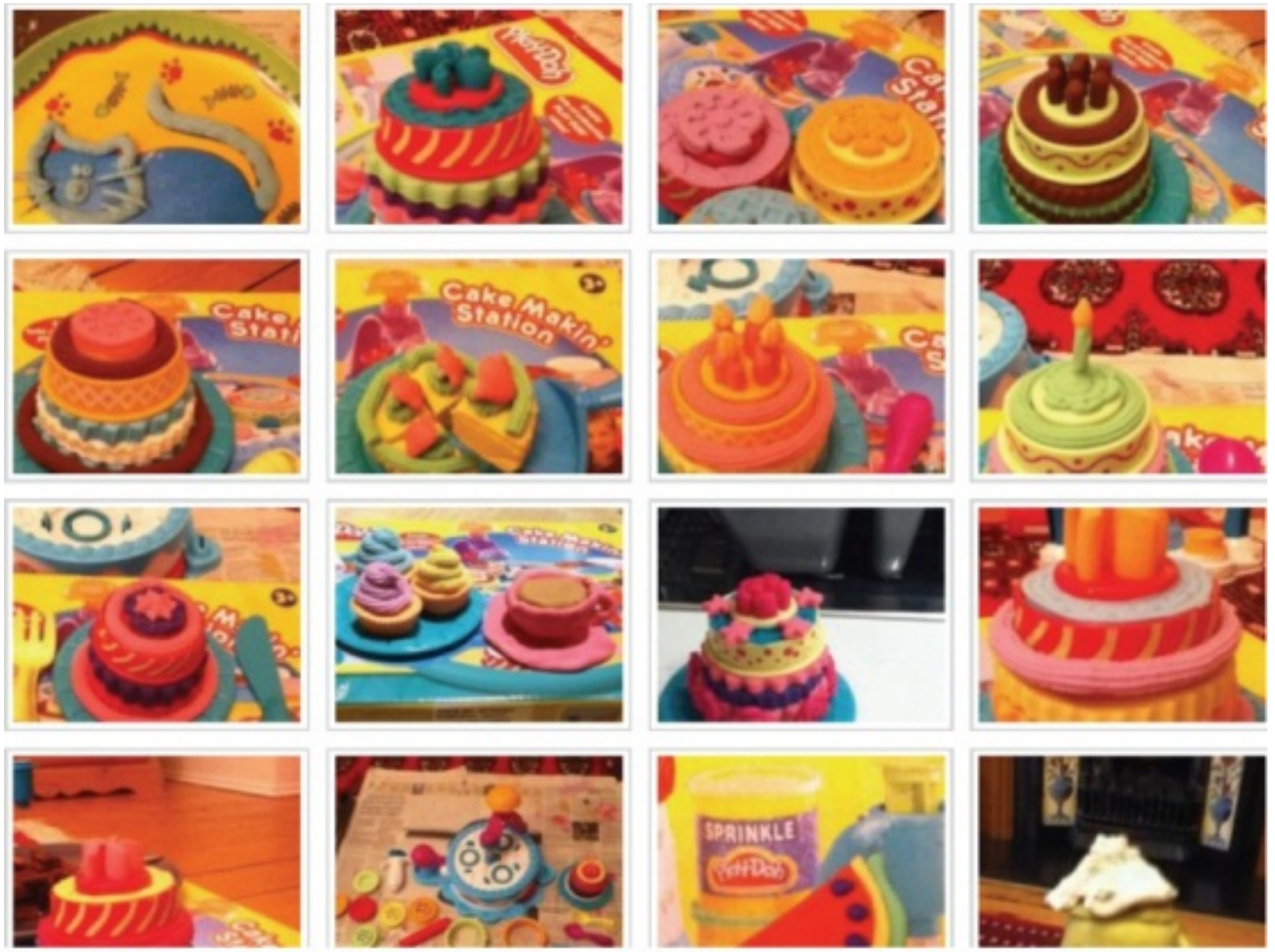
Class and confidence

Dominic -

Sara -



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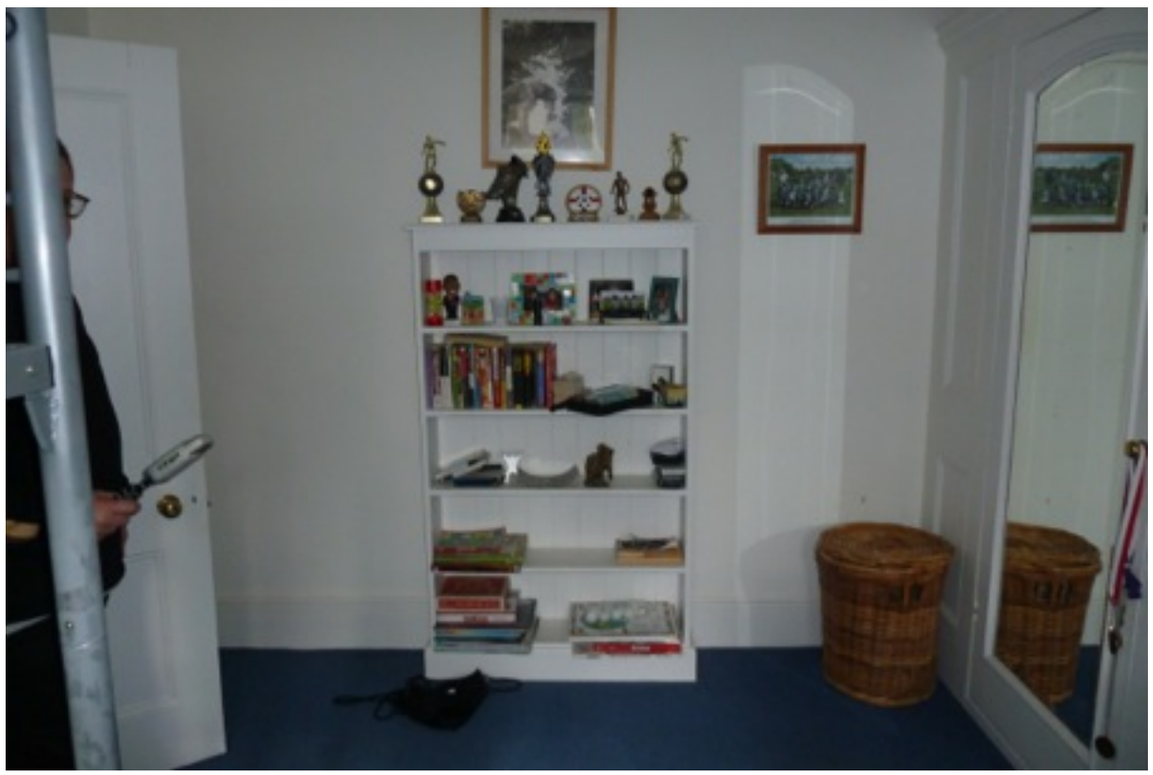

