

TL Infobits - August 2008

Issue 26

ISSN: 1931-3144

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UNDERSTANDING THE NET GENERATION'S TEXTS

"Much has been written about the way in which the [Net-Generation] learner acquires and processes information. Coming of age in an environment saturated by technology, where the digital world interacts more and more seamlessly with the "real" world, means that these students represent the first generation of virtual learners--learners accustomed to seeking and building knowledge in a technology-enhanced environment. When these learners seek information, they are more likely to look for it online than anywhere else since this is the environment with which they are most familiar. Are educators rising to the challenge of teaching these students? Some evidence suggests that they are not."

In "Why Professor Johnny Can't Read: Understanding the Net Generation's Texts" (*Innovate*, vol. 4,no. 6, August/September 2008), Mark Mabrito and Rebecca Medley of Purdue University Calumet discuss the difference in literacy skills between the current generation of college students and the faculty who teach them. They describe the differences between the two groups as "not a generation gap but an information processing gap" that can be bridged by faculty experiencing the digital world from the students' perspectives.

The paper is available online at <http://www.innovateonline.info/index.php?view=article&id=510>.

Registration is required to access articles; registration is free.

Innovate: Journal of Online Education [ISSN 1552-3233], an open-access, peer-reviewed online journal, is published bimonthly by the Fischler School of Education and Human Services at Nova Southeastern University. The journal focuses on the creative use of information technology (IT) to enhance educational processes in academic, commercial, and governmental settings. For more information, contact James L. Morrison, Editor-in-Chief; email: innovate@nova.edu; Web: <http://innovateonline.info/>.

STAKEHOLDERS IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN HIGHER ED

"To succeed in the internet age, libraries must be aware of which traditional roles are no longer needed and which potential roles would be valued, and strategically

shift their service offerings to maximize their value to local users."

Since 2000, Ithaka has conducted surveys to understand how new technologies are affecting the attitudes and behaviors of faculty in higher education. In 2006, Ithaka expanded its study by a similar survey of librarians. The results, which compare data from 2000, 2003, and 2006, are now available in "Ithaka's 2006 Studies of Key Stakeholders in the Digital Transformation in Higher Education" (by Ross Housewright and Roger Schonfeld, August 18, 2008).

Some of the findings include:

-- "[W]hile [faculty] value the library, they perceive themselves to be decreasingly dependent on the library for their research and teaching and they anticipate that dependence to continue to decline in the future."

-- "[T]he vast majority of faculty view the role that librarians play as just as important as it has been in the past."

-- While the library's role as purchaser and preserver of information remains important for faculty, the importance of its role of "gateway for locating information" is declining. However, librarians surveyed list this role as very important.

-- "[F]aculty members are growing somewhat less aware of the library's role in providing the tools and services they use in the virtual environment."

-- As libraries move from print to digital collections, "[n]either faculty members nor librarians are enthusiastic to see existing hard-copy collections discarded, with the faculty much less enthusiastic than the librarians. . . ."

The paper is available online at <http://www.ithaka.org/research/faculty-and-librarian-surveys/>.

Ithaka is an independent not-for-profit organization with a mission to accelerate the productive uses of information technologies for the benefit of higher education worldwide. "We work in close collaboration with JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org/>) and ARTstor (<http://www.artstor.org/>), and we are currently incubating three initiatives: Aluka (<http://www.aluka.org/>), a digital library of scholarly resources from and about the developing world; NITLE (<http://www.nitle.org/>), a collaborative effort to promote emerging technologies in liberal arts contexts; and Portico (<http://www.portico.org/>), a permanent archive of electronic scholarly journals." For more information about Ithaka, go to <http://www.ithaka.org/>.

INCREASING THE IMPACT OF ONLINE SCHOLARLY JOURNAL ARTICLES

As more scholars use the Web to disseminate their publications, they are faced with the problem of making their work stand out in the vast sea of online documents. In "Increasing Impact of Scholarly Journal Articles: Practical Strategies Librarians Can Share" (*E-JASL*, vol. 9, no. 1, Spring 2008), Laura Bowering Mullen describes how academic librarians can help faculty increase the visibility of their scholarly articles

by providing advice in the areas of self-archiving, citation analysis, and open-access publishing. Mullen provides a number of suggested strategies that scholars, in partnership with librarians, can use to increase the impact of their writings.

The paper is available online at

http://southernlibrarianship.icaap.org/content/v09n01/mullen_101.html.

