The kids are alright – or are they?

Jenn Horwath, Mohawk College
Cynthia Williamson, Mohawk College
WILU 2008
Agenda

Technology Skills of Millennials
- What does the literature say?
- Survey says?

Intelligence of Millennials
- What does research and evidence say?

Library Research Skills of Millennials
- What does our Mohawk survey say?
Our Hypothesis

Mohawk students who are also Millennials (aka the ‘Net Generation), that is students born after 1981, may be comfortable and even proficient in the use of technology for social communication and entertainment but these digital natives’ technological proficiency does not extend to their information literacy or online research skills.
What we hoped to learn

To either debunk or find scholarly support for what Prensky and others say about Millennials’ brains, intelligence and technology skills and use of Web 2.0 tools.
Millennials

What do the big names say?

Prensky
Abram
Oblinger
Sweeney
Prensky and Digital Natives

The overarching, much noted and much quoted idea:

“... there are important, never-before-seen differences between the generation that grew up with digital technologies (the natives) and the generation that grew up before these technologies (the immigrants)”

(From Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, 2001)
Prensky

- 11 articles in Educause cite Prensky
- 32 hits in Academic Search Premiere
- Google Scholar search of Marc Prensky and Digital Natives: 215 results
- Quoted by leaders in our field: Stephen Abram, Diana Oblinger, Richard Sweeney
- Mohawk instructors consulted the essay in the Winter ’08 semester
“Someone once suggested to me that kids should only be allowed to use computers in school that they have built themselves. It’s a brilliant idea that is very doable from the point of view of the students’ capabilities.”

(From Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants)
Millennials?

Do these men look like Millennials to you?
“Students could quite feasibly invent technological solutions to streamline homework submission and correction, freeing up teachers for more meaningful work.”

(From Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants)
“All 21st century kids are programmers to some degree. Every time they download a song or ring tone or conduct a Google search, they are, in fact, programming.”

(From Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants)
Oblinger

“Having grown up with widespread access to technology, the Net Gen is able to intuitively use a variety of IT devices and navigate the Internet.”

(From: Is it Age or IT?: First Steps Toward Understanding the ‘Net Generation.)
“...there is a growing body of research that their IQs, their raw ability to access and use their intelligence has grown markedly and at a level of statistical significance. MRI studies of their brains show that they use a greater degree of their brains and have greater physical capacity through increased ganglia and folds of their brains.”

(From: Millennials: Deal with Them!)
“...there are research findings showing that Millennials get higher scores on both SAT exams and standard IQ tests. Perhaps they are actually smarter...”

(From: Reinventing Library Buildings and Services for the Millennial Generation)
Technology Skills of Millennials

What do surveys find?
Surveys

ECAR
FIT
Colorado State
JISC/British Library
ECAR Study of Undergraduate Students and Technology

ECAR=Educause Centre for Applied Research
Study is done annually and asks:

- What kinds of technologies students use and what are their preferences?
- With what level of skill are they using these technologies?
- How does this use contribute to their undergraduate experience?
- What value does the use of info tech add in terms of learning gains?
ECAR, 2006

- 4,374 students surveyed & interviewed
- 13 institutions in the US
- 95% of respondents were 25 years or younger & full time
## ECAR, Ownership of Devices

