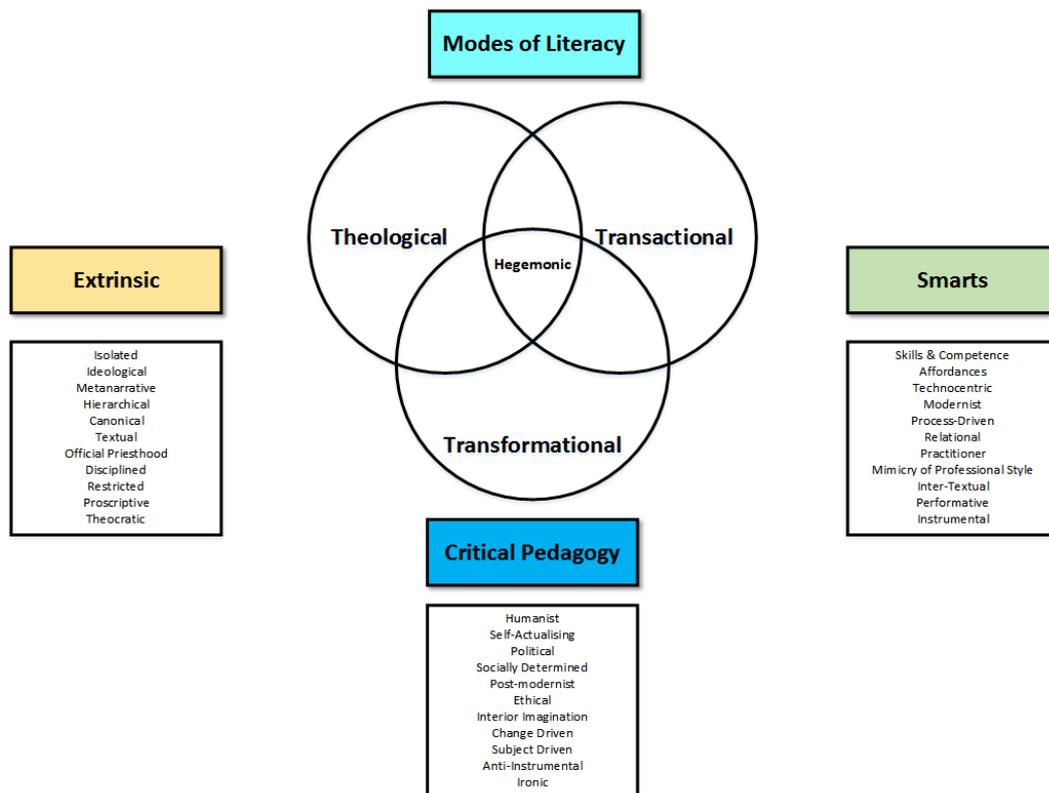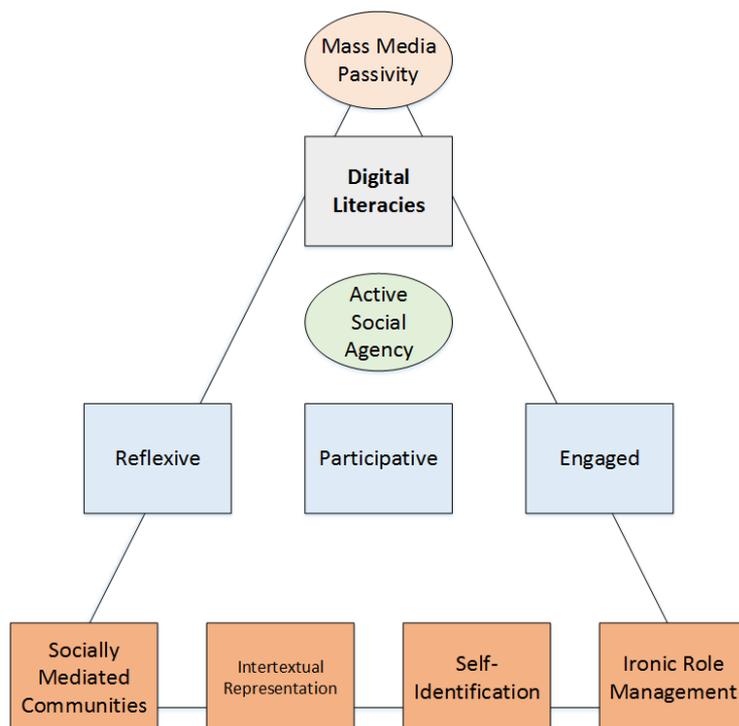