CIT Infobits

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CIT Infobits is an electronic service of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ITS Center for Instructional Technology. Each month the CIT's Information Resources Consultant monitors and selects from a number of information and instructional technology sources that come to her attention and provides brief notes for electronic dissemination to educators.

Is Writing a Dying Art?
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IS WRITING A DYING ART?

In "The Death of the Art of Writing: Myth or Reality?" (*Ubiquity*, vol. 5, issue 4, March 17-23, 2004) Victor Tiong Kung Ming looks at how we're moving from penmanship to "keypadship" and asks "Who cares about writing anymore?" Some of the results are a breakdown of traditional grammar, personalized abbreviations that limit comprehension, and the deterioration of handwriting. But all is not negative --writing may actually be increasing as people find technology gives them easier access to writing tools and a wider audience for their output. The essay can be read online at http://www.acm.org/ubiquity/views/v5i4_ming.html.

Ubiquity is a free, Web-based publication of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), "dedicated to fostering critical analysis and in-depth commentary on issues relating to the nature, constitution, structure, science, engineering, technology, practices, and paradigms of the IT profession." For more information, contact: Ubiquity, email: ubiquity@acm.org; Web: http://www.acm.org/ubiquity/.

For more information on the ACM, contact: ACM, One Astor Plaza, 1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036, USA; tel: 800-342-6626 or 212-626-0500; Web: http://www.acm.org/.

OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING

"Commercial publishers used to object to OA [open access] journals on the ground that they bypassed peer review. But that was clearly false. The latest refinement of the objection is that peer review at OA journals cannot be trusted. It must be compromised or corrupted by the business model, which covers expenses by charging an upfront fee on accepted articles. Such journals will have an incentive, the argument goes, to accept any paper from a paying author."

In the March 2004 issue of the *SPARC Open Access Newsletter*, Peter Suber examines the topic of open-access journals and dismisses many of the publishers' arguments against them. The issue also includes numerous links to other open access resources. The newsletter is available online, at no cost, at http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/03-02-04.htm.

SPARC Open Access Newsletter [ISSN 1546-7821] is written by Peter Suber and published by SPARC. Suber, who writes and consults in the area of open access to scientific and scholarly research literature, is a research professor at Earlham College.

The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition [SPARC] is "an alliance of academic and research libraries and organizations working to correct market dysfunctions in the scholarly publishing system." For more information, contact: SPARC, 21 Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036 USA; tel: 202-296-2296; fax 202-872-0884; email: sparc@arl.org; Web: http://www.arl.org/sparc/.

See also:

Washington DC Principles for Free Access to Science http://www.dcprinciples.org/

"On March 16, 2004, representatives from the nation's leading not-for-profit medical/scientific societies and publishers announced their commitment to providing free access and wide dissemination of published research findings. The 'Washington DC Principles for Free Access to Science' outlines the commitment of not-for-profit publishers to work in partnership with scholarly communities such as libraries . . . [and to] provide what has been called the needed 'middle ground' in the increasingly heated debate between those who advocate immediate unfettered online access to medical and scientific research findings and advocates of the current journal publishing system."

For a publisher's position on the issue of open access publishing, see "Elsevier's comments on evolutions in scientific, technical and medical publishing and reflections on possible implications of Open Access journals for the UK" at

http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/authored_newsitem.cws_home/companynews05_00077.

SURVEYING THE DIGITAL FUTURE

On June 8, 1999, the University of California - Los Angeles Center for Communication Policy began the first comprehensive, long-term study of "how life is being transformed by computers and the Internet." The UCLA World Internet Project surveys include households in the U.S., Europe, Latin America, the People's Republic of China, and Singapore. "Surveying the Digital Future," the survey's Year Three report, released in January, found the following:

"Television viewing is lower among Internet users than non-users in all of the surveyed countries."

"Information on the Internet is viewed as generally reliable and accurate by a large percentage of users in most countries."

There are "surprisingly high levels of online use among the poorest citizens in all of the survey countries."

