IAT INFOBITS

January 1998 No. 55

ISSN 1071-5223

About INFOBITS

Infobits is an electronic service of the Institute for Academic Technology's Information Resources Group. Each month we monitor and select from a number of information technology and instruction technology sources that come to our attention and provide brief notes for electronic dissemination to educators.

DEBATING THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

Sources mentioned in past issues of Infobits have expounded on the changing education environment with emphasis on the impact of technologies on the future of learning. [See "Digital Diploma Mills," *IAT Infobits*, December 1997, http://www.iat.unc.edu/infobits/bitdec97.html#1 and "Will Technotainment Make Schools Irrelevant?", *IAT Infobits*, August 1997, http://www.iat.unc.edu/infobits/bitaug97.html#2]. Here are a few more recent articles and papers in the educational press that add to the debate.

In "Will Schools Become Irrelevant?" (*MultiMedia Schools*, vol. 5, no. 1 January/February 1998, pp. 6, 8), Editor Susan Veccia argues that "concerns about the effectiveness of educational technology are wrapped up in value-laden topics... [but] whatever research ultimately tells us, we simply cannot wait to take some action." Veccia believes that "if schools cannot provide students with sufficient technology so that they can survive in the workplace of the 21st century, schools will become institutions of yesteryear." The entire article can be read on the Web at http://www.infotoday.com/MMSchools/jan98/dcon0198.htm

"A Paradigm Shift from Instruction to Learning" is a new addition to the ERIC Clearinghouse for Community Colleges Digest series by Gwyer Schuyler. The paper reviews the arguments and recommendations of those who believe that "the goal of student learning has become incongruent with the current way higher education institutions function." The paper is available on the Web at http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/ERIC/digests/dig9802.html
A searchable index to all ERIC Digests is available at http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/index/

While Schuyler states that "in the hearts of dedicated education professionals is the belief that the primary goal of education is student achievement," Ann Bradley (in "Professors' Attitudes Out of Sync, Study Finds," *Education Week*, October 29, 1997, p. 3, http://www.edweek.org/ew/vol-17/09profs.h17) highlights a poll conducted by Public Agenda that reveals that "professors of education hold an idealistic view of public education that differs so markedly from the concerns of parents, taxpayers, teachers, and students that it amounts to 'a kind of rarefied blindness'." The poll's report, "Different Drummers: How Teachers of Teachers View Public Education," states that education professors overwhelmingly place high value on the importance of how, not what, students learn. Also rated highly are lifelong learning, teaching students to be active learners, and having high expectations of all their students while downplaying more traditional educational practices and "academic sanctions such as the threat of flunking or being held back." A summary of the study and information on ordering the report is available on the Web at http://www.publicagenda.org/aboutpa/aboutpa3i.html

MultiMedia Schools [ISSN: 1075-0479] is published five times a year by Information Today, Inc., 143 Old Marlton

Pike, Medford, NJ 08055-8750 USA; tel: 609-654-6266; fax: 609-654-4309; email: custserv@infotoday.com; Web: http://www.infotoday.com/MMSchools/
Annual subscriptions are $39.50 (U.S. & Canada); $53 (Mexico); $62 (outside North America).

Education Week [ISSN: 0277-4232] is published by Editorial Projects in Education (the non-profit organization that founded The Chronicle of Higher Education), 4301 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20008 USA; tel: 800-728-2790; fax: 202-686-0797; Web: http://www.edweek.org/
Annual subscriptions are $69.94 (U.S.); $96.59 (Canada); $192.94 (airmail to all other countries).

Public Agenda is a non-profit public opinion research and citizen education organization founded in 1975 by social scientist and author Daniel Yankelovich and former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. For more information about Public Agenda, see their main Web page at http://www.publicagenda.org/

COUNTING THE COSTS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

In "Education in the Ether" (*Salon Magazine*, January 20, 1998, http://www.salonmagazine.com/21st/feature/1998/01/20feature.html) Vicky Phillips, an adult education and distance learning pioneer says, "I was taught what Plato defined to be the nature of a true liberal education. It is independent of time and place. Real education does not occur on a campus."

Learning may indeed be taking place in the virtual environment of the Internet, but campuses must still deal with the very down-to-earth issues of costs, content, and delivery mechanisms. Kenneth Green's article, "Money, Technology, and Distance Education" (*On The Horizon*, vol. 5, no. 6, November/December 1997, pp. 1, 3-7), lays out the realities that higher education must face as they rush into the booming distance education market. Green has charted the growth of campus technology for several years [see "Campus Desktop Computing Survey," *IAT Infobits*, July 1997, http://www.iat.unc.edu/infobits/bitjul97.html#1] and uses his expertise to make a case for grounding distance education initiatives on solid business practices. The utopia of distance education envisioned by Phillips will put increasing demands on infrastructures as faculty and students depend on expensive technologies such as high-speed data and video networks, online libraries, and production staff and facilities. Green believes that successful, cost-effective distance education will depend on addressing three factors: creating a sound business plan, having content development that is a team effort, and providing a formal recognition and reward structure for faculty who are "too often . . . penalized for their technology efforts when their portfolios are presented for promotion and tenure review."