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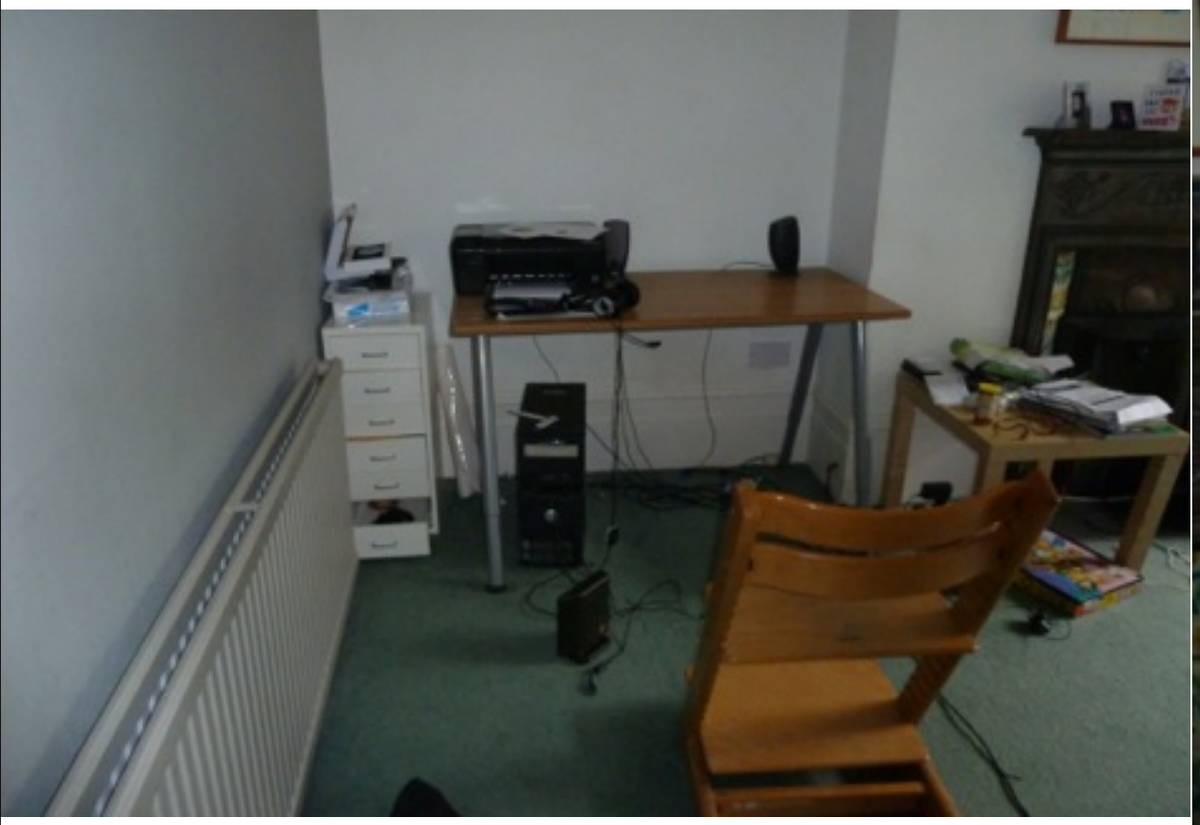

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A hierarchy of learning practices and knowledge domains

Adam -

Giselle -

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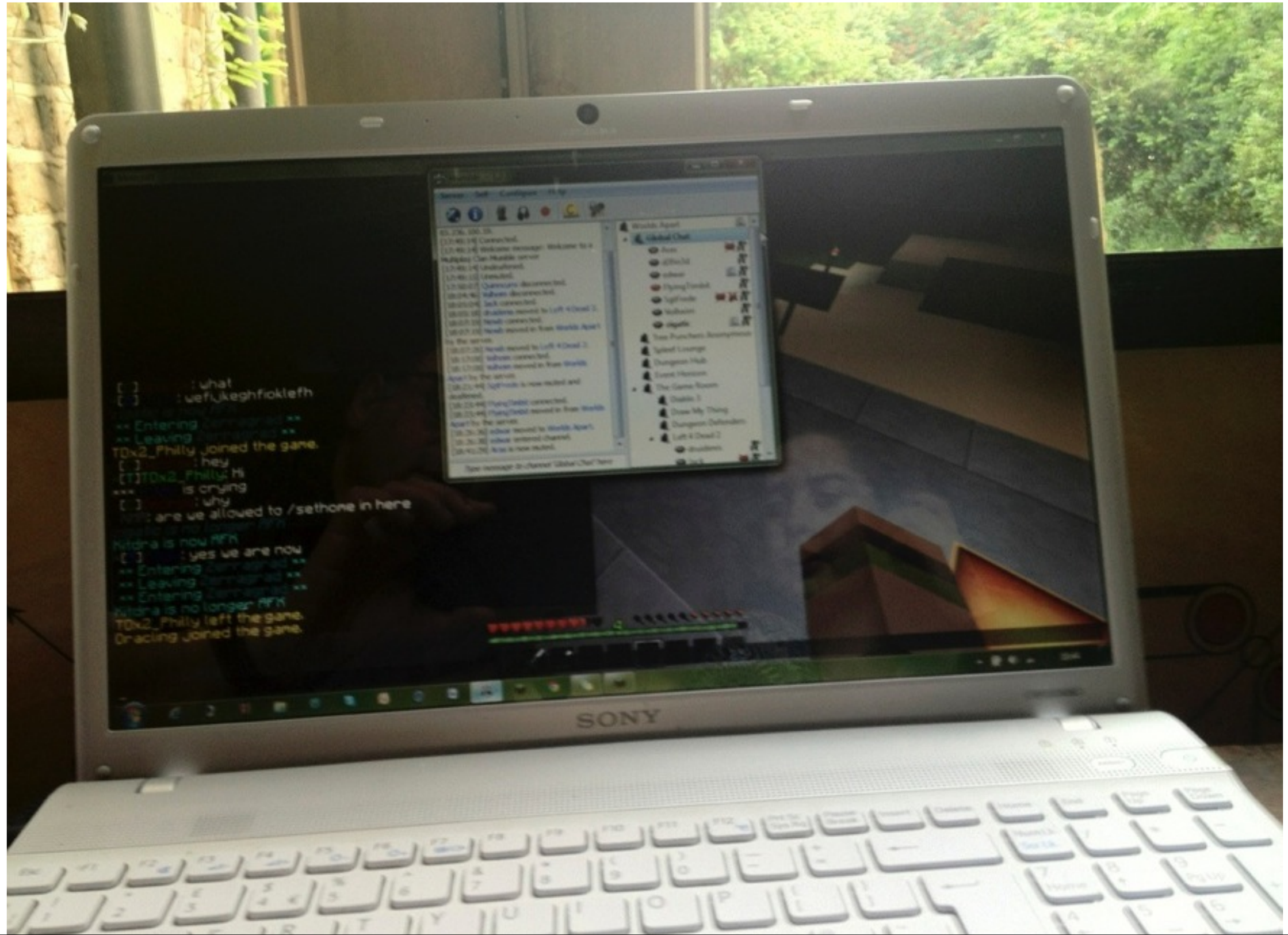

