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**Learners and Digital Identity:
The Digital Tattoo Project**

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"We all understand that an embarrassing photo could damage our reputation, but what are other, less obvious ways we might do so?"

- Teacher candidate, Faculty of Education, UBC.

"My online networks all have very different values - friends, professional colleagues, family. Managing all of them gets complicated."

- Undergraduate student, UBC.

"Now that I'm graduating, I feel the pressure to build a brand. It's depressing."

- Graduate student, UBC

1. Introduction: Our Motivation

Students, like the rest of us, are leveraging the public (or quasi-public) nature of social media and related technologies to organize protests, collaborate on projects, document and share experiences, voice opinions, participate in like-minded communities, arrange social functions and share gossip. Though we have always used the media at hand to communicate with wider public circles than we typically interact with, the process usually took a bit of planning, organization and involved more than a single individual to make it happen. Today, anyone with a smartphone and an internet connection can post an image or video that can be viewed by hundreds or even millions, if public attention is captured. It is not uncommon for an aspiring musician to garner hundreds of views on a music video uploaded to YouTube, an art student to get hundreds of comments on an online exhibit created on Flickr or an aspiring journalist to get picked up by a major news source for a politically astute tweet or blog post. These are average people with individual access to a broad public audience via the free social media tools available today.

In a recent publication dedicated to themes related to socially mediated publicness, researchers Baym and boyd note that this "level of moderate, widespread publicness is unprecedented" (2012, 321) and brings with it both opportunities and challenges. The complexity of the multiple contexts and networks that students interact with, combined with technology that allows information to travel across contexts quickly and easily with the touch of a send button, requires both new literacies and new skills. Baym and boyd make the point that "understanding socially-mediated publicness is an ever-shifting process throughout which people juggle blurred boundaries, multi-layered audiences, individual attributes, the specifics of the systems they use, and the contexts of their use" (2012, 320). This is a process that takes time and, like any developmental process, involves mistakes. Mistakes that were once an expected and accepted part of the process of learning

about good judgement which occurred mostly in private or close personal circles, may now be made public and persistent as long as they remain published on the internet, either intentionally or inadvertently, depending on the user's understanding of the technology. Hargittai's (2008) research on skills among internet users has shown that people differ in how well prepared they are to manage these processes and make wise choices. Real choice requires sufficient information, skill, self-awareness and time for learning about how to leverage the technology that is available so that we can participate and contribute, and yet preserve and protect the aspects of ourselves that we want to keep private. Approaches for supporting the development these capacities are still emerging, but promising on this front are Howard Rheingold's five literacies for thriving online which include attention, crap detection, participation, collaboration and network smarts (Rheingold, 2012, 246-251). These literacies are about behaviors that can support sound decision making when it comes to digital participation.

At the University of British Columbia, librarians recognized that professional staff had a role in supporting the development of digital literacy as students were grappling with the impact of their online participation on the formation of their digital identities. The blurring of lines between identities as student, emerging professional, and private individual meant that professional staff needed to be equipped to mentor and support students as they struggled to develop the skills they needed. Indeed, according to the 2012 Horizon Report "[d]igital media literacy continues its rise in importance as a key skill in every discipline and profession" (Johnson, Adams and Cummins, 2012, 6). But what exactly are those skills? What format would best suit the fast-paced and ever evolving landscape of the themes and issues related to digital identity, reputation and social media? Where were we going to start?

The following chapter describes the Digital Tattoo project at the University of British Columbia and its focus on supporting learners to make informed choices and extend their digital capabilities around online practices, safety and identity. We will provide background on this innovative project and describe the multi-professional team structure that drives the project forward. We will discuss benefits, challenges and what we have learned in creating and sustaining this dynamic, flexible learning resource. Finally, we will address project outcomes and future directions, including highlights from a recent study conducted by the Digital Tattoo project team pertaining to student perceptions around social media and digital identity. Stretching the boundaries of traditional librarianship, the project emphasizes the role of partnership between learners, librarians, and professional staff in creating an environment for ongoing innovation in an ever-changing digital landscape.

