

# DEAR MAINSTREAM PRESS, MEET YOUR RIVAL. FROM HIGH SCHOOL

LE 25 JUIN 2010 VITTORIO ZAMBARDINO

Vittorio Zambardino, Italy's Repubblica veteran and author of the blog "Digital Scenes" urges his fellows not to ignore the challenges induced by the rise of non-professional contributors. Instructive.

I have recently come across the work of a (remarkably) interesting journalist, who has mostly focused on the appeal trial against Senator Marcello Dell'Utri (Freedom People, Silvio Berlusconi's party) indicted for his relations with the Sicilian mafia.

A number of things have struck me.

First of all, Federico Pignalberti writes for Agoravox Italia, a citizen journalism website founded and managed by young people. Also, he has been following the trial whilst studying in the comfort of his home. **And he's only 17.**



***"When I began working on this, I noticed no one was covering dell'Utri's trial. I found this absurd" – Federico told me on the phone. "I started following the hearing on the radio. I got hold of many phone numbers. I am sent documents all the time and work on it every day".***



I passed Federico's work over to a colleague, an expert on judicial news. Such was his reaction: *"This is outstanding! I'm going to keep his articles since I couldn't follow the trial myself"*.

Indeed, I am not the only one to be impressed by Federico's work. **Aside from his age, Federico's articles are edited and published by a group of 27/30 years-old journalists working in Paris** (in the French Agoravox HQ) i.e. people that in traditional Italian newsrooms would be nothing more than interns.

## We keep considering our profession a closed industry

**Dear fellow journalists, are we or are we not going to face reality?** We keep placing our profession in an ivory tower, conceiving it as a closed industry made in official places, just like a film. But, just like in film industry, there are people willing to live journalism as an open activity which is free for anyone — and often free from journalism schools — whereby they don't have to ask anyone permission.

**And, as you can see, the point is that they're doing it well.** If you dared attend Italy's journalism festivals or debates (as I do whenever I get a chance) you would notice that at this time there are a lot of Federicos in our country.

They don't have to ask anyone to practice the sort of journalism that is of civic value ("How absurd that nobody is following the trial!" he said).

The issue is not that Federico should be able to find a job, after all he has found one on his own (though I suspect Agoravox is not paying him). In any case, one day he'll find a job, and to be frank, I don't know whether I wish him to be hired at all. The point is that you are — we are — disintermediated. **The iPad will not save us. Only the highest quality in journalism will save us from the brutal competition brought by all the world's Federicos.**

So be careful, these little journalism geniuses hold the future in their hands.

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Original post : **Il nostro inviato dal liceo scientifico ci fa concorrenza. Bene** –  
Translation **Adriano Farano**

The teenager's articles **on AgoraVox**. The french version of this post : **Presse tradi, ton rival est un lycéen de dix-sept ans**

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## 2 pings

Les tweets qui mentionnent Beware traditional press, your rival is a 17 year old teenager » Article » [owni.fr](#), digital journalism -- [Topsy.com](#) le 25 juin 2010 - 20:18

*[...] Ce billet était mentionné sur Twitter par [damien douani](#), [Maria Lucia Martin](#) et [Owni](#), [Flash Presse](#). [Flash Presse](#) a dit: Beware traditional press, your rival is a 17 year old teenager <http://goo.gl/fb/RBGPi> [...]*

Presse tradi, ton rival est un lycéen de dix-sept ans | [Lick My Chip](#) ! le 30 juin 2010 - 13:01

*[...] Version anglaise : Dear mainstream press, meet your rival. From high schoolress [...]*