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dedicated space/multiuse

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1. tacit agreement among family members about what is meant by learning
2. the activities associated with such a definition in terms of disciplines or habits and
3. the role of media technology as medium, surrogate or proxy for the learning itself

dis/connected learning and the social worlds of young people....

4. Music, social capital and learning (findings about learner identity)

Preliminary and follow up visit
Observational and interview sessions
Role of other family members
Contrast with observations at school and other school data (reports, assembly)

dis/connected learning and the social worlds of young people...

	GA	**SN**	**AE**	**FN**	**MS**	**JB**
	Female 'Bohemian' , cosmopolitan Middle class	Male Born in Turkey Turkish/Alevi Rural class	Female Mixed Race Downward class trajectory	Male East African Working class	Male Middle class	Male Working class
Instrument	Piano, Guitar, Singing, Recording	Saz Singing	Violin	Guitar	Piano	Keyboard Decks
Private Lesson	Y (45 mins)	Y	N	N	Y (30 mins)	N
In school instrumental lessons	N	N	Not any more	N	N	N
Frequency of lessons	1 a week	2 a week	N	N	1 a week	N
Accreditation	N	N	N	N	Y	N
Hrs. practice a week outside lesson	2	5	N	7/9	2	N
Can read music	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N
Uses Youtube and self-teaching	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
Taste cultures or played music	Own –led by	Traditional -but also what he enjoys	Classical – not what she listens to	Own –led by	Classical – not what he listens to	Classical – not what he listens to
Mode of learning	Engaged, active, self-directed	Engaged, disciplined (unlike school)	Idealised, aspirational	Autodidact-self-disciplined	As directed, disciplined	Idealised, aspirational
Place of music in life	Very important to ID	Proud of accomplishment	For pleasure and as domain she aspires to work in	Central to ID	Likes idea of virtuosi- has clear and important tastes	As leisure, - important to father
Imagined role of music in future	Dominant	Within community activities	Important	As a career	As an secondary skill	As a hobby
Music and Identity	Expressive artistic self	Cultural (Alevi) , family & community	Past self and dreams of future	Future self	Instrumental (as an accomplishment)	Future self
Music consumption	Committed, intense	Committed	Committed, intense	Committed, intense	Committed	Casual
Attitude towards school music	Negative	Indifferent	Negative - wants to study further	Disappointed	Negative	Positive