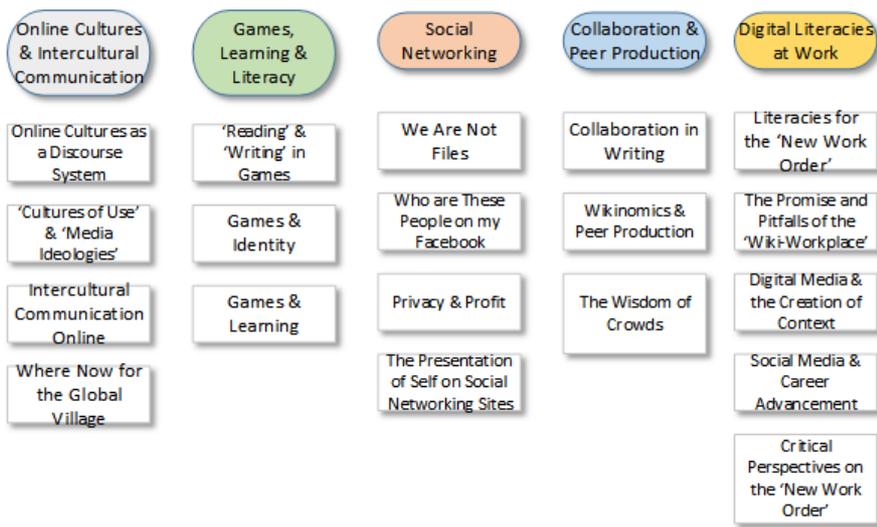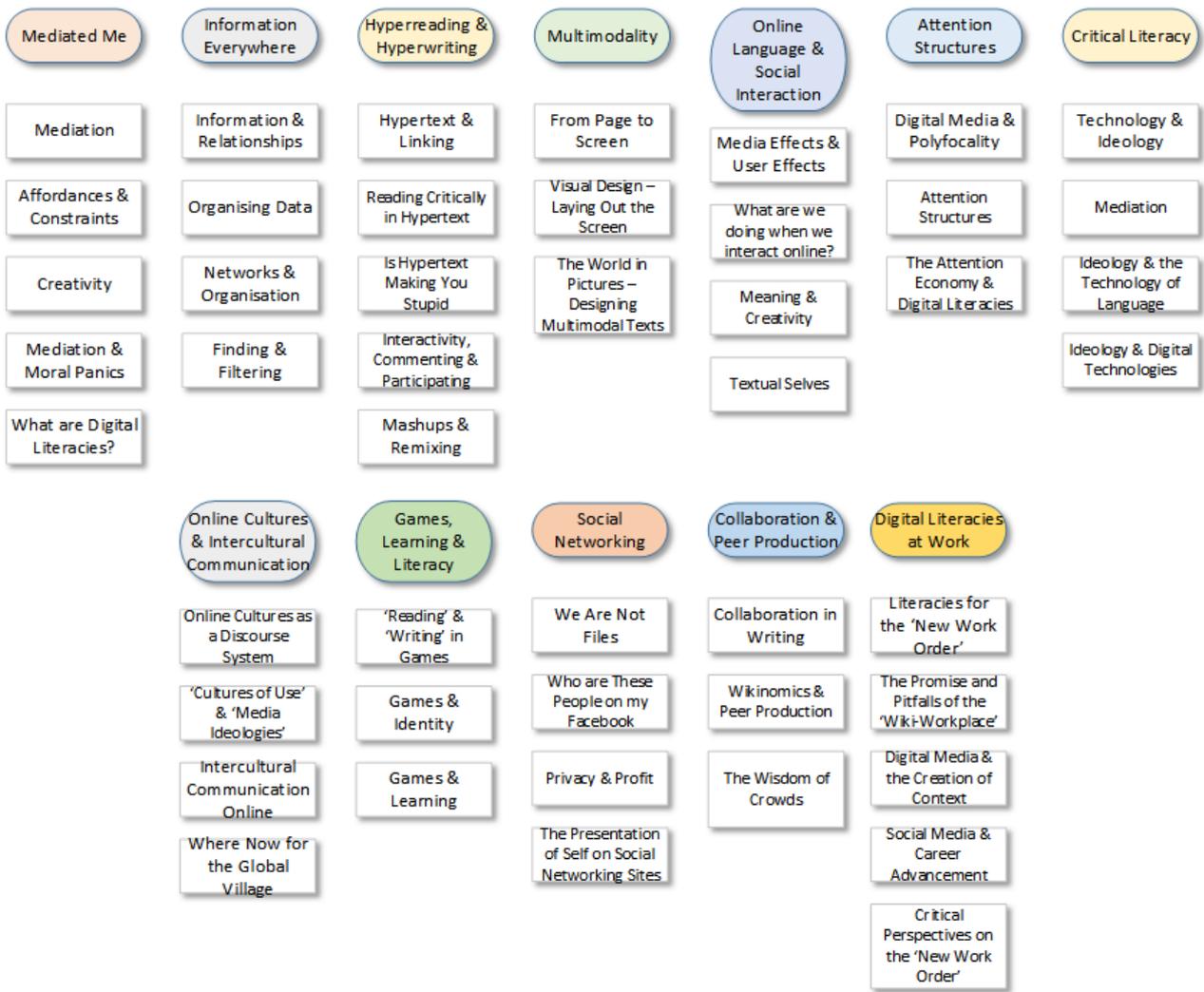**TECH3022-18 Social Media Practice**

