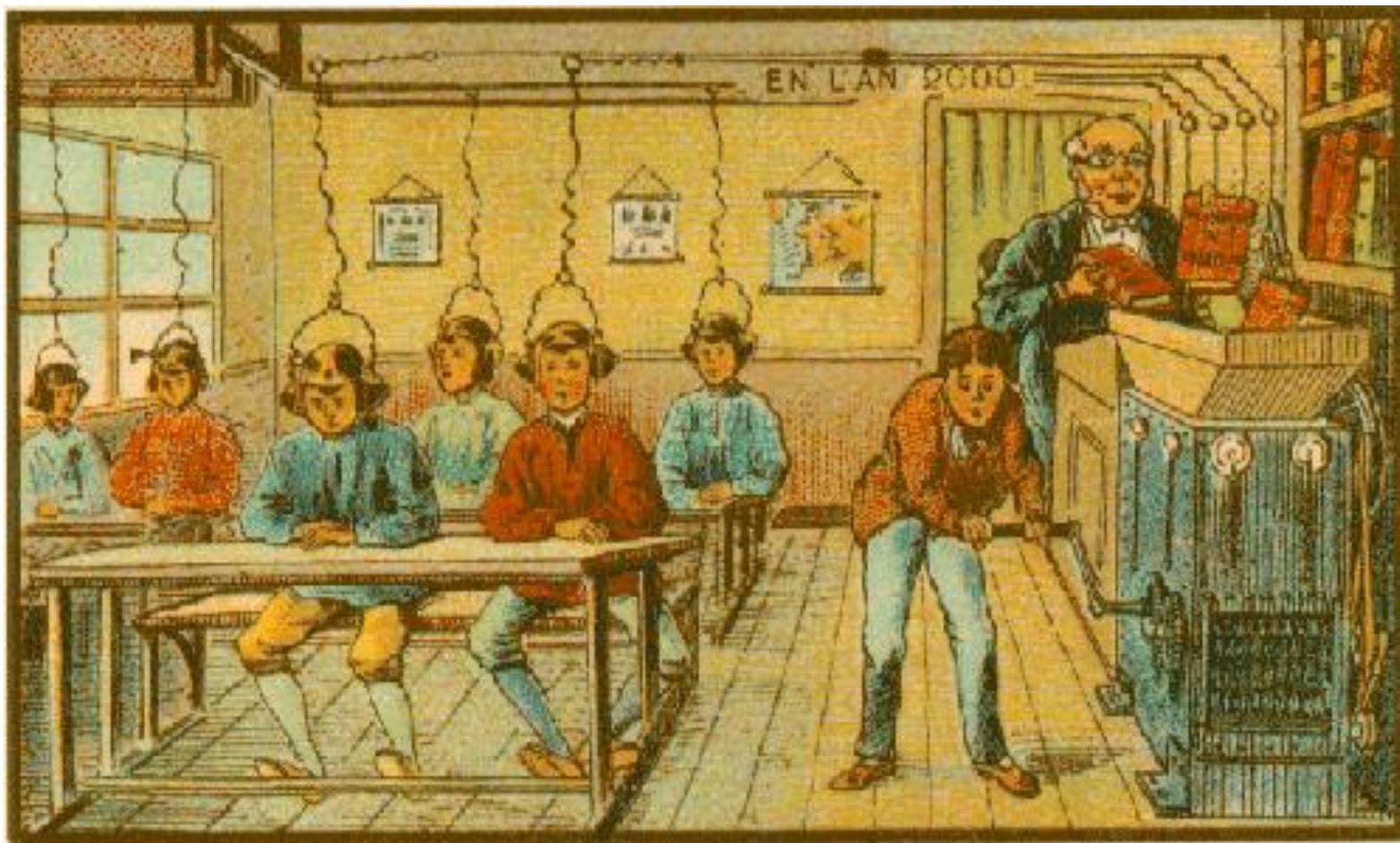




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**Do social media, MOOCs & other digital opportunities in education add value?**

**Professor Andy Lane**





## The added value for teaching

- They allow the sharing of ideas and knowledge between **individual** teachers and learners beyond the confines of the classroom – moving from **individual to collective practices**;
- Their potential ‘openness’ can enable **educational institutions and other organisations** to create resources or courses more efficiently and/or effectively in collaboration with others;
- They do allow individual teachers or educational organisations to reach a **global audience** at scale;
- They provide **easier access** to interactive simulations and audio visual material;
- They can potentially **reduce the carbon-based impacts** of education.



## The reduced value for teaching

- They encourage and/or reinforce **bad instructional practices**, fostering teacher/content-centred approaches rather than student-centred ones ;
- Digital-based activities and assessments can be **inauthentic** and not relate well to everyday uses;
- Some proprietary digital media and technologies can be **more costly to access and use** than ‘traditional’ methods;
- Students generally **read fewer words per minute** off screen rather than in print and have to re-read more often and teachers have to adjust learning resources to compensate;
- They may **increase plagiarism, collusion and other forms of cheating** and/or erode differences in academic writing styles (whither the footnote in the humanities?).



