

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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THE DIGITAL LIBRARY

The digital library was the subject of two lectures this month sponsored by the School of Information and Library Science (SILS) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Edward A. Fox, Professor of Computer Science and Associate Director for Research at the Computing Center at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI&SU) presented the SILS 1996 Henderson Lecture, "Rethinking Libraries in the Information Age: Lessons Learned with Five Digital Library Projects." According to Fox, rather than being on the way to obsolescence, libraries can play an enormous part in education in the future. He describes several projects to make his point, including TULIP (The University Licensing Program), a testing system for networked delivery and use of journals; the ETD (Electronic Theses and Dissertations) project; the IBM Digital Library, a combination of software and hardware designed to capture assorted media in digital form and distribute multimedia content across public and private networks; and Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV), a "wired" community in Virginia where almost 40% of Blacksburg residents are on the Internet and the local schools have T1 connections.

The outline and notes of Professor Fox's lecture and links to most of the projects he discussed are on the World Wide Web at URL <http://fox.cs.vt.edu:80/talks/UNC96/>

More information about Professor Fox is available at URL <http://fox.cs.vt.edu/foxinfo.html>

SILS sponsored a special lecture by W. Bruce Croft on "Digital Libraries: Technologies and People." Croft is on the faculty in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and the Director of the NSF State/Industry/University Collaborative Research Center for Intelligent Information Retrieval. One of the digital library systems that Croft is working on is THOMAS, a joint project between the Library of Congress and the University of Massachusetts designed to make legislative information available to the general public over the Internet. More details about THOMAS can be found in "Providing Government Information on the Internet: Experiences with THOMAS," by W. Bruce Croft and Robert Cook at URL <http://csdl.tamu.edu/DL95/papers/croft/croft.html>

Croft's lecture focused on the "hot" topics for information retrieval researchers working on digital library projects and on what is missing from the digital library. He was quick to point out that the digital library does not mean that all books will be available electronically. Costs and technical considerations will keep the vast amounts of popular printed materials in their existing format. Croft predicts that scholars will benefit disproportionately as narrowly-focused, specialized materials are digitized. Croft's article, "What Do People Want from Information Retrieval? (The Top 10

Research Issues for Companies that Use and Sell IR Systems)," covers most of the points that he made in his lecture. The paper is located at URL <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/november95/11croft.html>
 More information about Professor Croft is available at URL <http://ciir.cs.umass.edu/info/people/staff/croft.html>

For more information on digital libraries, see D-Lib: Digital Libraries Research and Development at URL <http://www.dlib.org/>

For more information on the School of Information and Library Science (SILS) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, go to URL <http://ils.unc.edu/ilshome.html>

BLACK HISTORY ON THE WEB

In February, the U.S. celebrates Black History Month to inform citizens about and to commemorate the contributions of African Americans to our history and culture. This year there are many World Wide Web sites that are recognizing this month-long event with online exhibits and pointers to resource materials.

-- selections from "The African-American Mosaic: A Library of Congress Resource Guide for the Study of Black History and Culture" are available at URL <http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/African.American/intro.html>

-- Miami University (Ohio) Libraries' Black History Month Web site provides links to more recommended African/African-American resources at URL <http://www.lib.muohio.edu/~skimmel/bhm/bhm.html>

-- Charles Isbell (isbell@ai.mit.edu), doctoral student at the MIT AI Lab, maintains a chronology of African-American history at URL <http://www.ai.mit.edu/~isbell/HFh/black/bhist.html>

-- a Canadian perspective on Black History Month can be found at URL <http://www.dal.ca/~acswww/dalbh.html>

Commercial Web sites featuring Black History Month pages include:

-- NetNoir Online is the Internet division of NetNoir, Inc., a San Francisco-based corporation whose mission is to promote, develop, digitize, archive, and distribute Afrocentric materials. The URL for their Black History Month resources is <http://www.netnoir.com/spotlight/bhm/index.html>

-- Time, Inc.'s Pathfinder Web site's Black History Month page can be found at URL http://pathfinder.com/@@h*25DqHR6gIAQFCU/pathfinder/features/blackhistory/index.html

-- Global Network Navigator's site features weekly historical chronicles and interviews with notable African-Americans. URL: <http://gnn.com/netizens/bhm/index.html>

-- Whole Internet Catalog provides links to several sources of information on the African Diaspora. URL: <http://gnn.com/gnn/wic/wics/life.african.html>

More resources on African-American history are available at the Universal Black Pages, an information service which resides at the Georgia Institute of Technology and whose purpose is to have a complete and comprehensive listing of African Diaspora-related Web pages at a central site. URL: <http://www.gatech.edu/bgsa/blackpages.html>