### Table 4-1. What Electronic Devices Students Own

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of electronic devices owned</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital camera</td>
<td>28,234</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal computer—desktop</td>
<td>27,353</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal computer—laptop</td>
<td>27,436</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>66.9%</td>
<td>66.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic music/video device</td>
<td>28,129</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic game device</td>
<td>28,013</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wireless hub</td>
<td>27,847</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal digital assistant (PDA)</td>
<td>27,705</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart phone (combo cell phone/PDA)</td>
<td>27,638</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of different types of electronic devices owned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five devices or more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of software purchased</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spreadsheet software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video/audio software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web page software</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4-2. What Electronic Devices Students Own, by Respondent Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>18–19 (N = 10,084)</th>
<th>20–24 (N = 12,369)</th>
<th>25–29 (N = 2,387)</th>
<th>30–39 (N = 1,975)</th>
<th>40 and Older (N = 1,840)</th>
<th>All (N = 28,655)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital camera</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>73.8%</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal computer—desktop</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal computer—laptop</td>
<td>76.4%</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>66.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic music/video device</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic game device</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
<td>54.9%</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wireless hub</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal digital assistant (PDA)</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart phone (combo cell phone/PDA)</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ECAR, Use of Devices for Activities

Table 4-5. Student Use of Electronic Devices for Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IT-Related Activities</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Students Engaged</th>
<th>Median Frequency of Use*</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almost all Students Engaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create, read, send e-mail</td>
<td>29,812</td>
<td>99.9% daily</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write documents for coursework</td>
<td>29,664</td>
<td>98.8% several times/week</td>
<td>Several times/week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use for course activities</td>
<td>20,607</td>
<td>98.5% several times/week</td>
<td>Senior Engineering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use library on university/college Web site</td>
<td>28,676</td>
<td>94.0% monthly</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create presentations (powerpoint)</td>
<td>28,416</td>
<td>90.8% monthly</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Students Engaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create spreadsheets or charts (Excel)</td>
<td>28,621</td>
<td>85.1% monthly</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop online</td>
<td>28,596</td>
<td>84.1% monthly</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As an in-class requirement</td>
<td>28,528</td>
<td>82.6% weekly</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create, read, send instant messages</td>
<td>28,602</td>
<td>88.5% daily</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use course management system</td>
<td>28,443</td>
<td>75.0% several times/week</td>
<td>Several times/week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Play computer games: 28,632, 73.4% Monthly, Male, Age (younger)
- Online social network (Facebook, etc.): 28,619, 70.6% Several times/week, Age (younger), Read on campus
- Download Web-based music or videos: 28,623, 70.5% Weekly, Age (younger), Male
- Create graphics (Photoshop, etc.): 28,034, 68.4% Monthly, Fine arts, Engineering

Few Students Engaged

- Online gaming (pogo.com, etc.): 28,660, 34.2% Monthly, Male, Age (younger)
- Blogging: 28,510, 26.5% Monthly, Age (younger), Fine arts
- Create Web pages (Dreamweaver, etc.): 28,614, 26.6% Once per quarter/semester, Engineering, Male
- Create audio/video (Recorder, Movie, etc.): 28,588, 22.7% Once per quarter/semester, Male, Fine arts

*The median is the midpoint in a series of numbers; half the data values are above the median, and half are below.
(1 = never, 2 = once a year, 3 = once per quarter/semester, 4 = monthly, 5 = weekly, 6 = several times per week, 7 = daily)
They’re not Super-users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimal or No Use</th>
<th>Use Basic Features</th>
<th>Use Advanced Features</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online library</td>
<td>27,978</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Social sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation software</td>
<td>27,433</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(PowerPoint, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spreadsheets</td>
<td>27,267</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Excel, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer maintenance</td>
<td>27,415</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer security</td>
<td>27,563</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course management</td>
<td>26,023</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics</td>
<td>25,373</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Fine arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Photoshop, Flash, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web pages</td>
<td>24,740</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Dreamweaver, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video/audio</td>
<td>24,740</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Fine arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Director, iMovie, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Categories of skill: Minimal or No Use (very little or no use of basic features); Basic Feature (use of some or all of the basic features, but not the advanced features); Advanced Features (full use of basic features and many or all of the advanced features).
ECAR: Seniors more advanced than Freshmen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Use Basic Features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors report more advanced skill than freshmen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online library resources</td>
<td>25,931</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation software (PowerPoint, etc.)</td>
<td>24,810</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spreadsheet software (Excel, etc.)</td>
<td>24,012</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course management system</td>
<td>24,343</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web pages (Dreamweaver, etc.)</td>
<td>25,183</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors and freshmen report similar skill levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer maintenance</td>
<td>24,389</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer security</td>
<td>24,116</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics (Photoshop, Flash, etc.)</td>
<td>24,332</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video/audio (Director, iMovie, etc.)</td>
<td>25,173</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Categories of skill: Basic Features (use of some or all of the basic features, but not the advanced features); Advanced Feature (full use of basic features and many or all of the advanced features).
Gamers may not be good students