Lecture Fourteen: Network Smarts & Digital Affordances

1   Introduction – Digital Literacies

The lived experience of users and producers of media content is moving centre stage and is increasingly recognised for its capacity to inculcate a vibrant sense of participation in dispersed and decentred media cultures.

The introduction of new media and communication technologies has prompted a thorough re-evaluation of the nature of civic interaction, professional interaction, politics, economics and social and community experience, and many more forms of human collaboration and interaction.

Mediated Me
- Mediation
- Affordances & Constraints
- Creativity
- Mediation & Moral Panics
- What are Digital Literacies?

Information Everywhere
- Information & Relationships
- Organising Data
- Networks & Organisation
- Finding & Filtering

Hyperreading & Hyperwriting
- Hypertext & Linking
- Reading Critically in Hypertext
- Is Hypertext Making You Stupid
- Interactivity, Commenting & Participating
- Mashups & Remixing

Multimodality
- From Page to Screen
- Visual Design – Laying Out the Screen
- The World in Pictures – Designing Multimodal Texts

Online Language & Social Interaction
- Media Effects & User Effects
- What are we doing when we interact online?
- Meaning & Creativity
- Textual Selves

Attention Structures
- Digital Media & Polyfocality
- Attention Structures
- The Attention Economy & Digital Literacies

Critical Literacy
- Technology & Ideology
- Mediation
- Ideology & the Technology of Language
- Ideology & Digital Technologies

Online Cultures & Intercultural Communication
- Online Cultures as a Discourse System
- 'Cultures of Use' & 'Media Ideologies'
- Intercultural Communication Online
- Where Now for the Global Village

Games, Learning & Literacy
- 'Reading' & 'Writing' in Games
- Games & Identity
- Games & Learning

Social Networking
- We Are Not Files
- Who are These People on my Facebook
- Privacy & Profit
- The Presentation of Self on Social Networking Sites

Collaboration & Peer Production
- Collaboration in Writing
- Wikinomics & Peer Production
- The Wisdom of Crowds

Digital Literacies at Work
- Literacies for the 'New Work Order'
- The Promise and Pitfalls of the 'Wiki-Workplace'
- Digital Media & the Creation of Context
- Social Media & Career Advancement
- Critical Perspectives on the 'New Work Order'

- Mass Media Passivity
- Digital Literacies
- Active Social Agency
- Reflexive
- Participative
- Engaged
- Socially Mediated Communities
- Intertextual Representation
- Self-Identification
- Ironic Role Management

2 Practice-Based Literacies

Formerly passive subjects of consumption-based mass media practices, are becoming intrinsically active as social agents, and are reflexive, participative and engaged in a widespread array of socially mediated communities of intertextual representation, self-identification and ironic role management.

