

## TECH1002-17 Social Media & Technology

### Lecture Seventeen: Digital Literacies

001	<p><b>Why do we Need Literacies?</b></p> <p><b>Digital Literacies:</b>          “The know-how that empowers the best of bloggers and videobloggers, netizens, Twitterers, and online community participants – those who use digital media to express themselves, socialize, advocate, organize, educate, and grow collective intelligence...the Webwide aggregation of [individual] participation’ is where ‘the literacy of participation shades into the literacy of collaboration” (Rheingold, 2012, p. 9).</p>
002	<p><b>Rheingold – Network Smarts</b></p> <p>According to Howard Rheingold literacy can no longer be conceived as a solitary skill or attribute, but must incorporate increased levels of collaboration and social competency. Rheingold’s five literacies for thriving online are:</p> <p>How does Tom Cox manage his social conversations and hold our attention? <a href="http://www.tom-cox.com/">http://www.tom-cox.com/</a></p>
003	<p><b>Attention:</b> According to Rheingold thinking critically and mindfully in the network media environments that we share is much more difficult than in previous times because of the volume of traffic and information, and because of the speed at which new information is sent to us. Successfully filtering this information is based on training our attention management skills and focussing on how we can filter out the bad information that we don’t desire. According to Rheingold, “basic information literacy, widely distributed, is the best protection for the knowledge commons; a sufficient portion of critical consumers among the online population can become a strong defence against the noise-death of the internet”.</p>
004	<p><b>Participation:</b> New media technologies allow a degree of participation in the communications process like never before. According to Rheingold, recognising the potential power of the media equipment that many of us carry around with us in our pockets is a starting point for a more general change in society, one that values contributions more than passive receivers of information. As Rheingold says, ‘a participant is active’ and forms of collaboration have the potential for greater levels of global social understanding.</p> <p><b>Collaboration:</b> Social networking tools have the power, according to Rheingold, to ‘amplify’ the collective actions that we may wish to undertake. As we use the net to overcome barriers to cooperation we will find, according to Rheingold, that we will be able to achieve ‘higher’ ends and goals based on the idea that as humans we are ‘optimised’ for social activity and collective problem solving.</p>
005	<p><b>Critical Consumption of Information (‘crap detection’):</b> According to Rheingold basic information literacy is essential if we are to protect ourselves as consumers and citizens online. Being able to tell the difference between the spin and the marketing messages and those that are authentic messages of people actively engaged in activities for the benefit of other people is essential. How do we trust information to be accurate? Rheingold calls this skill an intention and suggests that we ensure that our ‘crap detectors’ are well attuned to filter out the credible from the incredible information.</p> <p><b>Network Smarts:</b> Rheingold argues that we need to encourage a wide range of skills to help us manage our life online in the form of Net Smarts. These are skills that will help us to maintain our social position and enable us to manage our reputations online, engage in different social networks and to track and trace the footprints that we leave on the net without undermining our sense of self as individuals, or our ethical sense as a community. Rheingold see these net smarts as a set of media tools that we can learn to use effectively.</p>
006	<p><b>Collaborative Literacies</b></p> <p>According to Pierre Levy “we need to promote organisational cultures and technical environments conducive to transparency, flexible reorganisation of skill networks and continuous collaborative creation of immediately usable knowledge” (Levy, 2013, p. 104).</p>