2. Our Project

2.1 What we set out to do

The goal of Digital Tattoo project is to provide support for students to develop responsible, judicious and analytical approaches to their decisions regarding their online identities: specifically, what to share, with whom and how best to participate across varied networks,

both as a consumer and as a creator. Comprised of a website, workshop curriculum and teaching resources, the project aims to raise questions, provide examples and highlight resources to encourage learners to think about their presence online; help navigate the issues involved in shaping their digital identity; and educate learners about their rights and responsibilities as digital citizens. The idea for the Digital Tattoo project was conceived in 2007, after librarians at UBC recognized the need to support students around issues of digital identity. The Library looked for partners to develop a proposal for a project and in 2008, those partners formed an advisory committee that drove the initial development. The advisory committee secured project funding through UBC's Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund and hired the first group of students to work on the project.

Underpinning the Digital Tattoo project are notions of participatory culture and digital literacy which come from the work of media scholar Henry Jenkins (2009) and critic, writer and teacher Howard Rheingold (2012). Specifically, each of these experts highlight the importance of social competency, understanding networks and how they operate, and negotiating across varied contexts with different people, who have different values, expectations and spoken (or more often, unspoken) rules of conduct. This is much more complex than just learning how to use or manage a particular tool or technology. It requires a level of self-awareness and reflection that takes time, maturity and experience to develop. As explained by Jenkins (2009),

Most public policy discussion of new media have centered on technologies—tools and their affordances...Our goals should be to encourage youth to develop the skills, knowledge, ethical frameworks, and self-confidence needed to be full participants in contemporary culture (6-7).

While an emphasis on developing knowledge and encouraging personal reflection is central to the Digital Tattoo project, professional staff hear from students that they want practical information and something they can easily act on. As stated by Rheingold, however, “[t]here is no single recipe for a mindful life in the digital mediasphere; reflection is required” (2012, 8). In order to balance the need for both reflection and practical guidance, the Digital Tattoo website themes, workshop curriculum and teaching resources introduce questions for reflection and discussion while also offering opportunities to take action that encourage the user to go deeper into these subtle and critically important understandings and address their practical concerns related to their own use of digital tools and social media. Covering issues such as cyberbullying, geotagging, collaborative online learning, copyright and digital identity as it impacts career prospects, the topics are varied and wide-ranging.

The concept of digital permanence was particularly motivating for the project. The notion that once you publish something online it is difficult, if not impossible, to remove (much like a tattoo) resonated with the student team members. And, like a tattoo, your digital identity is personal, even though it is shaped in part by what others say about you. A broad goal of the project was to make sure that visitors to the site were provided with the information and resources that would help them develop the awareness and foundational skills to make wise decisions that would support the kind of “digital tattoo” they wanted to

create and build for themselves. The tattoo metaphor prevailed and became the title for the project: digitaltattoo.ubc.ca.

2.2 How we did it

2.2.1 Gather the right people and expertise

Digital Tattoo advisory committee members included project students plus representatives from UBC Library, the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology, Student Development, Career Services, Access and Diversity Services and the Writing Centre. This group met early on to establish a direction for a website and workshop curriculum around five basic themes: social networking, protecting privacy, employment, new opportunities for learning, and publishing and research. The multi-professional nature of the advisory committee brought different perspectives and unique expertise that were invaluable to the ongoing development of the Digital Tattoo project. At the same time, the fact that members of this team came from diverse perspectives and had varying levels of engagement with issues around digital identity, made it important to establish principles that the group could agree on and would guide decision making. These guiding principles include:

1. Currency and relevance of content is critical.
2. Students are in the best position to identify relevant content themes.
3. There is no single “right way” to be online. Identity is individual. However, wise choices require informed individuals.
4. Well-researched information provides guidance for wise decision making.
5. Consistency, simplicity and opportunities for deeper investigation allow for optimum user experience.

Development of these guiding principles was critical for decision making about content, approach to workshop delivery and web design. These guidelines remain central to the work of the project team today and support the annual orientation of new project students.