Salon Magazine is published electronically on weekdays by Salon Internet, Inc., 706 Mission Street, Second Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103 USA; tel: 415 882 8720; fax: 415 882 8731; email: salon@salonmagazine.com;
Web: http://www.salonmagazine.com/

On The Horizon [ISSN 1085-4959] is published bimonthly by Jossey-Bass Publishers; 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104-1342 USA; tel: 888-378-2537; Web: http://sunsite.unc.edu/horizon/
Annual subscriptions are $50 (individuals/print only); $80 (institutions/print only); $79 (individuals/print & online); $137 (institutions/print & online). Back issues are available on the Web site to non-subscribers.

MIDDLE SCHOOL COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES JOURNAL

A new electronic journal was launched on January 1, 1998, "to introduce educators to the reality and possibilities of applying the latest technology to teaching and learning in the middle school classroom. The structure of *Meridian: A Middle School Computer Technologies Journal* is "modeled after the interdisciplinary, multimodal structure of the middle school, and not the discipline-specific structure of the university." The review board is made up of graduate students from several Colleges at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC. Articles in Meridian's debut issue include "Project KID DESIGNER: Constructivism at Work through Play," by Lloyd P. Rieber, Nancy Luke, and Jan Smith (University of Georgia); "Gender and Digital Media in the Context of a Middle School Science Project," by Ricki Goldman-Segall (University of British Columbia); and "Urgent Emerging Issues Related to Technology Applications in Schools," by Peter Martorella (North Carolina State University). An excerpt from Don Tapscott's book,

Growing Up Digital: The Rise of the Net Generation (McGraw-Hill, 1988), is also featured.

Meridian: A Middle School Computer Technologies Journal is available on the Web at http://www.ncsu.edu/meridian/

For more information or to submit an article, contact Cheryl Mason, Meridian Co-Editor, 602 Poe Hall, Box 7801, NC State University, Raleigh, NC 27695-7801 USA; email: clmason@unity.ncsu.edu

---

ONLINE ACCESS TO SPECIAL EDUCATION RESEARCH

The U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) are sponsoring a new electronic publication, *Research Connections In Special Education*, a biannual review of research on topics in special education, focusing on research sponsored by the OSEP. The debut issue (Fall 1997) focuses on "schoolwide behavioral management systems, discusses the characteristics of emerging models, suggests steps for implementation, and provides educators with a number of strategies for teaching students how to manage their own behavior." The second issue will focus on helping educators include students with disabilities in standards setting and large-scale assessments.

Research Connections is available on the Web at no charge at http://www.cec.sped.org/osep/recon.htm

To receive announcements of other U.S. Department of Education projects and activities, subscribe to *ERICNews*. *ERICNews* is published six times per year by ACCESS ERIC with support from the National Library of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. Subscriptions are available by email. To subscribe, send email to listproc@aspensys.com with the command:

```
subscribe ERICNews firstname lastname
```

in the body of the message (replacing "firstname" and "lastname" with your actual name).

ERIC, the Educational Resources Information Center, is a national information system designed to provide users with ready access to an extensive body of education-related literature. Links to all ERIC components are available on the Web at http://www.aspensys.com/eric/

INFOBITS SUBSCRIBERS -- WHERE ARE WE IN 1998?

Each January issue of *IAT Infobits* includes our annual subscriber tally listing the countries represented by our subscribers. As of January 5, 1998, there were 4,866 subscribers to *IAT Infobits*. Here are some brief statistics about our current subscribers:

The majority (2,723) of the subscribers are in the USA. Other countries with large numbers of subscribers are Canada (382), Australia (209), and the United Kingdom (152). This is not surprising for a newsletter that is only published in the English language. (Anyone who is interested in translating *Infobits* into another language should contact the editor.)

Each of the following countries have between 10 and 31 subscribers: Austria, Brazil, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, and Sweden.

The following countries have nine or fewer subscribers: Argentina, Belgium, Brunei, Darussalam, Chile, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

In addition to subscribers that we can positively identify by a geographic location, 579 subscribers are from commercial sites and 428 subscribers are from BITNET, .org, or .net sites, none of which have been attributed to a particular country.

Thanks to all the subscribers for your support in 1997!
-- Carolyn Kotlas, IAT Infobits Editor

URL: http://www.unc.edu/cit/infobits/bitjan98.html
Infobits editor: Carolyn Kotlas
© Copyright 1998, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. All rights reserved.
May be reproduced in any medium for non-commercial purposes.

Center for Instructional Technology
Academic & Technology Networks
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill