

☒ On Monday I gave a talk on social media research and the Unlike Us agenda at the art education masters of the Zurich Art School. The next morning 40 or so students gave 'like', 'dislike' or 'whatever' answers to a few theses they formulated themselves after having read my What's the Social in Social Media text. I thought the outcome was interesting enough to share them here. The debate was lively but a bit general, lacking the usual emotional attachment to the topic. As it turned out, most students were on Facebook (95%) but did not use it in class and were not in contact with each other through Facebook (or Twitter, for that matter). They either used it to stay in contact with friends and family (strictly private) or for professional purposes. Here is the outcome:

1. Social networks are social: yes 13, no 14, whatever 2.
2. Purpose of social networks is not to find information but to make contacts: 14 yes, 14 no, 2 whatever.
3. Excessive use of social media is dangerous: yes 22, no 8, whatever 1.
4. Social media are a representation of the real world: 18 no, 6 yes, 3 whatever.
5. Social media influence world events: 22 yes, 5 no, whatever 1.

Number 1 and 2 seemed to be controversial, but thesis 3, 4 and 5 less so.

Students also made a selection of a few 'social media' videos that we watched together and then discussed:

The cybermobbing video of Amanda Todd:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRxfTyNa24A>

Can I be your friend: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDycZH0CA4I>

A futuristic short Film:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=lK_cdkpazjI#!

Future hipster:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=uGi_r9xlvqE