While the advisory committee set strategic directions for the project, development, delivery and ongoing maintenance of resources requires the expertise of a smaller multi-professional project team and leadership from student staff. The project team implementing this initiative currently consists of three students (both graduate and undergraduate), a Learning Resource Design Strategist (with expertise in learning design and online resource development), a librarian and members of the technical team from UBC’s Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology. This group provides a foundation of expertise (both technical and pedagogical) which are necessary for mentorship, guidance and support for students as they develop their research, writing, networking, technical and facilitation skills.

2.2.2 Assemble the right strategies and tools

To support the guiding principles established by the advisory committee, the project working team identified several practical strategies to guide website development and curriculum creation. These strategies include the following:

1. Student generated content to ensure relevance.
2. Simple, re-usable learning design to maximize flexibility and facilitate reflection, understanding and action.
3. Re-publishing strategies (such as RSS, embed, etc.) to allow for publishing in multiple contexts and keep content current.
4. Creative Commons license to support flexible re-use.
5. Use of social media to engage conversation.
6. WordPress platform to support timely editing/publishing.
7. Blogging as response to current issues (i.e. news).
8. Accessible teaching resources (hosted in Slideshare, UBCwiki and YouTube) to support community based discussion and workshops.

Given that numerous authors are involved in creating and delivering content, it is essential that the platforms used to host the Digital Tattoo project resources support collaboration. The platforms, which include UBC hosted WordPress and MediaWiki installations and a project management tool called Active Collab, are relatively easy to learn and are part of the University's technical infrastructure, ensuring that training and support are well integrated. This contributes to the sustainability of the project by allowing for short training timelines and ongoing technical support for new student team members. The Digital Tattoo team also makes use of the social web to host our resources (YouTube and Slideshare) and to facilitate discussion or comment on themes that students are blogging about via Facebook and Twitter.

2.2.3 Engage with the community

Digital Tattoo workshops are delivered throughout the year both face-to-face and online, related to the themes addressed on the website. Workshops are designed to encourage discussion and exploration of themes around digital identity in a more social environment. Workshop requests may come from the UBC community or from schools or public libraries province-wide. To foster long-term sustainability of the project, a train-the-trainer model is in place whereby workshops, lesson plans and teaching resources are available online for others to download. Digital Tattoo project leads will often go into the community to deliver a workshop or run a discussion group on a theme related to digital identity, with the agreement that a delegate at the host library or institution attend the workshop to learn to deliver future sessions in that community using Digital Tattoo resources and adapting them to local needs.

The Digital Tattoo project has now been in place for five years and it continues to be a popular resource. With consistent annual web traffic of over 20,000 visitors and continued requests for workshops both locally and nationally, the website and workshop curriculum

have proved to be an important resource for the campus and greater community. By bringing together a diverse, multi-professional advisory committee, developing a clear project framework, honoring a student-led approach and utilizing tools to facilitate collaboration among the project team, the Digital Tattoo project pooled campus expertise on digital identity to create a resource to extend learners digital capabilities.

3. What We Learned

3.1 Mentor students and let them lead

A unique feature of the Digital Tattoo project is the emphasis on student-generated content. Identified by the advisory committee at the outset of the project as a key guiding principle, the direction students provide with respect to content development helps us to stay current and fluid in the development of our resources. Students conduct and post video interviews, maintain and update the website; write relevant and timely blog posts; manage the Digital Tattoo social media strategy; and deliver workshops. These activities require students to learn independently, take risks, stay flexible and rely on each other for feedback and support. First attempts at some of these activities, which may be new to some of our students, may not always be successful. We work at creating a learning environment, where failure is expected, success is celebrated and learning from each other is encouraged.

Project students are supported by the expertise and mentorship provided by the professional staff on the working team. Mentorship may include joint examination of resources, discussion of responsibilities as a content creator, review of content dealing with legal or sensitive issues, attribution for embedded content, and understanding copyright. Broadly, students are informally mentored in the development of skills related to learning design, research, information management and digital literacy. However, it is the personal knowledge and experience project students bring regarding how they and their peers understand and learn about their digital tattoos that is central to the success of the project. In creating and delivering workshops, for example, student team members have been successful in drawing out new ideas from their peers which have informed successful strategies for engaging groups of students in future workshops. In addition, student staff connect with their networks asking for feedback on the website and leveraging those networks to promote workshops and Digital Tattoo resources to their peers. They are experimenting, reflecting, generating feedback and applying new ideas to future experiences - exactly the kind of experiential learning and iterative design process we strive for in our work.