“...students with the lowest grade point averages (GPAs) spend significantly more time playing games.”

“Those respondents who reported frequent creation and exchange of instant messages, playing computer games, or downloading music or videos also reported achieving lower GPAs.”

(From: Convenience and Control: How Students Use Technology)
ECAR: They don’t need to be constantly wired
FIT Study

Southwestern U. in Georgetown, Texas, 2001
Survey of 300 students in year 1-4, plus 20 interviews
FIT: Mostly Basic Skill Levels

- Skill levels were highest in the use of word processing, communications and the use of the Internet
- Skill levels were significantly lower for specialized applications such as spreadsheets and presentation software
- Also found much lower levels of skills in the maintenance of computers
“To say that our students, having grown up with digital media in their homes and schools, come to SU already equipped with skills and knowledge of information technology is a misconception.”

“They lack experience with and exposure to the other contemporary skills including working with spreadsheets and databases, networking and creating web pages.”
Colorado State University surveyed 2,102 students in 2001.
“...the highest level of software use was for MS Office software and ... students had the least experience with programming.”
Information Behaviour of the Researcher of the Future

Study from JISC/British Library, January 2008

“They are more competent with technology.”

Their verdict: “Generally true, but we think older users are catching up fast. However, the majority of young people tend to use much simpler applications and fewer facilities than many imagine.”
“They pick up computer skills by trial and error.”

Their verdict: “This is a complete myth. The popular view that Google generation teenagers are twiddling away on a new device while their parents are still reading the manual is a complete reversal of reality.”
Millennials’ Intelligence and Brains
“Secondly, there is a growing body of research that their IQs, their raw ability to access and use their intelligence has grown markedly and at a level of statistical significance. MRI studies of their brains show that they use a greater degree and balance of their brains and have greater physical capacity through increased ganglia and folds of their brains.”
(From: Millennials: Deal with Them!)
“...there are research findings showing that Millennials get higher scores on both SAT exams and standard IQ tests. Perhaps they are actually smarter...”

(From: Reinventing Library Buildings and Services for the Millennial Generation)
IQs Going up?

IQ scores have been rising...

Flynn Effect: an increase of 3-5 IQ points per decade in the last century discovered by James R. Flynn in 1987 (in 14 industrialized countries - beginning in 1917)

“Gains in the neighbourhood of 18-20 points in a generation seem to be quite typical in many industrialized countries” (Flynn, 1999)
On Second Thought

The sheer size of the gains undermines the very concept of “general intelligence.”

Flynn now concedes: “… the tests do not measure intelligence but only a sort of “abstract problem solving ability” with little practical significance.”

(From: Rising Scores on Intelligence Tests, Ulric Neisser)
IQs Going Down?


“A complete cessation of [IQ] gains between the mid-1900s and 2002” has been noted in Norway. (Sundet et al, 2004)

A study of intelligence of 6-11 year olds in Australia found results the same or lower than in 1975 (using Raven's Coloured Progressive Matrices Test). (Cotton et al, 2005)
“It is very likely that our students’ brains have physically changed - and our different from ours.” (From Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants)
Prensky

“And while we haven’t yet directly observed Digital Natives’ brains to see whether they are physically different (such as musicians’ appear to be) the indirect evidence for this is extremely strong.”

