

IAT INFOBITS

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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.

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ART EXHIBITS AT YOUR DESKTOP

Advances in computer displays and in image digitization enable us to view collections of art reproductions on CD-ROM and the Web that rival fine prints in art books. In many cases the images are provided at no cost at Web sites sponsored by the art museums that own the originals. In "Fine Art on Multimedia CD-ROM and the Web" (*Computers in Libraries*, vol. 17, no. 4, April 1997, pp. 63-67), J. R. Griffin reviews a sampling of collections available on disc or the Web, along with hardware recommendations for optimal viewing. In addition to exhibits from major art museums, many lesser-known, smaller museums and galleries are represented in current offerings. Some of the collections also include biographical information on the artists and databases of art history material. Griffin recommends Scott Yanoff's Internet Services List (<http://www.spectracom.com/islist/>) as a good place to begin your browsing for art on the Web.

For a list of commercial sources of CD-ROMs, see the recently-updated IAT Information Resource guide, "CD-ROMs, Laserdiscs, and Videos: Sources" at <http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-02.html>

Computers in Libraries [ISSN 1041-7915] is published 10 times a year by Information Today, Inc., 143 Old Marlton Pike, Medford, NJ 08055-8750 USA, tel: 609-654-6266; fax: 609-654-4309; Web:

<http://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/ciltop.htm>

Annual subscriptions are \$89.95 (U.S.), \$97.95 (Canada/Mexico), 68 pounds (Europe), \$105.95 (all other countries).

ONLINE LEARNING: WHAT WILL STUDENTS NEED?

As higher education institutions prepare to expand their online distance learning offerings, will the students in these programs also be prepared? In "Preparing Students for the Task of Online Learning" (*Syllabus*, vol. 10, no. 7, March 1997, pp. 38-39, 41), John E. Reid, Jr. outlines several points that should be considered to ensure student success in these new forms of learning. Reid suggests that students begin with an elective online course rather than enroll in a full load of online classes. Online classes offer the advantage of "anytime, anywhere" learning. The downside is that this affords more chances for procrastination; students must be more responsible for acquiring good time management skills. Competency in navigating the Internet is another crucial prerequisite for success in the online environment. A final consideration is how well students can take responsibility for their own learning. Some students may find that

they do better when they can learn in a classroom meeting with the instructor at a regular time. As institutions move away from the traditional classroom model, it may be necessary to provide additional services to help students make a successful transition to the new self-directed, asynchronous learning setting.

Some excerpts from the article are available on the Web at http://www.syllabus.com/mar97_mag.html

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Subscriptions are free to qualified educators in the U.S. Individual subscriptions are \$24/year for unqualified U.S. subscribers and to Canada and Mexico; \$75/year outside North America. Institutional subscriptions are \$75/year in North America and \$135/year outside North America.

BENEFITS OF ELECTRONIC DISCUSSION GROUPS

Anecdotal evidence indicates that electronic discussion groups (listservs) benefit both impulsive learners, who may dominate class discussions, and reflective learners, who need more time to process a question and compose an answer. There have been, however, few assessment studies that provide hard evidence to support the benefits of using electronic discussion groups as a learning tool. In "Student Perceptions of Electronic Discussion Groups" (*T.H.E. Journal*, vol. 24, no. 9, April 1997, pp. 69-71), Silva Karayan and Judith Crowe present the results of a survey of 96 students in eight classes at California Lutheran University. Students reported developing closer relationships with both their instructors and their classmates. Even students who indicated that they did not like participating in electronic discussions showed changes in behaviors, such as taking more time to think before responding to questions and improving writing coherency. The article is available on the Web at <http://www.thejournal.com/past/APRIL/0497feat4.html>

For more information, contact Silva S. Karayan, Assistant Professor of Education and Chair of the Teaching and Learning Center for Faculty Development, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, CA USA; email: karayan@clunet.edu

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Subscriptions are free to qualified individuals in educational institutions and training departments in the U.S. and Canada. Non-qualifying subscriptions are \$29/year in the U.S. and Canada.

A recent issue of *NewChalk* ("Online Discussion," vol. 1, issue 7, February 24, 1997) provides some examples of how instructors are using electronic discussion groups in their courses at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The articles are available at <http://www.unc.edu/courses/newchalk/archive/ncv1n7.html>

NewChalk is a biweekly newsletter that focuses on real, practical examples of how instructors use new technology in their teaching. The current issue is available at <http://www.unc.edu/courses/newchalk/current.html>

EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

The Internet is not only changing the method of instruction delivery, but also how instructional products are being developed. Shahaf Gal, director of computers for instruction at Israel's Center for Educational Technology (CET), sees "instructional materials development moving to a living online collaborative process that involves students and teachers from inception and continues for the life of the product." Not only will software developers be connected virtually, but, through Internet connections, remotely-located end-users will also become part of the development team. Users will be able to test prototypes and give the programmers continuous feedback. It will be possible to continue modifying and refining educational materials throughout the life of the products in what Gal characterizes as a "cradle

to grave" process, "a kind of service in which updating and perfecting continue indefinitely." For more details and examples of the CET's products, visit their Web site at <http://www.cet.ac.il/>

Gel's observations were featured in *The Heller Report: Internet Strategies for Education Markets*, vol. 2, no. 9, March 1997, pp. 4-6. *The Heller Report* is published monthly by Nelson B. Heller, 1910 First Street, Suite 303, Highland Park, IL 60035 USA; tel: 847-441-2920; fax: 847-926-0202; email: info@hellerreports.com; Web: <http://hellerreports.com/>
Subscriptions are \$397/year (U.S.); \$197/year (U.S. schools/teachers); add an additional \$40 for international airmail.