Clearly, the student directed approach results in more relevant content for the website and workshops, but there are other benefits. As students are researching and talking about issues related to digital identity, they are learning a great deal about their own digital identity. As noted by project team student Paul Chiang, undergraduate student in the Faculty of Arts at UBC:

Working on the Digital Tattoo project has definitely instilled in me a certain kind of cautiousness when I, say, view and post things on my Facebook profile. Not surprising when most of the top stories circulating the internet regarding digital identity are about how people have, using social media, carelessly ruined their own lives. But horror stories aside, I am also beginning to realize just how powerful social media technology can be, when properly applied, in empowering not just the user, but whole groups of people with a common goal, either on a community level, a national level, or even on a global level (email message to author, 2013).

Professional staff observe the transformational learning that occurs with project students with respect to digital identity as they work on the website, develop reflection activities and deliver workshops.

While maintaining a student-directed approach is a fundamental value of the Digital Tattoo project, it is not without its challenges. Internships, study abroad opportunities and competing demands on student time mean that trained student staff may only stay on the team for an academic year or may leave the position mid-way through the academic term, leaving the professional staff to re-hire and re-train frequently. With the student-directed approach to this project and a small team, such transitions can be quite disruptive to workflow, website content management, and workshop commitments. Another challenge relates to support and mentorship of project students. To do this well requires professional staff to be skilled at identifying areas of strength and need on the project working team, each time there is a change in members. Depending on the strengths or gaps on the project team at any one time, we may need to shift the focus temporarily while we work together to ensure that each student develops the competencies they need to fulfill their role.

While student hires come to the position with a strong knowledge of social web tools and approaches, it is an ongoing challenge to equip the student team members with the expertise they require around Creative Commons licensing and Canadian copyright guidelines in order to work on the website and update teaching resources. While a strong suite of orientation resources exists for new project students, these require regular updating due to the ebbs and flows around current policy and practice (particularly related to copyright), version updates to technical platforms used to support the project and strategies adopted by the University to meet the demand for mobile friendly websites and resources. As evident from the range of changes listed, we would not be effective in addressing these without the range of expertise and experience that a multi-professional team provides.

3.2 Collaboration is a commitment

The challenges that exist in working with the student team are not only balanced by the benefits of working with students, but also with the benefits of a multi-professional team environment. In addition to the student team, the Digital Tattoo project involves one Learning Resource Design Strategist and one librarian in the professional staff member compliment. These two skill sets work particularly well for the Digital Tattoo project, as it

brings different perspectives around learning design, technology, content organization, teaching and workshop delivery, student staff supervision and information architecture. Specifically, the Learning Resource Design Strategist was instrumental in developing the learning design framework for the project, creating design templates, and developing key questions to support the students work to create the content modules and workshop curriculum, and acting as a “technical translator” between the applications support team and the project team. The Librarian was invaluable in contributing expertise related to information architecture, copyright, attribution and student staff administration. Not only do these different professional perspectives and expertise benefit the project, they also benefit the professional staff members involved, who have the opportunity to learn from each other as each person brings awareness of issues from different professional spheres. In more traditional roles, librarians may not have the opportunity to work with a Learning Resource Design Strategist—however, management of the Digital Tattoo project involves ongoing collaboration between the two professionals who co-lead the work. Through this collaboration, the librarian is exposed to literature, theories, ideas and concepts outside of her discipline, broadening expertise and expanding knowledge beyond the library realm. Notably, as the project has progressed and professional staff learn from each other, the demarcation of roles and traditional boundaries lessen. The focus shifts away from the specific expertise that each professional contributes to the project, to an emphasis on the knowledge, skills and resources that need to be developed by each team member for the project to be successful.

The benefits observed with respect to librarian involvement in this project reinforce Shumaker’s (2012) work on embedded librarianship. As Shumaker notes, as the librarian’s engagement with the team progresses:

...the embedded librarian develops highly customized, sophisticated, and value-added contributions to the team—contributions that sometimes go far beyond the confines of traditional reference work and that some might be surprised to find a librarian delivering (2012, 23).