"Even though respondents consistently say that online access is a powerful tool for information gathering, the Internet is not perceived by most users as having an effect on school grades."

For more information about the survey and to view all reports, go to http://ccp.ucla.edu/pages/internet-report.asp.

The UCLA Center for Communication Policy, created in September 1993, is "a forum for the discussion and development of policy alternatives addressing the leading issues in media and communication." For

more information, contact: The Center for Communication Policy, UCLA, Box 951586, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1586 USA; tel: 310-825-3711; email: <u>internet@ucla.edu</u>; Web: <u>http://ccp.ucla.edu/index.asp</u>.

TECHNOLOGY TIPS FOR STUDENTS

In "Taking Charge of Learning: Tips for Students" (*Syllabus*, March 2004) David G. Brown, Wake Forest University, provides five pieces of advice that professors can pass along to their students to enhance their learning experiences: use email, use the Web, keep it simple, be cautious, and anticipate breakdowns. The article is online at http://www.syllabus.com/article.asp?id=8470.

Syllabus [ISSN 1089-5914] is published monthly by 101communications, LLC, 9121 Oakdale Avenue, Suite 101, Chatsworth, CA 91311 USA; tel: 650-941-1765; fax: 650-941-1785; email: info@syllabus.com; Web: http://www.syllabus.com/.

Annual subscriptions are free to individuals who work in colleges, universities, and high schools in the U.S.; go to http://subscribe.101com.com/syllabus/ for more information.

PAPERS FROM AN E-LEARNING CONFERENCE

The March 2004 issue (vol. 2, issue 1) of the *Electronic Journal of eLearning (EJEL)* includes a selection of papers which were presented at Glasgow Caledonian University in November 2003. Papers include:

"The Need for a Strategic Foundation for Digital Learning and Knowledge Management Solutions" by Mehdi Asgarkhani, Christchurch, New Zealand

"Understanding and Reducing Stress in Collaborative e-Learning" by Naomi Lawless and John Allan, Open University Business School, Milton Keynes, UK

"Expected and Actual Student Use of an Online Learning Environment: A Critical Analysis" by Nicola Beasley and Keith Smyth, Napier University, Edinburgh, Scotland

This issue and the previous issue (vol. 1, issue 1, February 2003) are available online, at no cost, at http://www.ejel.org/.

The *Electronic Journal of eLearning* [ISSN 1479-4403] is a refereed journal that "provides perspectives on topics relevant to the study, implementation, and management of e-Learning initiatives." EJEL is published by Management Centre International Limited. For more information, contact: EJEL, Curtis Farm, Kidmore End, Nr Reading RG4 9AY, England; tel: +44 (0)1189 724148; fax: +44 (0)1189 724691; email: info@ejel.org; Web: http://www.ejel.org/.

IDENTITY ABUSE RESOURCES

In February the *CIT Infobits* editor participated in "Identity Abuse in Academe," a symposium sponsored by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Internet and the Social Sciences Working Group (also known as Internet Impact). The symposium featured presentations and panel discussions on online identity, what constitutes identity abuse, and how to protect yourself from identity abuse. The presentation notes and supplementary readings and resources from the symposium are online at http://www.unc.edu/internetimpact/2004symposium/index.html.

Since the symposium topic is of continuing interest, we will update the readings and resources section whenever new materials are available. If you come across items that would be useful additions to the

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.

Theory and Practice of Online Learning Edited by Terry Anderson and Fathi Elloumi Athabasca, Canada: Athabasca University, 2004

ISBN: 0-919737-59-5

Theory and Practice of Online Learning is "concerned with assisting providers of online education with useful tools to carry out the teaching and learning transactions online. It presents, in an easily readable form, the theory, administration, tools, and methods of designing and delivering learning online."

Athabasca University has published the book as an open source book under a Creative Commons License [http://creativecommons.org/], thus making the book available to educators all over the world at no cost. The complete text is available online at http://cde.athabascau.ca/online_book. (Printed, bound copies are available for purchase.)