(From: Do They Really Think Differently?)
Brain size and structure

- Millennials’ brain is used differently than Boomers’ brain

The Scary re-wiring of the Millennials and post-Millennials
Brain Size and Structure

Experience may shape brain structure - however there is very little evidence to suggest that brain structure is indicative of intelligence.
Brain Size is NOT equated with Intelligence

“Any program that seeks to relate brain weight, cranial capacity, or some other measure of overall brain size to individual performance ignores the reality of the brain’s functional diversity.”

(From: Neuroscience, 2001)
Brain Changes

“... it is not apparent whether new genetic adaptations discovered in human brains have any effect on brain size, or intelligence.” (Inman, 2005)

“Many researchers doubt there is any mechanism by which nature could be selecting for greater intelligence today, because they believe culture has effectively blocked the action that natural selection might have on our brains.” (Inman, 2005)
Millennials and Web 2.0

What are they doing with 2.0 Technologies?
Prensky

“Our young people ... [are] busy adopting new systems for communicating (instant messaging), sharing (blogs), buying and selling (eBay), exchanging (peer to peer technology), creating (Flash), meeting (3D worlds), collecting (downloads), coordinating (wikis), evaluating (reputation systems), searching (Google), analyzing (SETI), reporting (camera phones), programming (modding), socializing (chat rooms), and even learning (Web surfing)”
“A junior at the university, Eric wakes up and peers at his PC to see how many instant messages (IMs) arrived ... Several attempts to reach him are visible on the screen, along with various postings to the blog he’s been following... he pulls up an eclectic mix of news, weather and posts on the homepage he customized using Yahoo ... he switches back and forth between the paper [he’s writing] and Internet-based multiplayer game he’s trying to win.”

(From: Is it Age or I.T.: First Steps toward Understanding the ‘Net Generation. 2006. Oblinger & Oblinger)
The Push is to Be Where They Are
Our Survey

Survey of 389 Mohawk College students, conducted Fall 2007

Survey of 26 Questions in three parts:

Part One: About You, program of study, year, gender, etc.

Part Two: Your use of Computers and the Internet

Part Three: About Your Use of the Library
Our Survey

- Used Survey Monkey
- Online for the month of October
- Incentives
- Promotion - website, in-library, class visits
Students at Mohawk

- 10,000 FTE (full time equivalents) students
- 5000 adult learners
- 3,180 apprentices
Our Survey: Participants

- Almost 85% of our respondents fall into the age range definition of a Millennial (18-24)
- 67.8% Female, 32.2% Male
- Majority full-time (89.5%), majority 63% in first semester
- Only 30.4% came to Mohawk from high school, another 31.3% had worked full-time, very few came from another college or university
Participants – Where they filled out survey

§ online - library website: 83.3%
§ in print - in the classroom: 1.5%
§ in print - in the library: 15.2%
Device Ownership

Less than 10% have no portable communication or entertainment device

- iPod or mp3 player: 53%
- Cell phone with camera or cell phone with mp3: 44%
- Cell phone with no extra features: 27.1%
- Cell phone & camera & mp3 all in one: 22.2%
- No portable entertainment/communication device: 9.3%
- PDA or Palm Pilot or Blackberry: 4.6%
How do they contact us?

- **In-person**: 56.7%
- “I do not contact the Library@Mohawk for help”: 22.1%
- Library’s online chat plus service called Ask TheBrain: 14%
- Phone: 4.9%
- Chat using Yahoo!, MSN, AOL, or Google Talk: 2.3%
Why Chat?

- Vast majority use chat & IM for social reasons (82.8%)
- Only 17.2% use it for work (which we defined as: “to communicate with classmates, work colleagues, instructors, librarians, etc.”)
Web 2.0 - Are they There?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pick the choice that best describes your use of this technology</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Read a blog</td>
<td>6.9% (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Created a blog</td>
<td>7.2% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Read the Library’s blog (the BRAINblog)</td>
<td>12.6% (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Listened to a podcast</td>
<td>25.5% (103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Created a podcast</td>
<td>28.2% (114)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Listened to the Library’s podcast (BRAINcast)</td>
<td>39.9% (125)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creative Generation?