"Using media is a rather complicated affair that influences not just how we do things, but also the kinds of social relationships we can have with other people, the kinds of social identities we can assume, and even the kinds of thoughts we can think. When we talk about being able to use media in this broader sense, not just as the ability to operate a machine or decipher a particular language or code, but as the ability to creatively engage in particular social practices, to assume appropriate social identities, and to form or maintain various social relationships, we use the term 'literacies'" (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 12).

3 Digital Tools

"You cannot act alone. In order to do anything or mean anything or have any kind of relationship with anyone else, you need to use tools. In a sense, the definition of a person is a human being plus the tools that are available for that human being to interact with the world" (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 2).

3.1 Backfilling

"New media are constructed on the foundations of the old. They do not emerge fully fledged or perfectly formed" (Silverstone, 1999, p. 20).

3.2 The Medium is the Message

"Marshall McLuhan is best known for the provocative thesis that the most important aspect of media is not to be located within issues connected to cultural content, but in the technical medium of communication. The medium, declares McLuhan, is the message" (Stevenson, 2002, p. 121).

4 New Literacies

Donald J. Leu, Jr., Charles K. Kinzer, Julie L. Coiro, and Dana W. Cammack: "Toward a Theory of New Literacies Emerging From the Internet and Other Information and Communication Technologies"(Donald J. Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, & Cammack, 2004).

4.1 Transformations
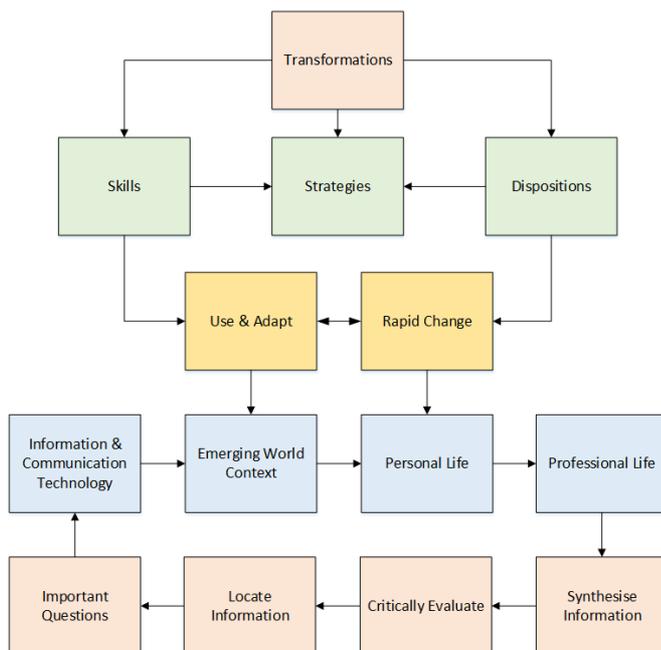
"The new literacies of the Internet and other ICTs include the skills, strategies, and dispositions necessary to successfully use and adapt to the rapidly changing information and communication technologies and contexts that continuously emerge in our world and influence all areas of our personal and professional lives. These new literacies

allow us to use the Internet and other ICTs to identify important questions, locate information, critically evaluate the usefulness of that information, synthesize information to answer those questions, and then communicate the answers to others" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004)

5 Transactional Literacies

'How we do things', the 'kinds of social relationships' we enter into, the 'social identities we can assume', and even the 'kinds of thoughts we can think'. The way that we 'talk' about digital media, the way that we 'use' digital media, the way that we 'operate' digital media; the way that we 'decipher or decode' digital media; and even how we 'creatively engage' with digital media (Jones & Hafner).