In any given day, the librarian project co-lead for Digital Tattoo may be asked to give a radio interview about digital literacy, respond to a workshop participant who is worried about a ‘racy’ video on YouTube or mentor a student staff member to compose blog posts on digital identity from a balanced perspective. Contrary to a more traditional model where a librarian may wait at the reference desk to be asked questions, the librarian for this project is an active member of a multi-professional team, developing specialized skills and knowledge around digital identity.

There is a wealth of examples in the literature that highlight librarians and information professionals working on multi-professional teams, particularly with respect to medical librarianship (i.e. Tan and Maggio, 2013; Lorenzetti and Rutherford, 2012; Kenefick, 2011; Schwing and Coldsmith, 2005). There is also much written on the benefits of embedded librarianship, where librarians move outside the confines of the library to join a specialized research group or locate services within a particular faculty or department (i.e. Schulte, 2012; Kvenild and Calkins, 2011; Drewes and Hoffman, 2010; Freiburger and Kramer,

2009). In the case of the Digital Tattoo project, however, a librarian did not simply join an existing group, she initiated the project and brought a multi-professional team together to support student needs around digital literacy. Such initiatives demonstrate a shift in librarianship from that of service to the institution, to a leadership role within the campus community in identifying student need and initiating solutions.

While the benefits of a multi-professional team environment are an unquestionable asset to the project, there are also challenges encountered that present opportunities for growth. With different professional perspectives, may come differences of opinion on how to proceed with the project. Co-supervision of the student team may also present challenges if supervision styles differ between project co-leads. For both issues, clearly communicating expectations, honouring the needs of the project and trusting in each other's abilities is essential. In regards to co-supervision, being open to differences of opinion and approaches between professional staff and working through them respectfully and visibly with students allows the project to proceed in a timely manner, while role-modeling for the student team professional strategies for working through differences of opinion.

Finally, while collaboration is a key to the success of the project, there is also a cost in terms of staff time that may be invisible from a budgetary perspective. Specifically, working through differences and moving forward collaboratively simply takes more time than moving forward on a project independently. And when strategic priorities may differ between departments of a multi-professional team, a secondary layer of complexity is added. With this challenge, it is important to be transparent to senior management regarding the 'cost' of collaboration in terms of time and accurately assigning the time commitment required on a project. Often, senior management may believe that dividing a project among departments cuts the work in half—in reality, however, the collaborative element takes time and needs to be budgeted for accordingly.

3.3 Sustainable practices are essential

Aside from the student-led approach and multi-professional work environment, a unique benefit and challenge of the Digital Tattoo project relates to the content itself. The issue of digital identity stretches across multiple fields of expertise and evolves at rate that can make it difficult to stay well informed. Developing the expertise to create and deliver workshops on this content and mentor students on updating project resources, stretches the boundaries of traditional librarianship which may focus more on reference, collection development and subject liaison responsibilities. At the same time, it engages skills inherent in more traditional roles such as current awareness strategies, research expertise, copyright knowledge, information architecture, and teaching and workshop delivery. By applying these skills, knowledge around digital identity develops through ongoing engagement with the content.

A challenge with the project overall—one familiar in the library profession—is information management and organization of content. Whether it's maintaining current web content, updating and organizing teaching resources or developing training materials for students, the rapid rate at which content evolves combined with the vast amount of content on the

topic, is an ongoing challenge for the Digital Tattoo project team. A strategy to overcome this challenge includes clearly defining the project scope, constant assessment and weeding of web content and a sustainable content maintenance schedule that accounts for the inherent turnover in the student-staff team.

A final challenge with the project is simply maintaining balance when only a small portion of each professional team member's time is assigned to the project. The size and scope of the project could easily demand full-time commitment from two professional staff—however, as with many projects, there is not the luxury to devote such time. With approximately 20% of each staff members' time available to devote to the Digital Tattoo project, a constant eye to sustainability is required. Examples of this were referred to earlier with strategies like a content management system that can easily be learned by new student staff; self-directed learning resources for new student team members and a strategy of hiring student staff who can work well independently with little supervision.

