The Problem(s) With Digital Natives
Billy! Did you do your homework?

Try texting him.

Students in Shanghai, China have top test scores.

Tap tap tap
tap tap tap
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tap tap tap

Mike Smith - Las Vegas Sun 2010 King Features Syndicate
‘The single biggest problem facing education today is that our Digital Immigrant instructors, who speak an outdated language (that of the pre-digital age), are struggling to teach a population that speaks an entirely new language’

(Prensky, 2001, p. 2).
The Problem(s) With Digital Natives, Tom Hoskins, NEAS Conference 2015
Sydney teenagers on 'struggle street' after giving up Facebook to learn about self control

Sydney Morning Herald, March 30th 2012
In combat with an encroaching sense of disconnection

Could being plugged in to social media be rewiring kids' brains? Jill Stark reports on the new fears.

Sydney Morning Herald, October 14th 2012
‘Beginning to manifest a wide array of positive social habits that older Americans no longer associate with youth, including a new focus on teamwork, achievement, modesty, and good conduct...look closely at the dramatic changes now unfolding in the attitudes and behaviours of today's youth, the 18 and unders of the year 2000. The evidence is overwhelming - and just starting to attract notice.’

‘They accept little at face value...unlike the TV generation which had no viable means to interact with media content, The N-Generation has the tools to challenge ideas, people, statements - anything. These youth love to argue and debate...they are also learning to think critically as well.’

(Tapscott, 2009, p. 88)
‘It is now clear that as a result of this ubiquitous environment and the sheer volume of their interaction with it, today’s students think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors.’

The Problem(s) With Digital Natives, Tom Hoskins, NEAS Conference 2015
The Problem(s) With Digital Natives, Tom Hoskins, NEAS Conference 2015
“.. the global leader in education and education technology, reaches and engages today’s digital natives with effective and personalized learning”

“There's never been a high school math classroom quite like yours. It's populated with diverse, multi-tasking digital natives”
The Problem(s) With Digital Natives, Tom Hoskins, NEAS Conference 2015
The use of technology among young people is:

- Often far more passive, solitary, sporadic and unspectacular than expected
  
  (Livingstone, 2009)

- Largely restricted to very specific passive uses for most people (e.g. game playing, messaging, social media, retrieval of online content)

  (Crook and Harrison, 2008; Luckin et al., 2009; Lenhart et al., 2007).
With the exception of social networking, most activities associated with Web 2.0 are engaged in by a minority of respondents on key large-scale surveys

(Salaway & Caruso 2007; Kennedy et al. 2009; Maton & Bennett 2010; Jones et al. 2010)
(While) the use of some ICTs was ubiquitous (e.g., mobile phones, email, and instant messaging) we did not find any evidence to support claims that digital literacy, connectedness, a need for immediacy, and a preference for experiential learning were characteristics of a particular generation of learners.

Bullen, Morgan and Qayyum (2011) *Digital Learners in Higher Education: Generation is Not the Issue*
During a typical weekday for how long do you use the Internet at school?
Are any of these devices available for you to use at school?
- Internet connection

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To what extent do you agree? - Using the computer for learning is troublesome

- Using the computer for learning is troublesome
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
We should

• Maintain a balanced and objective perspective on strong claims concerning ‘Digital Nativeness’.

• Expect to train students in digital literacy skills, and uses of technology regardless of their age.

• Recognise and engage with deep-rooted cultural attitudes towards technology and education.
We should not:

• Expect students will always want to use technology in the same way within the classroom as outside.

• Confuse heavy use of specific technologies with wide-ranging technological expertise.

• Make assumptions about the ability of staff to engage with and incorporate technology into their classroom practice based on their age.
This is not an argument for maintaining the status quo at post-secondary institutions. Rather, it means that we need to avoid the temptation to base our decisions on generational stereotypes and instead seek a deeper understandings of how students are using technology and what role it plays in learning and teaching in higher education.

(Kennedy, Judd, Dalgarnot, & Waycott, 2010)
Here's your zombie apocalypse
References:


Crook, C. and Harrison, C. (2008), Web 2.0 Technologies for Learning at Key Stages 3 and 4, Becta, Coventry


Lenhart, A., Madden, M., Macgill, A. and Smith, A. (2007), Teens and Social Media, Pew Internet & American Life Project, Washington, DC


