

## Week 6 – Answer to Justin

Hi Justin, thanks for sharing your thoughts. That's true, the examples I gave fell more surrounding digital learning in general.

It is amazing how many new practices SNS brought into education. You've listed some very good examples of them. And yet, we've only touched the tip of the iceberg because the education realms to test new practices are not always flexible enough. I wonder how education will become when we were really able to exploit the full potential of the learning opportunities available through SNS.

What about modulation of student behaviour in the sense of manipulation? Is it correct to say that SNS fosters a society that values frequent communication more than meaningful communication? For example, today our communications need to be shorter and more frequent since people increasingly value quick hits that allow them to gather important information and then quickly move on. Similarly, our communications need to be far more visual to capture our shrinking attention spans, a reality that is playing itself out in the form of infographics, viral videos, and picture-oriented social media sites such as Instagram. Our content also needs to be more personal to appeal to a new generation that has come to expect access to more intimate information.

Well, the impact of these changes remains to be seen, and the long-term implications could be significant, particularly for those young enough that never have known anything different.

**(Stephen)**

Higher education is increasingly a neoliberal space

1. **So what is the learner identity?**
2. **Can people become 'learners' if their identity is that of consumers?**
  - **Are the identities of learner/consumer compatible?**

Hi everyone, very interesting posts and valuable links in this blog.

I have to confess that I struggled with some ideas at the beginning, and I had to search extra information to convey my thoughts. But at the end it feels good to be able to grasp some of my own after dedicating some time reflecting and learning with you guys.

@Stephen W.: About your question what is the learner identity? I think it is one of our identities as someone able to learn, a more holistic perception.

@Stephen W. & @Rory about compatibility of learner and consumer identity:

I think that although 'we've all been learners, and we've all been consumers' as Rory mentioned, when it comes to treat students as a customer, it depends on what kind of customer the student is. It could be very risky if he/she assumes that as a customer, he/she requires a lot of "pampering", and in exchange he/she gives to the institution good customer feedback (or Likes). I actually don't think that good students have that purpose in mind when they are investing time and money in education; rather they prefer to receive support with honest feedback and to be challenged. And this type of student attention over SNS probably forces members of faculty to devote time and effort to areas and realms beyond research that they are not interested in and they are not traditionally rewarded for.

@Louise: Thanks for the link, so it seems that our brain won't shrink after all due to our dependence on Google's search engine. A good thing could be if we know more how to shield our span of attention for all sorts of readings, not only the ones that normally appeal to us.

As you pointed out, it's probably not affecting communication expectations everywhere, and I think it is more generational than cultural. I still remember a workshop I participated in in Borneo where the locals had to portray themselves and the international staff (they call Malays = any white foreigner) at work. The Malays were portrayed walking fast and talking/texting on the mobile while the locals were in group smoking and chatting life.

Talking about generational problems, the other day I watched a funny old comedy called "Idiocracy" (2006), about our society in the future, which instead of having evolved has regressed. The movie is perhaps too uncouth, but there are quite a few insights that I can't stop relating to some stories that we learn from the news.

Have a look in the first 7 minutes for a laugh (or cry) :D

<http://explicit.bing.net/videos/?q=Idiocracy#view=detail&mid=0B9F7673AD6CA98886440B9F7673AD6CA9888644>

I will continue my comments in a separate post ...