



## ENTREVISTA con Howard Rheingold:

### Web 2.0 y educación en América Latina y el Caribe

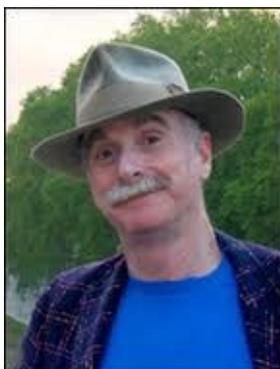
**Howard Rheingold**

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Howard Rheingold is an American critic and essayist. He is the author of: *Tools for Thought*, *The Virtual Community* and *Smart Mobs*. He was editor of *Whole Earth Review* and *The Millennium Whole Earth Catalog*. He is the founding executive editor of *Hotwired* and is the founder of *Electric Minds*.

Non-resident Fellow, Annenberg Center for Communication, USC (2007).

Visiting Professor, Montfort University, UK. Has taught: *Participatory*

*Media and Collective Action* (UC Berkeley, SIMS, Fall, 2005, 2006, 2007),

*Virtual Community/Social Media* (Stanford, Fall 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010;

UC Berkeley, Spring 2008, 2009), *Toward a Literacy of Cooperation*

(Stanford, Winter, 2005), *Digital Journalism* (Stanford University Winter, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008).

Current projects: *Social Media Classroom*; *The Cooperation Project*; *Rheingold U*; *21st Century Literacies* (40 min video); 6 minute vid interview, same subject.

He is currently a professor at Stanford University.



***“We face a divide between those who know how to use Web 2.0 media to their advantage and those who do not”***

***How is Web 2.0 impacting the educational process? Are learning outcomes improving and new forms of collaboration evolving? Are teachers implementing new strategies? Are we facing new multidimensional learning environments?***

People around the world spend 3 billion hours per month playing computer and video games, volunteers have created millions of entries on [Wikipedia](#). Both these activities require learning, neither of these activities are done because they are required. However, learning and education aren't necessarily the same thing. While students are blogging and searching, playing games, it isn't often in the context of schools, many of which ban the use of the Internet. Those educators who have embraced the use of social media know that using more peer-to-peer media and collaborative tools can only have a powerful effect when they are part of a pedagogy that encourages collaborative inquiry on the part of the students. This isn't always easy for teachers who are used to the broadcast model. And students need to redirect attention from scoring on tests to engaging with each other around learning.

***What are the general values or norms that should be taken into account to make engaging learning environments in a virtual learning community?***

First of all, the notion of learning community means that the teacher needs to broadcast less often and facilitate more – the students become more central, and they must take more responsibility for their learning. Projects must come from the students' own engagement with issues. Reflection on what the subject matter means in the students' lives is important.

***How can Web 2.0 tools be utilized efficiently for education in the developing world, specifically in societies that are traditionally disadvantaged?***

More people have access to telephones with SMS capabilities or even smartphones than have access to brick and mortar schoolhouses. Open educational resources are available online for free, from [MIT Open Courseware](#) to the [Khan Academy](#). But students need guidance on how to use these resources.



***Can you share with us what you consider to be the challenges and possibilities beyond the digital divide? What are our opportunities to capitalize on positive changes and address negative trends?***

With the proliferation of web-connected phones, access to the devices is no longer the only kind of divide. Now we face a divide between those who know how to use Web 2.0 media to their advantage and those who do not.

***Democratic processes of participation can be promoted through education. How can we utilize the tools of Web 2.0 in the Americas and the Caribbean to achieve this?***

Encourage students to engage in the democratic process in their education – nominate, debate, and vote on projects to do, for example.

***What do you think will be the topics of our interview in 10 years? In what direction are we evolving?***

I have no idea!