'Social Practices' , 'Social Identities', 'Social Relationships'

"In an information age, we believe it becomes essential to prepare students for these new literacies because they are central to the use of information and the acquisition of knowledge. Traditional definitions of literacy and literacy instruction will be insufficient if we seek to provide students with the futures they deserve" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

5.1 Established Regimes of Practice
- Proficiency
- Effectiveness
- Capability

5.2 Communities of Participation
- Democratic change,
- Direct engagement
- Self-Organisation

6 Circularity

"As new technologies for information and communication continually appear, still newer literacies emerge" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

"New technologies regularly and repeatedly transform previous literacies, regularly redefining what it means to become literate" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

"Often, we lose sight of these historic roots. We need to remember that social forces and the technologies they often produce define the changing nature of literacy today just as much as they have in the past. Briefly identifying previous historical contexts will remind us of how important it is to understand this point before we explore the changing nature of literacy within our contemporary context" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

The 'knowledge economy' and the 'information worker' are closely aligned, as a result, with the emerging 'skills industry' and culture of 'personal development'.

7 Traditional Literacies
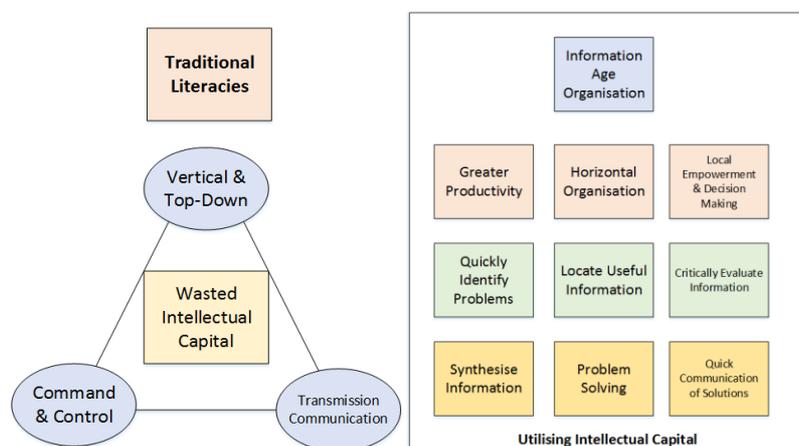
"Traditionally, industrial-age organizations were organized in a vertical, top-down fashion. Most decisions were made at the highest levels and then communicated to lower levels, thus wasting much of the intellectual capital within an organization by using tight command and control structures. Information-age organizations seeking to achieve greater productivity are organized horizontally, with teams within lower levels of the organization empowered to make important decisions related to their functioning. Members of these teams must quickly identify important problems, locate useful information related to the problems they identify, critically evaluate the information they find, synthesize this information to solve the problems, and then quickly communicate the solutions to others so that everyone within an organization is informed. These high-performance workplaces seek more fully to utilize the intellectual capital among every employee. This change has had a fundamental effect on the nature of literacy within these organizations" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

7.1   Digital Literacies
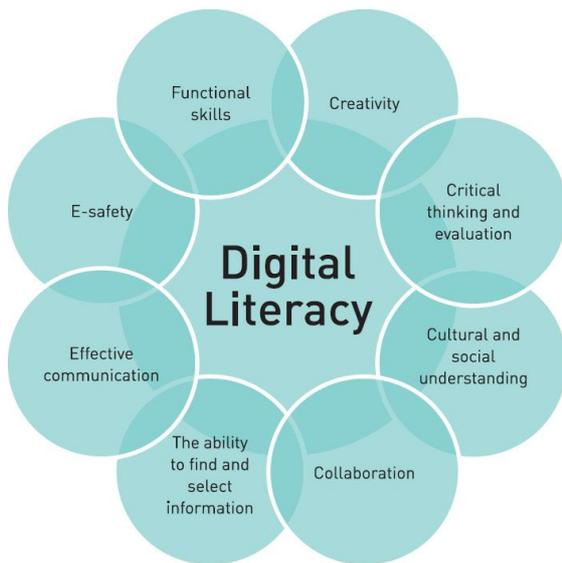
"Do these critical literacies and analytic skills also become increasingly important elements in the literacy curriculum because they are essential to the careful evaluation of any information one obtains, something that is essential in an informational space such as the Internet where anyone may publish anything" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

