Abstract
In a background of deep inequality and social exclusion, in which young people see the prospects of carrying out their projects sensibly undermined, public university becomes an essential place for discussion. Our research looks into the representations that the young have developed about school and university. These representations were already inherent to a social system of representations of historical nature which became specific with the hegemony of neoliberal policies. This study focuses on the meanings resulting from two age groups: a) those who finished high school the year before entering university and b) those over thirty years old. Our purpose has been to contrast how much these two groups reproduce and/or question those meanings that modernity has shaped as legitimate by giving education a main role as a vehicle to social and economic progress. While younger people identify with those meanings sustained by Keynesian concepts, the second group reveals a major crisis of representation. A methodological strategy was developed, based on a triangulation of sources, starting with a survey taken among all the students who finished the first year of the Educational Sciences Department at the University of Lujan, in the year 2002. Students´ reports about the meaning of being university students and discussion forums were also taken into account.

Keywords
Young people, Social representation, Projects, School, University.