	<p>What digital literacies and skills should we adopt if we are to use wikis in the workplace?</p> <p>Pierre Levy advocates that the modern business organisation should be thought of as a “knowledge community.” This community develops, shares and uses knowledge in a way that is reflexive, or self-aware, and which is able to think about its own forms of organisation and modelling. As Levy describes this, “the work of self-modelling that allows the community to synthetically represent itself to itself its own emergent cognitive processes.” This means that an organisation has to think about how it thinks, and what it expects to get from different types of thinking.</p> <p>Levy explains that “whether we are producing useful documents, clarifying or improving shared symbolic structures, spreading the most effective methods and practices or raising individual and collective awareness of the emergent cognition for the community, we will almost always find ourselves confronted with the problem of explicating implicit knowledge and processes.” What Levy suggests, then, is that an organisation has to look at the way that it supports conversation and the sharing of tacit knowledge, as much as the way that it shares formal and previously established knowledge.</p>
007	<p>Levy believes that “we need to promote organisational and technical environments conducive to transparency, flexible reorganisation of skill networks and continuous collaborative creation of immediately usable knowledge.” This means fostering a dialogue within an organisation that is trusting and allows people to comprehend the differences between knowledge that is explicit and clear, and knowledge that is implicit and emergent.</p> <p>A wiki is a good examples of an electronic tool that allows people to manage knowledge within an organisation because it is based on collaboration, sharing and co-development, rather than delineated expert knowledge that is maintained through internal processes of hierarchal endorsement, such as professional qualifications and roles.</p> <p>A wiki offers emergent knowledge communities the opportunity to share and to collaborate in the formation of knowledge, and to regulate the flow of personal information as well as the flow of formal information.</p>
008	<p><b>Wiki Smarts</b> Jason Mittell defines the principles of wikis as being characterised by a sense of Freedom, Transparency, Fluidity, Emergence and Collective Intelligence.</p> <p><b>Freedom:</b> Wikis are therefore open to a wide range of uses beyond traditional forms of knowledge organisation, and they can be used for collaborative authoring, projects, organising documents or sharing information. Wikis are non-hierarchical and are open to different contributors to create and post entries. Readers of wikis are free to navigate the pages via hyperlinks, key word searches, random pages, and so on, without a defined ‘route’ through the wiki (i.e. a contents page).</p>
009	<p><b>Transparency:</b> wikis show and track what changes have been made to an entry and by who. As a community of users this is non-hierarchical and promotes non-hierarchical working based around the discussion components of the wiki that allow contributors to edit, re-edit and compare different versions of an entry while posting. Any contributor can make and edit an entry, without a ‘hierarchy’ enforcing an editorial policy. If there is a dispute then it is discussed in an open manner. Wikis trace and show the work that went into producing them.</p> <p><b>Fluidity:</b> Wikis are easy to display content that can be read on a wide range of browsers. Wikis can be edited and updated easily, while linked to different pages, sources of content or external media files. Pages in a wiki are always changing and being updated. Contributors then ‘watch’ a page to see if it is added to or amended by other contributors.</p>
010	<p><b>Emergence:</b> Wikis are not organised centrally, and they are not planned. They rely instead on the posting of entries by participants who decide between themselves which entries should be made. The reader is free to navigate a wiki in a similar manner. The principles that shape the wiki are decided on by the users who form the community of interest based around the subjects and the topics covered. Disputes are managed through a process of resolution and compromise, which looks to other sources of information as a point of expression in an ongoing debate.</p> <p><b>Collective Intelligence:</b> Wikis allow for the tracking and discussion of ongoing projects. In this way wikis open up</p>