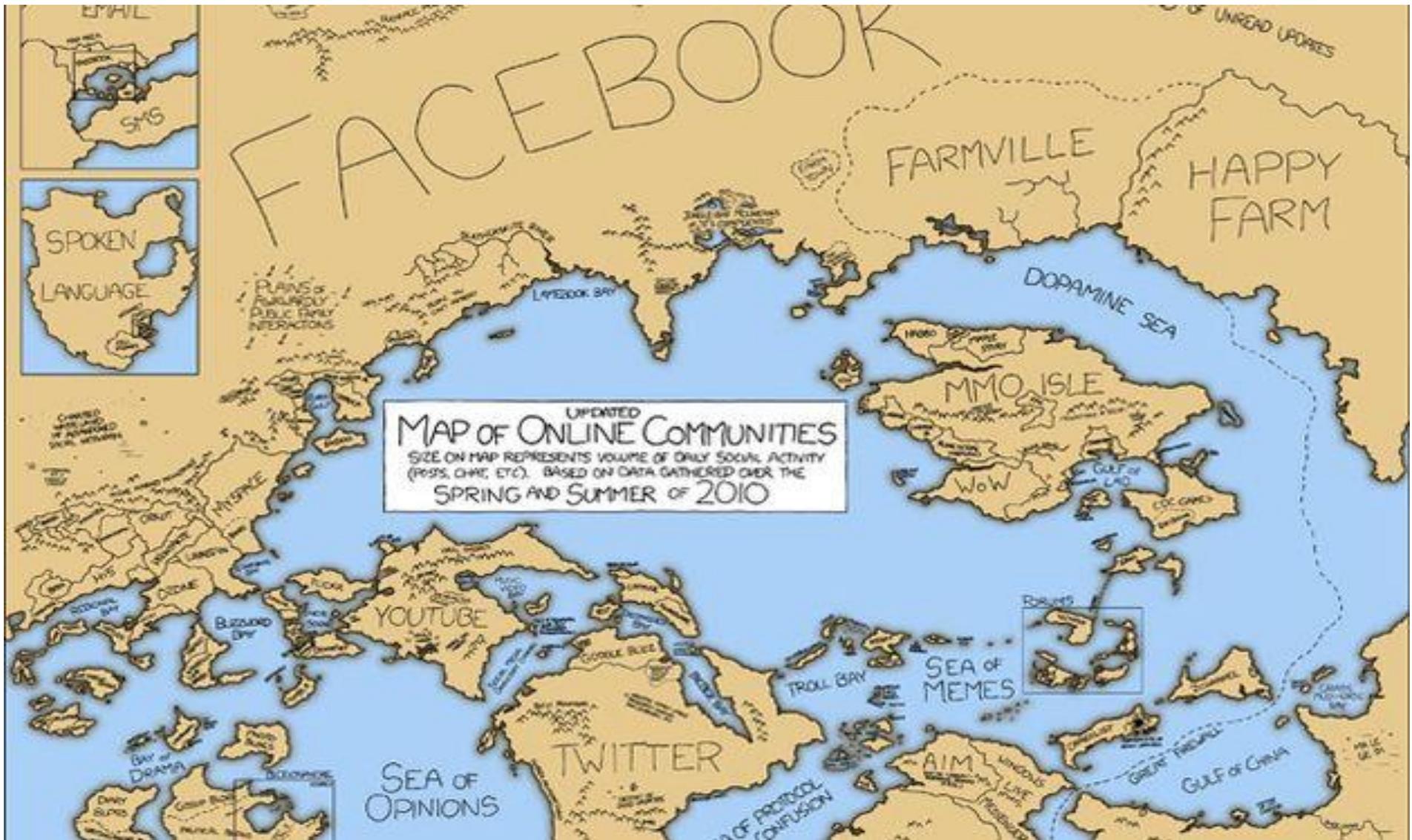
## The added value for learning

- They provide greater **access** to a much wider range of sources of **knowledge and information** from many different countries and cultures;
- They enable multi-way **communication** to be made to many **more people** than a student's own immediate peers;
- They enable **'mobile' study** whereby resources and people can be accessed wherever you are and wherever they are;
- They involve and promote **'digital' skills** that are seen as critical for 21<sup>st</sup> century living and working, including the use of visual media in place of plain written text;
- Online badges and portfolios can provide more **visible expressions** of a student's **abilities and competencies**.



## The reduced value for learning

- Digital-based activities and assessments can be **inauthentic** and not relate well to everyday uses;
- The **quality of digital conversations** can be degraded compared to face to face conversations;
- They can **exclude** many people through enhancement of both digital and educational divides;
- Multiple technologies and platforms can provide **a confusing or irritating experience** to learners
- People generally **read fewer words per minute** off screen rather than in print and have to re-read dense writings more often;
- If people can get access to educational resources and courses for free what will they still be **willing to pay for?**





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