RESOURCE CENTER FOR CYBERCULTURE STUDIES

The Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies (RCCS) is an online, not-for-profit organization launched in January 1997 from the Department of American Studies at the University of Maryland at College Park. The Center's creator, David Silver, defines cyberculture as "a collection of cultures and cultural products that exist on and/or are made possible by the Internet, along with the stories told about these cultures and cultural products." The purpose of the RCCS is to research, study, teach, support, and create diverse and dynamic elements of cyberculture by establishing ongoing conversations about the emerging field, fostering a community of students, scholars, teachers, explorers, and builders of cyberculture, and showcasing various models, works-in-progress, and online projects. Currently, the Center's Web site includes an annotated bibliography on cyberculture and virtual communities, a list of university-level courses covering cyberculture topics, interviews with cyberculture personalities, a listing of scholars researching various elements of cyberculture, and links to other cyberculture-related Web sites. In the future, the Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies hopes to sponsor a number of collaborative projects, colloquia, symposia, and workshops. The RCCS Web site is located at <http://otal.umd.edu/~rccs/>

For more information, contact David Silver, Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies, Department of American Studies, 2123 Taliaferro Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742-7725 USA; tel: 301-405-1354; email: ds207@umail.umd.edu

LIBRARY LAUNCHES AMERICAN SOUTH PROJECT

As the first stage of a larger project to document the cultural history of the American South, the Academic Affairs Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is making available a new online database called "Documenting the American South: The Southern Experience in 19th-Century America." While most information about 19th-century America comes from Northerners, this database presents primary sources documenting the American South from the viewpoint of Southerners. The primary sources offered include diaries, autobiographies, travel accounts, titles on slavery, and regional literature drawn from the Southern holdings of the UNC-Chapel Hill library. Materials are encoded using SGML and HTML formats. The database is available on the Web at <http://sunsite.unc.edu/docsouth>

For more information on the project, contact Natalia Smith, Digitization Librarian, UNC-Chapel Hill Academic Affairs Library; CB# 3918, Chapel Hill, NC 27599 USA; tel: 919-962-1095; email: nsmith@email.unc.edu

CYBRIDS: INTERNET-ENABLED CD-ROMS

Rather than seeing the replacement of CD-ROMs by the Internet, the "Internet-enabled" CD-ROM, or "cybrid," is being touted as a software solution that will use the strengths of both technologies. The parts of a program that can slow down access time if downloaded from the Internet (multimedia, index searches) are kept on the CD-ROM for faster loading. The Internet side of the equation is used for providing timely updates and corrections, and for adding new features without the need to send out a new CD-ROM disc. In theory it sounds like a melding of the best of both worlds. In "The Cybrid Experiment" (*Technology & Learning*, vol. 17, no. 6, March 1997, p. 48ff.), Susan McLester reports that 10 percent of all CDs published in 1997 (approximately 3,500 titles) will be cybrids. She points out that cybrids will provide educators with controlled links to "safe" sites and supervised chatrooms, eliminating some of the

concerns associated with letting K-12 students access the Internet. There are glitches in this technology: some of the cybrids that McLester tested just didn't work, failing to make the connection to the Internet. However, she predicts that the technology will improve and be particularly valuable for multimedia encyclopedias and other reference works.

Technology & Learning is published eight times a year by Miller Freeman, Inc., 600 Harrison Street, San Francisco, CA 94107 USA. Subscriptions are \$19.95/year (U.S.); \$27.95/year (outside U.S.) and are available from Technology & Learning, P. O. Box 5052, Vandalia, OH 45377 USA; tel: 800-607-4410; Web: <http://www.techlearning.com/>

NEWSEUM WEB PAGE

On April 18, 1997, the world's only interactive museum of news opened to the public in Washington, DC. The Newseum is funded and operated by The Freedom Forum, a nonpartisan, international foundation dedicated to free press and free speech. The Newseum is best experienced by on-site visiting; however, you can visit their Web page for a schedule of the museum's daily activities, an online tour of the museum, information on the "Journalist of the Day" (a top print or broadcast journalist who meets with museum visitors), and online copies of reports on the news media. The Newseum Web page is located at <http://www.newseum.org/>

For more information about The Freedom Forum, see their Web page at <http://www.freedomforum.org/>

IAT LIBRARIAN'S LINKS

The IAT Library has an extensive collection of multimedia vendor catalogs that can be used to identify and select educational materials. This collection serves as the basis for the IAT Information Resource Guide, "CD-ROMs, Laserdiscs, and Videos: Sources," which was updated this month. You can use this guide to form your own collection of catalogs for your library or media center.

<http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-02.html>

The following Information Resource Guides were checked for broken links and updated this month:

Collections of Software by Discipline: Selected Samples

<http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-24.html>

FirstClass Information on the Web

<http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-40.html>

Internet Opinion/Editorial

<http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-43.html>

Smart Cards: Readings and Resources

<http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-35.html>

What's What on the Web: Finding New Resources on and Information about the Internet

<http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-41.html>

Maintaining the collection of documents in the Information Resource Guide series involves checking any URLs in a document to verify that the links are still correct. Recently, we started evaluating CyberSpyder Link Test, a Windows program that automates the tedious task of manually checking each URL. The program creates a report of the broken and relocated links, reducing the time spent on document maintenance and making it easier to locate trouble spots. We still have to fix or remove broken links manually, and even working links need to be checked to assure that the information is still relevant and up to date. You can download an evaluation copy of CyberSpyder from

<http://www.cyberspyder.com/>

URL: <http://www.unc.edu/cit/infobits/bitapr97.html>

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