- 71.6% have either tried blogging ONCE and are not interested in trying it again or know what it is but have NEVER tried it
- 1.7% read the library’s blog frequently
- 25.5% reported not knowing what a podcast is
- 43.3% have never created a webpage (outside of Facebook & the like)
Information Behaviour of the Researcher of the Future

Quoting a Pew report:
“...Wikipedia and YouTube both exhibit a marked age separation between viewers of content (mainly 18-24s) and content generators (mainly 45-54s and 35-44s) respectively.”
Creative Generation?

Online Activities
What type(s) of online activities have you done or participated in during the last 12 months?

Creative Generation?
PEW Study - Teens and Social Media

§ 28% of teens surveyed have created their own blog
§ Only 10% higher than general public (17%) (OCLC)
§ 27% of college students surveyed maintain their own blog
Creative Generation?

§ University of Michigan, Oct. 2007
§ Library Web Survey (330 students)
  § 80% of respondents have never written a wiki
  § 58% of respondents have never rated things
  § 70% of respondents have never tagged
  § 90% of respondents have not created a podcast
  § 80% of respondents have never blogged
  § 80% of respondents have never social bookmarked
General Public (OCLC)

31% of respondents age 50+ have read blogs;

40% have used instant messaging.

37% of American respondents have used a social networking site, the highest rate of any country surveyed.
Sharing, Privacy and Trust in our Networked World, 2007

“Our research and other current studies ... suggest ... that due to the widespread adaptation of digital technologies over more than a decade, the behaviours and attitudes of these two technology generations are beginning to converge ... many digital immigrants are now fully indoctrinated into the culture.”
They’re Not all the Same

“Each age cohort appears to have its technology champions who adapt early, with others following.” (Horrigan, 2007)
Back to Mohawk: Sharing?

Almost half (48.5%) have either visited a photo sharing site once and are not interested in going back or have never visited a photo sharing site.

42% have never tried social bookmarking, another 40.5% don’t know what it is.
Second Life?

- 44.6% say they have never created an avatar in Second Life
- 47% say they have never visited the Library@Mohawk’s Second Life site
- 45.3% say they don’t know what Second Life is
Got Game?

- Just under half (44.8%) of Mohawk students claim to play video games less than 5 times per week.
- 32% say they are not interested or have never played a video game.
- 52.5% say they have never played a Massively Multi-player Online Game such as World of Warcraft.
- 22% say they don’t know what MMOGs are.
Other Findings about Gaming (Generation M, 2005)

Differences in Media Use by Age

Average amount of time young people spend per day...

![Bar chart showing differences in media use by age](chart.jpg)

MOHAWK COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

LIBRARY@MOHAWK

connect o learn o succeed
Mohawk Survey: Personalization

- 52.7% say they have never customized a webpage such as iGoogle or MyYahoo
- 36.9% say they have never used RSS feeds
OCLC & Personalization

- 75% of Canadian college students surveyed had never heard of RSS feeds
- only 2% are extremely familiar with RSS feeds
Usage of Electronic Resources—
by College Students and Total Respondents

Please indicate if you have used the following electronic information sources, even if you have used them only once.

- E-mail
- Search engine
- Instant messaging
- Online news
- Online bookstore
- Library Web site
- Electronic magazines/journals
- E-mail information/subscription
- Topic-specific Web sites
- Online databases
- Electronic books (digital)
- Blogs
- Ask an expert
- Audiobooks
- Online librarians question service
- Q&A forums

What *are* they doing?

Mohawk students are:

- **Chatting**: 49% claim to do this a lot (more than 10 times per week)
- **Facebooking**: 45.8% claim to do this a lot (more than 10 times per week) & 37.1% edit their own page a lot
- **Listening to music on the go**: 53% claim to own an iPod or mp3 player
What about their Research Skills?

