Harnessing Social Media for Disaster Health Learning: 
It’s Not Just About the Destination

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Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this portion of the presentation, the participant will be able to:

1. Understand and evaluate the learning theories that may inform a social media age.

2. Apply metaphors to assist in our analysis of the current social media environment.

3. Reflect upon our past conceptions of learning and consider new theories that may guide our educational future.
Remember to use #LDH13 when Tweeting about today's session!
What is learning?

• Developing identities
• Communities
• Engagement
• Meaningful experiences

-Wenger, 1998
Our educational focus?
Intellectual laziness and the hurry of the age have produced a craving for literary nips. The torpid brain ... has grown too weak for sustained thought.

There never was an age in which so many people were able to write badly.

Israel Zangwill, The Bachelors' Club

1891
But what is a learning theory?

- A model or lens
- Help us understand the learning process
Traditional Learning Theories

**Behaviorism**
- Understand
- Remember

**Cognitivism**
- Create
- Evaluate

**Constructivism**
- Analyse
- Apply

**Definition**
- Learning is a process of reacting to external stimuli.
- Learning is a process of acquiring and storing information.
- Learning is a process of constructing subjective reality based.
Behaviorism
Cognitivism
Constructivism
Constructivism in Practice

"I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!"
The Social Media Era

- Self-directed
- Crowdsourced
- World-wide audience
- Knowledge filtering
- 24/7 access

Is a new learning theory needed?
“In an increasingly complex world, sometimes old questions require new answers.”
Changes in smartphone ownership, 2011–2013
% of all U.S. adults who own...

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project April 26-May 22, 2011, January 20-February 19, 2012, and April 17-May 19, 2013 tracking surveys. For 2013 data, n=2,252 adults and survey includes 1,127 cell phone interviews. All surveys include Spanish-language interviews.
The internet as diagnostic tool...

1. **59%** of U.S. adults have looked online for health information in the past year.

2. **35%** of U.S. adults say they have used the internet to try to figure out what medical condition they or another may have. We call them “online diagnosers.”

3. **53%** of online diagnosers talked with a clinician about what they found online.

4. **41%** of online diagnosers had their condition confirmed by a clinician.
Social Networking Site Use by Age Group, 2005-2012

% of internet users in each age group who use social networking sites

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project surveys, 2005-2012
Social Media Activities
Connectivism: A learning theory for a social media age?

- Identity
  - Concrete experience
  - Observations/Reflections
  - Choice
  - Testing in new situations
  - Formation of abstract concepts

Creativity
Ahh The Smell Of Social Media In The Morning...

by @fonndalo
The Digital Age To-Go “Cup”

Mobile
- Information travels with us
- Anytime, anywhere information
- Timeliness – JIT information
- Location sensitive

Social Media
- Source variety
- Instant feedback
- Content creation
- Message amplification
Our new local coffeehouse
The future?

1900s

Today
Literacies in a Social Media Age

- Networking
- Privacy
- Identity management
- Self-presentation
- Content
  - Creating
  - Remixing
  - Organizing
  - Filtering

“No, you weren't downloaded. You were born.”
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“One’s destination is never a place, but rather a new way of looking at things.” – Henry Miller
Questions?

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