Learner Identity, Culture & Class

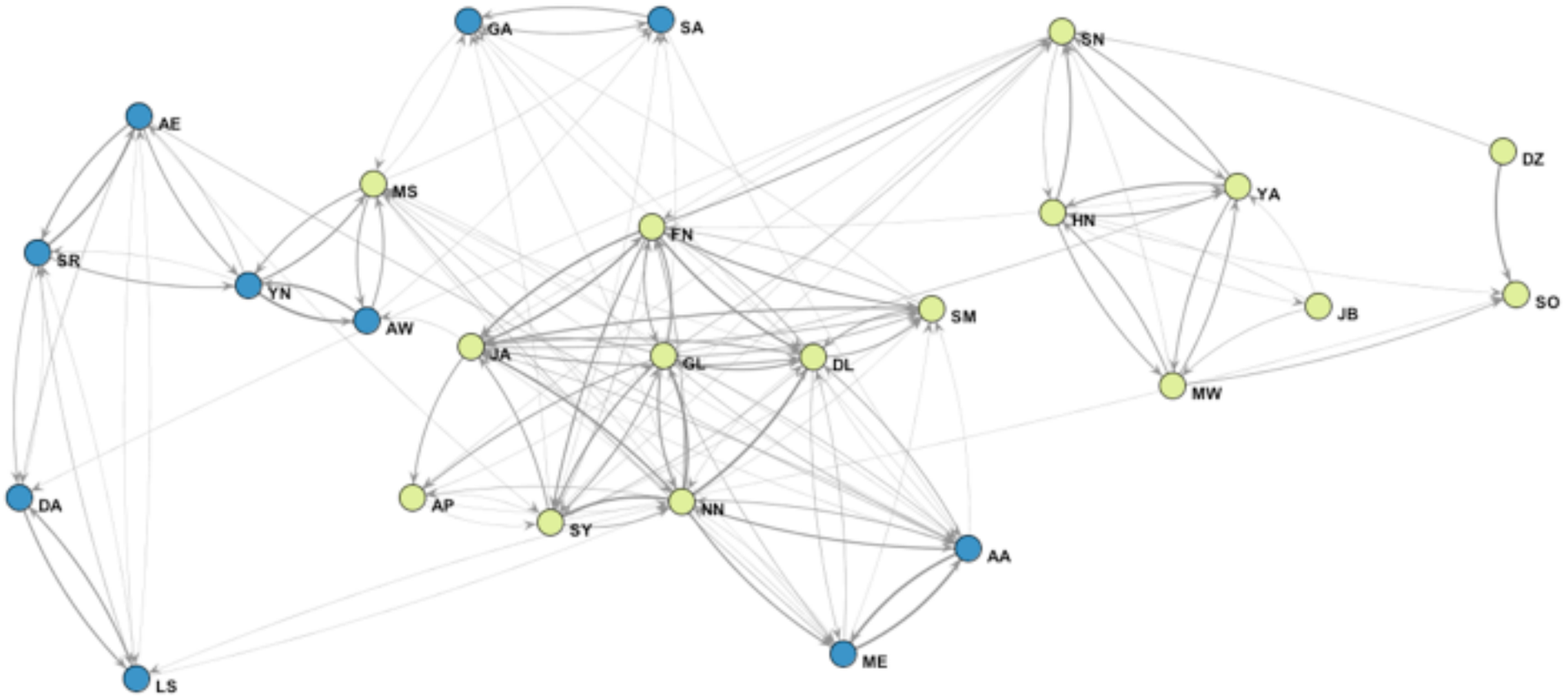
- prospective, retrospective
- instrumental & vocational
- expressive/artistic
- cultural (community and youth)
- reputational & self-identity
- independent/supervised (intrinsic/extrinsic)

5. Friendships, Cliques, Community and Networks (Findings about social capital in action)

Whole Network
Ego Network

1 :Who is your 'friend' on Facebook ?
2 :Who have you asked to help you with homework ?
3 :Who do you hang out with, out of school ?
4 :Who would you call a close friend ?
5 :Who do you chat with by text, Facebook, BBM or MSN ?
6:Who have you asked for help or advice about a personal problem ?
7:Who have you done an out-of-school activity with – like sport, music, drama ?
8:Who have you flirted with ?
9:Who do you spend time with online (e.g. gaming, Facebook)?

