I think it's extremely complex to close the gap of the digital divides and even most of developed countries such as Canada, US, UK, Sweden, Norway, Singapore haven't been able to close it. Access to ICTs is really important, and it is at the centre of the debate of the Digital Divide. Obtaining access is the basis of accessing information in the Digital realm but nonetheless, it has a number of shortcomings and the Journell paper does a good job showing some of the issues that we miss when we focus just on that.

In one hand, there is a wide range of skills/habits that people need, called Digital Literacy, for using a computer or accessing Internet. Kalyanpur & Kirmani (2005) define digital literacy as 'a set of habits through which individuals use computer technology for learning, work, socializing, and fun'. According to Journell, Dewey would view digital literacy as a skill, regardless of the discipline being taught that repeated over time would form into habits for students. I think that part of the digital literacy involves pretty simple capacities that we take for grant (such as being able to click on a link, navigate in the Internet, interact with a digital device, etc). They also involve our abilities to navigate in the complexity of both social and informational realms (such as have a minimum sense of privacy/security, write online, being able to do a couple of searches, find a solution to a problem, identify information to help to solve a glitch in our computer/software, identify important information, evaluate its meaningfulness and link the importance of that information with our own lives, etc, etc, etc). In other words, it is a kind of combination of 'hard and soft' digital skills that don't make up a 'geek'. Nevertheless, they require learning, training and experimentation mixed with some kind of attitude towards being willing to go into it and be willing to just click and see what happens. All these soft and hard skills/habits need to come together to develop digital literacy.

In the other hand, there are many factors that impact how people learn these skills/habits and one of the key is education, which as we know goes hand to hand with things like income, experience, how we move through life, if our parents had access and acquired any skills themselves, etc. Unfortunately, there are subgroups within our population that are really disadvantaged in terms of how they acquire these skills. As a result, chances are that they will be 'left behind' or they will develop a 'fear of technology' (depend on what population you are looking at) because they won't have the right 'incentive' for even trying out. Digital skills are all about play, about experimentation, I guess. If someone is lacking already that kind of attitude/opportunity, the path to the digital literacy will be longer…

So when you look at the population that is already connected, the digital divide is still there, thus we should be looking at all sort of variables, such as income, education, cultural barriers, demographics as Journell suggests. It's a huge problem that I don't think we can solve, however, it doesn't mean that If there's (are) no solution(s), there's no problem, and we should find a way to accept and deal with. Perhaps, the earlier ones get introduced to the digital world the better and the cheaper, so the children should be at the central of all debates as more things are moving online.