7.2   Employability
"The five main changes that we see as most relevant to the kinds of literacy practices that will be required in the 'new work order'. They are:
1.   a shift away from manufacturing work to 'knowledge work',
2.   the distribution of work across large geographic distances,
3.   a de-emphasis on the 'workplace' as a place where people work,
4.   a flattening of hierarchies within organisation, and
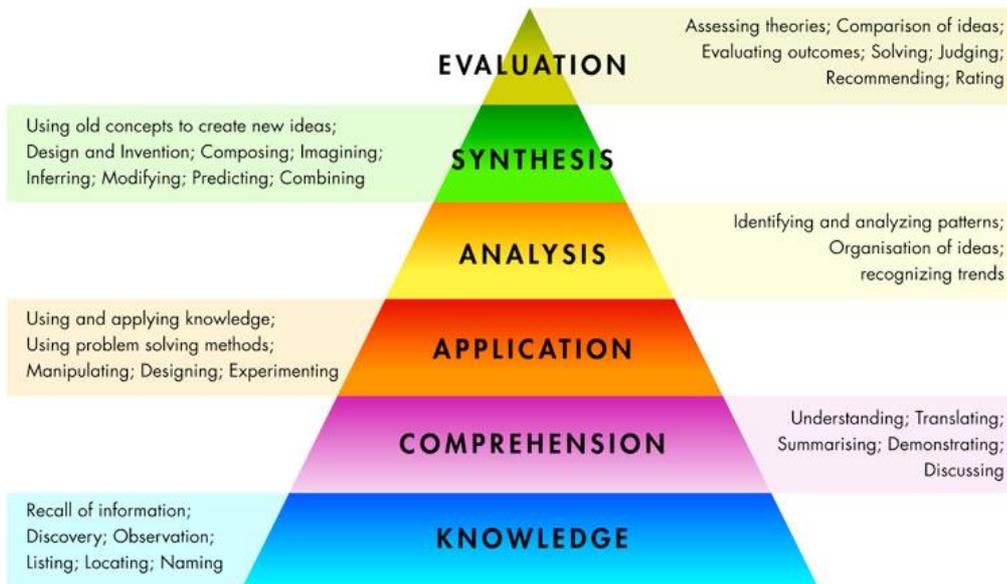5.   a weakening of the relationships between employers and employees" (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 175).

"A decentralized workplace [that] requires collaboration and communication skills so that the best decisions get made at every level in an organization and so that changes at one level are clearly communicated to other levels.
 Because each unit is empowered to identify and solve problems, one must keep others informed of changes that are taking place and negotiate these changes with others who might be affected by them. We need to support the development of effective collaboration and communication skills using new communication technologies if we wish to prepare children for their futures in a world where these skills are so important" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

"It is not surprising that the Internet and other ICTs have appeared and become such a prominent part of our lives during the transition from an industrial to a postindustrial society. These new information and communication tools allow us to identify important problems, quickly gather information, critically evaluate the information we locate, synthesize that information into a solution, and then communicate the solution to others. The new literacies required to effectively use ICTs to accomplish these functions are central to success in an information age" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

7.3   Blooms Taxonomy

BLOOMS TAXONOMY

EVALUATION — Assessing theories; Comparison of ideas; Evaluating outcomes; Solving; Judging; Recommending; Rating

SYNTHESIS — Using old concepts to create new ideas; Design and Invention; Composing; Imagining; Inferring; Modifying; Predicting; Combining

ANALYSIS — Identifying and analyzing patterns; Organisation of ideas; recognizing trends

APPLICATION — Using and applying knowledge; Using problem solving methods; Manipulating; Designing; Experimenting

COMPREHENSION — Understanding; Translating; Summarising; Demonstrating; Discussing

KNOWLEDGE — Recall of information; Discovery; Observation; Listing; Locating; Naming

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloom%27s_taxonomy

8   Transactional Literacies
Learn the Mechanics – Recognised – Comprehension – Present- Interaction – Decoding – Understand – Personal Response – Transaction – Evaluate – Meaning Making – Literacy Instruction

9   Social Roles
"I have suggested that social front can be divided into traditional parts, such as setting, appearance, and manner, and that (since different routines may be presented from behind the same front) we may not find a perfect fit between the specific character of a performance and the general socialised guise in which it appears to us.