Whole Network



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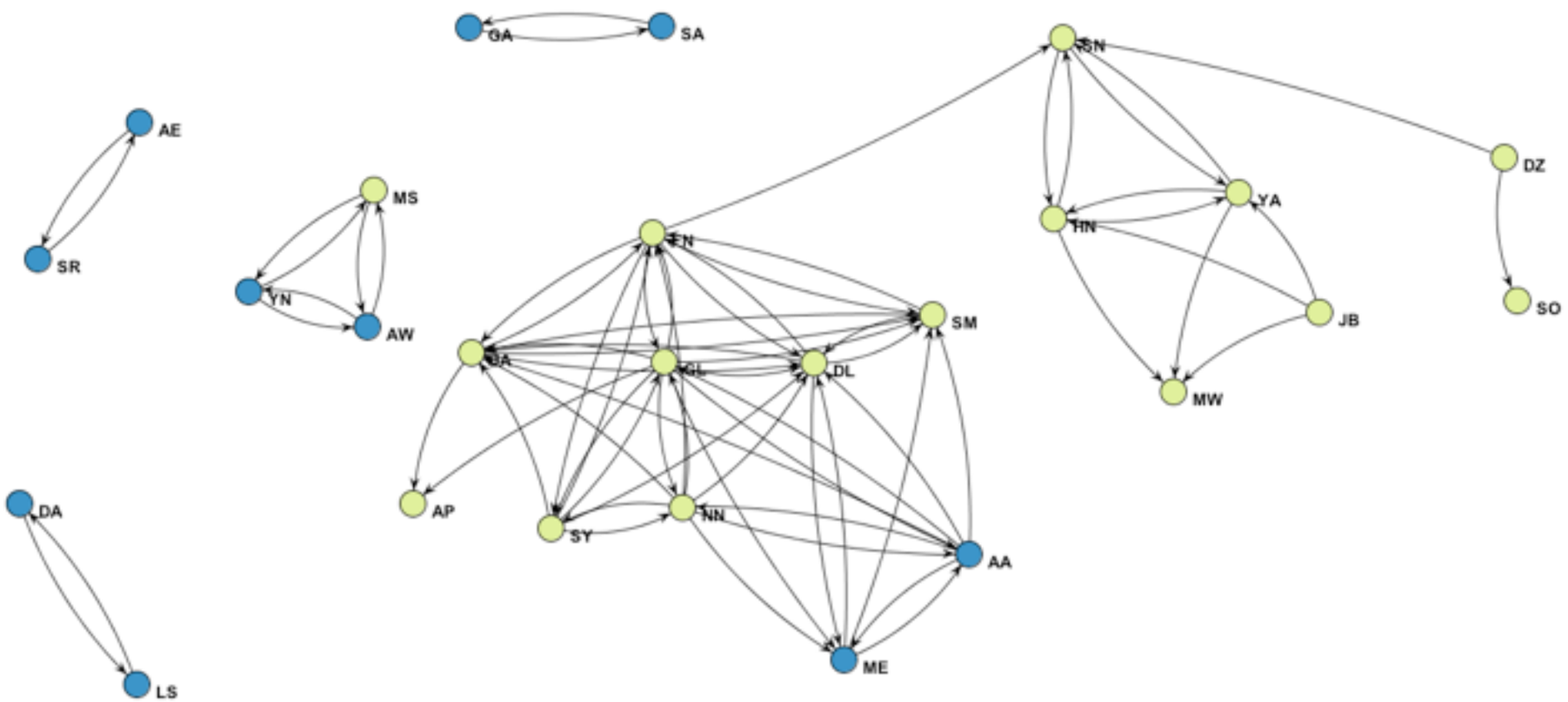
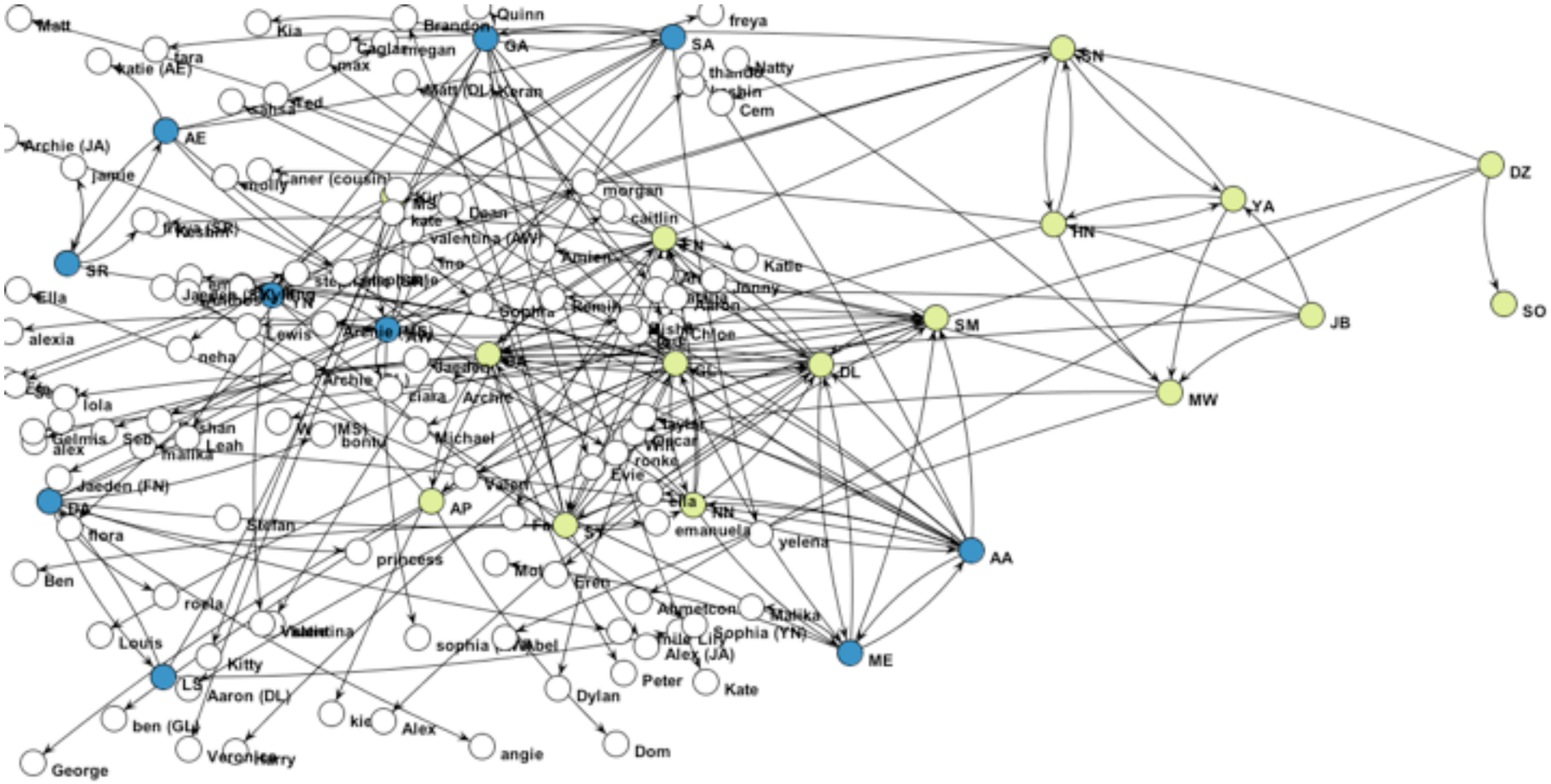
3 : Who do you hang out with, out of school ?



3 : Who do you hang out with, out of school ?
+ Ego network



The meaning of Networks

- Economic and Social Capital
- Gatekeeping access - who and how?
- Networks of networks
- Inclusion/Exclusion as an active and passive process
- Isolates and Isolation
- The ‘glue’ holding groups together
- Access but what mobility?

6. Towards the -isation of everything

1. Individualisation
   - inscribed in commercialisation of the home
   - the project of the self/resistance- surveillance
2. Self-Making
   - negotiation/regulation -everyday life
   - being,becoming, belonging (in networks)
3. Pedagogicization/Corporatisation
   - evasion/incorporation schooling
   - curricularisation of leisure
   - re-contextualisation into the everyday

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