

## **Towards a Critical Pedagogy of Digital and Social Media Literacy**

**Dr. Dean Chan**

**University of Wollongong**

The advent of Web 2.0 has witnessed the rise of internet-mediated participatory cultures and, in particular, the proliferation of user-generated content especially those disseminated via social and new media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Flickr. At the same time, however, the stark realities of the uneven access, uptake and digital proficiency—globally, regionally *and* locally—in these platforms are at times problematically taken for granted. In addition, there remains, at base, a complex dialectic and continuum between the online and the offline that is still very much at work in vernacular social and new media practices; but the complexities of this online-offline sociality are arguably still not adequately accounted for in current digital and social media theories. Accordingly, curriculum development initiatives in deploying social media in the classroom cannot afford to risk peddling in new media frontierism at the expense of developing a critical pedagogy of digital literacy. A keen attentiveness to the situated localities and contexts of social praxis, agency and affect in networked communications is therefore foundational to the development of this critical pedagogy. To illustrate these arguments, this presentation examines selected case studies of online-offline border blurrings in digital gaming and social media in the Asia-Pacific, and briefly outlines new course development initiatives at the University of Wollongong.