	<p>the possibility that we can manage a project by pooling the collective resources and knowledge of the different user's active in the project. So, rather than relying on a centralised management authority to validate the knowledge demonstrated in a wiki, the users and the readers of a wiki are able to discuss and add comments and suggestions for improvements, and to mark instances of information that is yet to be verified for later updates. In this way a wiki is said to be able to exceed the capabilities of the individual and produce a wider-ranging model of knowledge that draws on a cognitively diverse range of sources.</p>
	<p><b>Tom Cox: Under the Paw</b>  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/pages/Tom-Cox/93407930986">https://www.facebook.com/pages/Tom-Cox/93407930986</a>  <a href="http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2012/dec/05/cat-with-17-lives">http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2012/dec/05/cat-with-17-lives</a>  <a href="http://www.tom-cox.com/">http://www.tom-cox.com/</a></p>
011	<p><b>Why Do We Need Digital Literacy?</b>  Henry Jenkins et al suggests that while “we are excited about lowering the barriers of entry to cultural production, we should not assume that audience activities involving greater media production skills are necessarily more valuable and meaningful to other audience members” (Jenkins, Ford, &amp; Green, 2013, p. 154).</p> <p>To what extent does DIY media both enhances or reduces participation in media culture?</p>
012	<p>The traditional assumption is that when people consume media they are just listening or watching content that is produced by other people. Jenkins <i>et al</i> point out, however, that “even those who are ‘just’ reading, listening, or watching do so differently in a world where they recognise their potential to contribute to broader conversations about that content than in a world where they are locked out of meaningful participation.”</p>
013	<p>Jenkins <i>et al</i> suggest that there is a growing focus on the way that people participate in the production of media and the meanings that are attributed to different media forms. In this respect the idea of the ‘cultural producer’ has become to the forefront of thinking about new forms of media, particularly as there is a push-back against ideas of audience passivity and inactivity associated with the role of the media consumer.</p> <p>Networks are said, therefore, to promote a different form of engagement, and that audience are no longer viewed as passive, but are instead increasingly being conceived as participative and productive. Jenkins et al suggest that this is a shift from one set of cognitive frames to another: “lurking versus legitimate peripheral participation; resistance versus participation; audiences versus publics; participation versus collaboration, hearing versus listening; consumers versus co-creators.”</p>
014	<p>The desire to participate more effectively stems from a “desire for us all to exercise greater power over the decisions which impact the quality of our everyday lives as citizens.” According to Jenkins <i>et al</i> both concepts of participation and consumption exist in an uneasy tension that is being tested by changes in technology and changes in the expectations of audiences who are more willing to form grassroots organisations that challenge the passive consumption model of media that is more widely encountered, and therefore giving way to a wider sense of social change and progressive development.</p>
015	<p>Jenkins <i>et al</i> suggest that “seeing participation as a model with increasing levels of more intense engagement masks the degree to which all participants work together in an economy operating under some combination of market and nonmarket logic, with various audiences performing tasks that support one another.”</p> <p>This challenges the dominant view that only a small, elite, number of people have the skills and ability to make meaningful media content, and that the general audience lacks the knowledge and motivation to make meaningful contributions and play an active role in civic life. By championing participation, according to Jenkins <i>et al</i>, we are able to demystify the “mystique” and the “magic” of the professional media industries.</p>
	<p>Even in the 1870s, humans were obsessed with ridiculous photos of cats  <a href="http://io9.gizmodo.com/5900334/even-in-the-1870s-humans-were-obsessed-with-ridiculous-photos-of-cats">http://io9.gizmodo.com/5900334/even-in-the-1870s-humans-were-obsessed-with-ridiculous-photos-of-cats</a></p> <p>During the 1870s, the Brighton photographer <b>Harry Pointer</b> (1822-1889) became well known for a series of carte-de-visite photographs which featured his pet cats. Pointer began by taking conventional photographs of cats resting, drinking milk or sleeping in a basket, but from around 1870 he</p>