These two facts, taken together, lead one to appreciate that items in the social front of a particular routine are not only found in the social fronts of a whole range of routines, but also that the whole range of routines in which one item of sign-equipment is found will differ from the range of routines in which another item in the same social front will be found" (Goffman, 1990, p.39).

The Learner – The Teacher – The Manager – The Employee

10   Hierarchy of Skills
User can "fully access their potential new literacies, include the skills, strategies, and disposition[s]," and which "allow us to use the Internet and other ICTs effectively to identify important questions, locate information, critically evaluate the usefulness of that information, synthesize information to answer those questions, and then communicate the answers to others" [added emphasis] (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

11   Functional Literacies
- "Using a search engine effectively to locate information;
- Evaluating the accuracy and utility of information that is located on a webpage in relation to one's purpose;
- Using a word processor effectively, including using functions such as checking spelling accuracy, inserting graphics, and formatting text;
- Participating effectively in bulletin board or listserv discussions to get needed information;
- Knowing how to use e-mail to communicate effectively; and
- Inferring correctly the information that may be found at a hyperlink on a webpage" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

"For example, when seeking particular information, readers will need to know procedures for using keywords within the most appropriate type of search engine while those hoping to browse online resources for the sake of open-ended exploration should be familiar with the hierarchical categories of information indexed by many search engines. Similarly, when hoping to communicate asynchronously with others, Internet users should be literate in tools such as e-mail, listservs, and discussion boards. When seeking more real-time interactive forms of information, Internet users need to have an understanding of how to access instant messaging technologies, communicate effectively with video conference technologies, participate in chat rooms, and enter virtual environments" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

"In the first part of this book we will focus on these new affordances and constraints' looking at things like search algorithms, hypertext, the read-write web, and the ways new technologies facilitate our ability to manipulate visual elements in texts like photographs and videos in ways never before possible. We will also explore how digital media enable and constrain different cognitive and social processes, ways of distributing attention across different tasks and ways of managing our social relationships. At the end of this section we will critically explore the degree to which these affordances and constraints act to promote particular ways of seeing and representing the world, to normalise particular kinds of behaviour, and to advance agendas of particular kinds of people" (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 14).

"In the second half of the book we will go on to apply this analysis to specific 'literacies' that have grown up around various digital media and within various communities of media producers and consumers. We will examine practices like online gaming, social networking, peer production and collaboration, and practices involving digital media in the workplace" (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 14).

12   Net Smarts
"Attention"
"Crap Detection"
"Participation"
"Collaboration" and
"Network Smarts"
"Because new literacies continuously change as even newer technologies require even newer literacies, we require new epistemologies and new instructional practices that keep up with the rapid changes we anticipate" (Donald J. Leu et al., 2004).

13   Proliferation of Literacies
- This results in a proliferation of literacies, with all kinds of additional activities coming under the purview of a regulating force.
- Who decides what is included and what is excluded?
- Who is schooled in maintaining the canon - the scholarly?
- What do we include within this repertoire of literacies?

14   Functional Literacies
- Emotional literacy?
- Visual literacy?
- Linguistic literacy?
- Technical literacy?
- Peer Group literacy?

15   Reflexivity
"An understanding of these [technical] affordances and constraints is important, but developing digital literacies means more than mastering the technical aspects of digital tools. It also means using these tools to do something in the social world, and these things we do invariably managing our social relationships and our social identities in all sorts of different and sometimes unpredictable situations" (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 13).

"We first need to have a good understanding of the fabric of affordances and constraints digital media make available to us to start out with" (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 14).

"That you are not just trying to make different kinds of meanings, but also to establish different kinds of relationships and enact different kinds of social identities" (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 12).

Conclusion

"Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it" (Marx & Engels, 1976).

"Move away from a preoccupation with know how because we have spent some time thinking about know what?"

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