WEBBED BOOKS

Finding full-text editions of books on the Internet is nothing new. For several years there have been ongoing projects dedicated to making electronic copies of existing printed texts. The next progression in this process is simultaneous publication of both hardcopy and electronic versions of a title. The Web version of a book can offer added benefits by taking advantage of the Web's hypertext capabilities, by embedding hot links (URLs) to other Web sites that are mentioned in the text, or by including non-text enhancements (images, movies, sounds) that were never part of the

hardcopy publication. Here are some examples that may be of interest:

Engines for Education by Roger Schank, Director, Institute for the Learning Sciences, Northwestern University, and Chip Cleary, graduate student, Northwestern University -- "what's wrong with the education system, how to reform it, and especially, about the role of educational technology in that reform." URL: http://www.ils.nwu.edu:80/~e_for_e/

Aether Madness: An Offbeat Guide to the Online World by Gary Wolf and Michael Stein -- "a non-technical book about the online world, one devoted to the people, the cultures and countercultures of the digital world ... in the form of 60 travel tales based on our two year exploration of cyberspace." URL: <http://www.aether.com/>

City of Bits: Space, Place and the Infobahn by William J. Mitchell, Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology -- "a comprehensive introduction to a new type of city, a largely invisible but increasingly important system of virtual spaces interconnected by the emerging information superhighway." URL: http://www-mitpress.mit.edu/City_of_Bits/

THE WHY FILES

The Why Files, a project of the National Institute for Science Education (NISE) funded by the National Science Foundation, is an electronic exploration of the science, math, and technology that lurk behind the headline news. Recent topics included articles on organ transplants from animals to humans, monarch butterfly migrations, a neutrino detector at the South Pole, and the relationship between a low-fat diet and macular degeneration. Access the Why Files at URL: <http://whyfiles.news.wisc.edu>

For more information on NISE, link to URL: <http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/nise/index.html>

ON THE HORIZON GETS NEW PUBLISHER

In December 1995, *On the Horizon: The Environmental Scanning Newsletter for Leaders in Education* [see *IAT Infobits*, [June 1994](#)] was transferred from the School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to Jossey-Bass Publishers. Professor James L. Morrison remains as editor, and, based on the articles in the January/February 1996 (vol. 4, no. 1), the journal retains its high quality and usefulness under the new publisher. In "Gladly Would He Learn," Terry O'Banion, (Executive Director, League for Innovation in the Community College) proposes a model of radical change in education, "based on the assumption that educational experiences should be designed for learners rather than teachers." Professor Wallace Hannum (School of Education, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), in "The High-Tech Revolution: Who Will Reap the Benefits?" cautions that simply training displaced manufacturing and agricultural workers for high-technology careers may not solve the problems that changes in the economy are creating for the workforce.

On the Horizon [ISSN 1085-4959] is published six times a year by Jossey-Bass Publishers. Subscriptions are available for \$40/year/individual, \$65/year/institutions, \$165/year/site licenses from Jossey-Bass, Inc., 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104 USA; tel: 415-433-1740.

You can also participate in the Horizon List, a listserv designed "to encourage discussion about emerging issues, trends, events in the social, technological, economic, environmental, and political sectors of the macroenvironment (national/global levels) that will affect education--elementary and secondary schools as well as colleges and universities." To subscribe, send email to listserv@unc.edu with the message:

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subscribe horizon firstname lastname
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Archives of Horizon List messages are kept on the Horizon Home Page at URL: <http://sunsite.unc.edu/horizon>. The Web site also includes tables of contents and articles from back issues of *On the Horizon*, and readers' responses to articles in the current issue, an especially interesting feature.

U.S. GPO SERVICE NOW FREE

Previously available as a for-fee service, the U.S. Government Printing Office's GPO Access service is now being offered for free on the World Wide Web. Publications available include *The Federal Register*, *Congressional Records*, *Congressional Bills*, and *General Accounting Office (GAO) Reports*. URL:

http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/index.html

IAT LIBRARY PUBLICATIONS UPDATE

The document, "What's What on the Web: Finding New Resources On -- and Information About -- the Internet," has been revised to include several new resources. The URL is <http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-41.html>

A combined subject listing of the IAT Library's Information Resource Guides series and the "Librarian's Links" documents is now available at URL <http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/subjects.html>

URL: <http://www.unc.edu/cit/infobits/bitfeb96.html>

Infobits editor: [Carolyn Kotlas](#)

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