	<p>specialised in photographing cats in a variety of poses, placing his cats in settings that would create a humorous or appealing picture. Pointer often arranged his cats in unusual poses that mimicked human activities - a cat riding a tricycle, cats roller-skating and even a cat taking a photograph with a camera. Harry Pointer soon realised that even a relatively straight-forward cat photograph could be turned into an amusing or appealing image by adding a written caption.  <a href="http://www.photohistory-sussex.co.uk/BTNPointerCats.htm">http://www.photohistory-sussex.co.uk/BTNPointerCats.htm</a></p>
016	<p><b>Doug Belshaw’s Essential Elements of Digital Literacies are:</b> (Belshaw, 2013)</p> <p><b>Cu: Cultural</b> - Developing a cultural component of digital literacy means that agents able to move easily between different digital environments and use learning technologies in a variety of different contexts. For example , knowing how to distinguish between using Facebook for personal and social connections, and using it for academic coursework. Being aware of the norms, values and codes that are specific to a subject and how these might impact on the use of different learning technologies.</p> <p><b>Cg: Cognitive</b> – Being able to master the ‘how-to’s of specific tools and technologies that are important for the development of a learner, including those which are subject-specific as well as more general tools that will make agents into a more digitally literate person. Developing our cognitive element by engaging with a wide range of operating systems, platforms, devices and software and looking for developmental and training opportunities that expose learners to these tools.</p> <p><b>Cn: Constructive</b> - To develop the Constructive element learning agents need to understand and demonstrate how to take existing resources and content and re-use/remix them to create something new that benefits their learning. Showing awareness of the different ways that a learning agent can license resources so that others can benefit from the content that they create.</p> <p><b>Co: Communicative</b> - Understanding the importance of networks and communication and the important role they play in developing an agents digital literacy capability. This includes understanding the many different ways learners can communicate with different devices, including mobile and other digital devices. Learning agents also need to develop an understanding of the particular norms, values, protocols and ethics that are appropriate to social networking and other web 2.0 technologies.</p> <p><b>Cf: Confidence</b> - Understanding the importance of networks and communication and the important role they play in developing the competence and skills that learning agents have as digital literacy. This includes understanding the many different ways we can communicate with different devices, including mobile and other digital devices. Developing an understanding of the particular norms, values, protocols and ethics that are appropriate to social networking and other web 2.0 technologies.</p> <p><b>Cr: Creative</b> - To develop a Creative element that takes advantage of the digital technologies we have access to, and creating new things which have value to oneself and others. Being prepared to take risks and to value randomness and discovery when engaging with digital technologies, and developing an understanding of the processes, procedures and systems that lie behind digital technologies rather than the specific elements of software/hardware involved.</p> <p><b>Ct: Critical</b> – As a critical user of digital technologies we become aware of the power structures and assumptions that are embedded behind different digital tools and practices. For example, thinking about an audience and how they might interpret digital texts in different ways. Needing to develop an understanding of online security, identity and data management in literacy practices.</p> <p><b>Ci: Civic</b> – being able to make use of digital technologies in order to prepare ourselves to participate as fully as possible in society. Developing an awareness of how digital environment can help communities to self-organise and foster links with local, national and global organisations. Looking for opportunities for public engagement, global citizenship and the enhancement of democracy through the use of digital technologies.  <a href="http://digilitpride.wordpress.com/2012/10/01/making-sense-of-the-8-elements-of-digital-literacy/">http://digilitpride.wordpress.com/2012/10/01/making-sense-of-the-8-elements-of-digital-literacy/</a></p>
017	<p><b>Everyday Life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What people do, think and feel on a daily basis</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitual routines of living determined by environmental and social conditions of existence</li> <li>• Repetitions around the patterns of seasonal, hourly, weekly and yearly life</li> <li>• Mundane, ordinary existence</li> </ul>
018	<p><b>Everyday life is technically mediated</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The media are central to the way that we record, recall, share and produce what can be experienced as part of everyday life...</li> <li>• Thinking about everyday life helps me think about media and vice versa...</li> </ul> <p>What kind of technically mediated everyday social life are you living if your day begins and ends with you looking at your smartphone?</p>
019	<p><b>What is social media? (Mayfield, 2008).</b></p> <p>Social media is best understood as a group of new kinds of online media, which share most or all of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation: encouragement of contributions and feedback from everyone who is interested, blurring the line between media and audience</li> <li>• Openness: to feedback and participation, encouraging voting, comments and the sharing of information</li> <li>• Conversation: whereas traditional media is about “broadcast” (content transmitted or distributed to an audience) social media is better seen as a two-way conversation</li> <li>• Community: communities form quickly and communicate effectively through sharing common interests</li> <li>• Connectedness: making use of links to other sites, resources and people</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.antonymayfield.com/2008/03/22/what-is-social-media-ebook-on-mashable/">http://www.antonymayfield.com/2008/03/22/what-is-social-media-ebook-on-mashable/</a></p>
020	<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Mundane, ordinariness of a new technology absorbed into the fabric of everyday life (that happens to all media technologies). ‘...networked individualism is woven into our lives. The Web is no longer a special place but rather part of most of what we do’ (Rheingold, 2012, p.213).</p> <p>“The shadow face of authority is authoritarianism; that of collaboration peer pressure and conformity; that of autonomy narcissism, wilfulness and isolation. The challenge is to design institutions which manifest valid forms of these principles; and to find ways in which they can be maintained in self-correcting and creative tension” (Heron &amp; Reason, 1997).</p>
<b>References:</b>	

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