E-JASL: The Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship [ISSN 1704-8532] is an independent, professional, refereed electronic journal dedicated to advancing knowledge and research in the areas of academic and special librarianship. E-JASL is published by the Consortium for the Advancement of Academic Publication (ICAAP), Athabasca, Canada. For more information, contact: Paul Haschak, Executive Editor, University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL, USA; email: phaschak@usouthal.edu; Web: <http://southernlibrarianship.icaap.org/>.

PEER REVIEWING: PAST & PRESENT

"Putting one's work forward for refereeing is like playing chess with one's ego -- advancing one's pawn into the maw of scholarly battle. Busy old-hand reviewers are not necessarily blessed with a generosity of spirit, and may treat pieces harshly. On the other hand, newly engaged referees may find their reports ignored by editors, for reasons of lack of skill. Writing a review, as with receiving one, involves skills of astuteness and nuancing. This is due to the complexity of the academic publishing process and its professed responsibility to the advancement of knowledge."

In "Peer Reviewing: Privilege and Responsibility" (*TEXT*, vol. 12, no. 1, April 2008), Jane Johnston and Nigel Krauth chart the history of peer reviewing and discuss its role in current scholarly publishing. The authors identify four components of the contemporary peer review process and their responsibilities in the advancing of knowledge:

1. the researcher/author seeking peer review (Writer)
2. the role of the reviewer (Reviewer)
3. the philosophy of the journal publishing -- or rejecting -- the research (Journal)
4. the expectations of the discipline for which the paper is written (Discipline).

The paper is online at http://www.textjournal.com.au/april08/johnston_krauth.htm.

TEXT: The Journal of the Australian Association of Writing Programs [ISSN: 1327-9556] is "an international peer-reviewed journal under the auspices of the Australian Association of Writing Programs. *TEXT* publishes academic and other material concerned with creative and professional writing programs in universities, colleges, TAFEs [Technical and Further Education institutions] and the community around Australia, United States, Canada, New Zealand, England, and from other English-speaking areas and programs." *TEXT* is published twice a year and is available free of charge as an Open Access journal on the Internet. For more information, contact: email: text@griffith.edu.au; Web: <http://www.textjournal.com.au/>.

THE "DARK SIDE" OF PEER REVIEWING

In their paper "Perceptions of Ethical Problems with Scientific Journal Peer Review: An Exploratory Study" (*SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING ETHICS*, vol. 14, no. 3, September 2008, pp 305-10) researchers David B. Resnik, Christina Gutierrez-Ford, and Shyamal Peddada report on an anonymous survey of National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences scientists conducted in 2006 to discover ethical problems with the peer review process. The main problem reported by those responding to the survey was reviewer incompetence. Unethical reviewer conduct that was mentioned included:

- personal attacks in reviewer comments
- breach of confidentiality
- holding up publication of the paper so the reviewer could publish a paper on the same topic first

Since the survey's questions called for respondents to give their opinions, one might argue that the responses are more a reflection of their personal perceptions than a picture of the true peer review situation. However, as the survey conductors point out:

"[D]ocumenting that scientists perceive that there are ethical problems with journal peer review can be an important finding in its own right, because a scientist may change his/her behavior in response to what he/she perceives to be a problem. A researcher who is concerned that his/her ideas will be stolen, for example, may not disclose all the information that is needed to repeat his/her experiments. A researcher who is concerned that a reviewer is incompetent or biased may choose to ignore the reviewer's comments rather than address the concerns (which may in fact be valid), especially if they involve further time and effort in the laboratory. Additional studies can help determine whether Scientists' perceptions of ethical problems with journal peer review influence their behavior."

The paper is online at

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/k64q63125r0655ql/fulltext.html>.

A subscription is required for access; check your institution's library to see if it provides online access.

See also:

"Incompetence Tops List of Complaints About Peer Reviewers"

By Jeffrey Brainard

The Chronicle of Higher Education

August 27, 2008

<http://chronicle.com/daily/2008/08/4366n.htm>

Recommended Reading

"Recommended Reading" lists items that have been recommended to me or that *Infobits* readers have found particularly interesting and/or useful, including books, articles, and websites published by Infobits subscribers. Send your recommendations to kotlas@email.unc.edu for possible inclusion in this column.

"Who Profits When You Publish?"

By K. A. Wallace

Academe, July-August 2008

<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2008/JA/Feat/wall.htm>

"Among academic authors, discussion about dissemination of and access to scholarly works and lamentation about commodification abound, but scant attention is paid to the monetary aspects of digital publication for authors, in particular authors in the humanities and to some extent those in the social sciences."

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