4. Making a Difference

Analysis of Digital Tattoo website analytics show that although the majority of our visitors are from North America, our site is accessed by people as far away as Australia, India and the Philippines. We have consistent traffic on the site of more than 20,000 visitors annually, more than 4,000 people accessing the teaching resources on our wiki and over 12,000 users accessing our various videos on YouTube. From such statistics, we know that people are using our resources, but are they having an impact? We recently explored this question in our work with UBC's Teacher Education Program.

Over the past three years, project leads have delivered workshops to all incoming Teacher Candidates, typically over 500 students each year. Recently, project co-leads collaborated with a faculty member in Education to design and deliver an online survey to measure the practices of teacher candidates as it relates to their use of social media and the impact of the Digital Tattoo workshops on their attitudes. In September 2012, a short pre-survey was delivered to teacher candidates students prior to a Digital Tattoo workshop and a post-survey was delivered directly after the workshop. The pre-survey consisted of eleven closed-ended questions (yes/no and multiple choice) and one open-ended question. The post-survey consisted of eight closed-ended questions (multiple choice) and two open-ended questions. A total of 344 students responded to the pre-survey, 276 responded to the post-survey, and a positive shift in student perceptions around social media was documented. For example, for the statement "Teachers have a role in teaching students about the use of social media," 87% of students agreed with the statement on the pre-survey, compared with 91% on the post survey, an increase of 4%. Similarly, for the statement "Teachers have a role in shaping social media policy for the profession," 84% of students agreed with this statement on the pre-survey, compared with 90% on the post survey, an increase of 6%. Finally, for the statement "It's my responsibility as a teacher to decide how to use social media with my students," 76% of students agreed with this statement on the pre-survey compared with 82% on the post survey, another increase of

6%. Overall, results point to the success of the workshops in shifting student perceptions around digital identity.

Such assessment and reporting out around the impact of the Digital Tattoo project on student learning is particularly critical, as the budget for the project is uncertain moving forward. Being able to clearly articulate the value of this project for the Library, the University and the students it serves is more important than ever before. At the time the project was conceived, there was a dearth of practical resources around digital identity. Today, there are countless online resources available to a broad range of audiences: youth, teachers and parents. How can the Digital Tattoo project remain relevant and current given the changes in the digital landscape? What unique value does the site and workshops provide that other resources do not? In order to secure ongoing funding, project leads will need to answer these questions and continue to demonstrate the impact of our work on student's attitudes around their digital identities.

5. Looking Ahead

A challenge for the Digital Tattoo project moving forward is the tension between our goals related to digital literacy and critical thinking and what students often say they want—sensational stories about digital reputation gone wrong and step-by-step instructions for avoiding damage to their own. For example, in the author's survey of UBC teacher candidates, 93% of those who participated in our workshop agreed that the content would improve their abilities to manage their online identities, yet many wanted step-by-step advice and "more scary stories" to illustrate the consequences of missteps and misunderstandings of the impact of networks. This finding is consistent with the literature on novice-expert skill development (Bransford, 2000; Dreyfus, 2004). Novices typically rely on rules, guidelines and facts in attending to problems or new learning situations. Experts act almost intuitively, drawing on deep and connected knowledge structures and experiences. In terms of digital identity, perhaps we are all somewhere in between novice and expert due to the shifting landscape and complex technical, legal and privacy issues that arise. In this space between, we learn to recognize patterns and principles, associate new learning with what we already know and practice solving increasingly complex problems. With the Digital Tattoo Project, we help students build competency and expertise when we work to associate their own experiences and prior knowledge with new learning, correcting misconceptions along the way. Opportunities to dig deep into their own and others' stories (scary and hopeful), while uncovering the underlying principles at play, helps to lay the groundwork for developing competence and expertise. Tips and strategies are useful, but not sufficient if our goal is to encourage students to make thoughtful and informed decisions about their own digital identities.

This speaks to the importance of the emotional hooks for students who are viewing our site, that is, that they want to recognize themselves in the content. How do we raise provocative questions that stimulate interest and encourage personal reflection? How might we effectively use the media generated "worst case scenarios" that some students find instructive as a springboard for critical analysis and discussion related to potential impact on digital identity?