- We posed a series of questions about doing research and provided multiple choice answers.
- Asked students to choose a correct tool or approach.
- They did better than we thought they would but they are not experts and they really do like Google.
Example of a question we asked

If you needed a magazine article about the Kyoto Accord and the involvement of Canada with this Accord, what tool would you use to find this item?

- 44.7% say they would go to Google
- 35% say they would choose the “library’s online magazine and journal databases”
Need a book?

If you needed to find a book about business etiquette in Japan, what tool would you use to find this item?

- 44.7% would use Google
- 30.8% would use the library catalogue
Your instructor has asked you to use peer-reviewed or scholarly articles for your paper. What would be the best tool to use to find a scholarly article?

Google lost this one, 48.3% would use our databases, while only 22.9% would go to Google
Where do they like to start?

What is the first step you take in your research process when writing a research paper?

- 35.2% start on Google or a search engine
- 30.6% use their textbooks or class readings
- only 10.3% start on the library website and only 2.8% ask a library staff member
Beyond Google: How do Students Conduct Research?

“Many young people have been exposed to computers since birth and are considered “naturals” with technology. Though students clearly have an avid use of MySpace and YouTube, this does not mean that college aged students are natural born researchers.”
Information Behaviour of the Researcher of the Future

“... there is a big gap between their actual performance on literacy tests and their self-estimates of information skills and library anxiety.”
Information Behaviour of the Researcher of the Future

“... Internet research shows that the speed of young people’s web searching means that little time is spent in evaluating information for either relevance, accuracy or authority.”
Is there any good news?

§ Commissioned by Proquest: Observing Student Researchers in their Native Habitat

§ One of their findings is that research instruction classes and library outreach & awareness programs do help to get students to use library’s resources
Our Findings

- Millennials are not the wonder generation they have been touted as being, at least not all of them.
- Intelligence doesn’t seem to be greater than previous generations.
- Technological literacy and fluency is not so great in the group as a whole.
- There is a spectrum of ability (surprise!)
Our Findings

$\$ All Millennials are not spending their time creating and using Web 2.0 tools

$\$ Other age groups are spending time creating content and sharing, maybe even more than than the ‘Net Gen

$\$ Millennials spend more time on Facebook, YouTube, and iTunes than creating blogs, podcasts, RSS feeds or web pages

$\$ All Millennials are not gamers
Incidental Findings

- Consider the method of research - are there quantitative findings to back up the qualitative and anecdotal findings?
- Where are the references? Scholarly research to back up assertions.
- Quality of research? e.g. focus groups in front of an audience
- Check behind the curtain of the hype - Web 2.0
- Arcade Scholarship (=superficial and cartoonish analysis)
McKenzie and Arcade Scholarship

ואב

Jamie McKenzie, Yale, Columbia MA & Rutgers EdD

Wrote Digital Nativism, Digital Delusions and Digital Deprivations

Article finds serious flaws in Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants

None of us should be relying on Prensky’s findings on Digital Natives
Recommendations

§ Spend resources building technological skills of the Millennials instead of assuming they already have them

§ Choose a service to start or develop because you’ve studied your students, then, if a Web 2.0 tool is the right tool for delivery, use it.

§ Some gaming techniques may enhance instruction but don’t assume that all Millennials prefer it and are able to perform in this environment
Recommendations

$ Mandatory technology courses for first year students:
  § Evaluation of web resources
  § Database searching
  § How to use 2.0 tools such as RSS and social bookmarking
  § How to use spreadsheet and presentation software
  § How to use web programs such as Dreamweaver, Photoshop and Flash
Recommendations

- In our liaison with instructors we need to get information/technology literacy and expectations on the table.
- Students will use Google and not library resources if their work is acceptable to their instructors.
Further resources…

http://kidsarealright.wordpress.com