Maintaining a balanced approach in writing about these issues is also an ongoing challenge for project students who work on the Digital Tattoo website. We need to continue to think carefully about how to best support our project students who are authoring this content since this kind of work requires a sophisticated understanding and synthesis of the goals we are trying to achieve. One strategy could be the use of a set of literacies to provide project students with a better framework for developing questions and content. As mentioned in the introduction, Howard Rheingold's five literacies for thriving online (attention, crap detection, participation, collaboration and network smarts) are straightforward and the practical considerations he articulates for each literacy could provide a preliminary framework for our project students in the development of reflection questions related to our current content themes (Rheingold, 2012, 246).

As we continually look at improving our content themes, an ongoing consideration is current perceptions of students around their digital identities. While today's students clearly understand the impact of a misplaced photo, video or comment, they appear less savvy about how to create and manage an online identity to promote themselves via e-portfolio, blog or professional networking site. In our survey of teacher candidates at UBC, for example, only 33% used social media (LinkedIn or Facebook) for professional networking. The project team is also aware that students are looking for simple, immediate solutions to challenges faced by social media and may not want to take the time to build or reshape the digital identity they aspire to. It's a challenge familiar to librarians who offer information literacy instruction where new students want research to be simple, easy and instantaneous—although we know that is not always the case, even with the best tools on hand. Similarly, the Digital Tattoo project teams find that students want to 'push the easy button' when it comes to managing their digital identities. Students have reported to us that managing their online identities and contributing to others' identities (i.e. via online recommendations for friends and colleagues) is "too much work" so they opt out of various communities or fall back to communication technologies that they understand to be more private in nature (i.e. text messaging) and therefore less work to maintain. These attitudes may reflect a relationship with technology that is more about fear of public scrutiny than community building or contributions to a collective. They may also reflect a lack of commitment to digital identity as something important and worthy of time and energy.

Students are just beginning to come to terms with the notion that it is important to cope with material on the internet that we may be embarrassed about. One way to achieve this is to create new content that reflects our current selves and write our own stories instead of falling victim to internet history. This approach takes time and thoughtful decision making, which runs counter to student expectations of immediacy—shaped by hours of participation on mobile communication platforms and social media. How do we inspire students to invest the time it takes to move beyond instant gratification to thoughtful participation? How can we leverage the Digital Tattoo project to build a stronger online community so that students can share stories and resources with each other? Answering these questions go beyond the Digital Tattoo project and relate to challenges in reimagining the learning environment at universities as a whole.

6. Conclusion: Ongoing Engagement

In his book *Net Smart: How to Thrive Online*, Rheingold makes the point that “digital literacies can make the difference between being empowered or manipulated, serene or frenetic” (2012, 3). Involvement in today’s participatory culture requires a set of core skills and cultural competencies that range from experimentation, navigation across contexts and sound judgment to a sophisticated understanding of networks and how to negotiate across diverse communities, respecting multiple perspectives and synthesizing and making sense of complex interactions (Jenkins, 2009). This kind of learning is best supported when integrated thoughtfully into the fabric of a student’s life: at home with family, in formal courses, experimenting and socializing with friends and in pursuing professional and amateur interests. If we accept Jenkins’ suggestion that literacy in the 21st century should be seen as social skills and competencies preparing us for contribution in diverse public spaces rather than simply personal expression or promotion of ourselves as “brands”, then we need to examine what this means in the context of our classrooms, curriculum and learning activities and ensure that we articulate this in a way that shows students that it matters. In a time when academic libraries are reinventing themselves, librarians in particular need to look at how they can play a role in helping students develop these digital literacy skills. As indicated in the 2012 Horizon Report “[d]espite the widespread agreement on the importance of digital media literacy, training in the supporting skills and techniques is rare in teacher education and non-existent in the preparation of most university faculty” (Johnson, Adams and Cummins, 2012, 6). At the University of British Columbia, students, librarians and professional staff are taking the lead on this front through the Digital Tattoo project, working collaboratively to help students develop the skills they require to face today’s rich and complex digital environment.

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