

ADETA

Alberta Distance Education & Training Association

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The Need to be a Woman: Gender Issues in Distance Education By Veronica Yu



Given that our assumptions may be a result of all sorts of accidents of upbringing and experience, and that they may well be based on little evidence or ill-founding inference or may even be in contradiction with one another, some questioning of them is in order. (Selman et al, 1998, p. 377)

Our lifeworld is dominated by systems with its bureaucracies, politics and institutions, both large and small, that we do not question. (Cranton, 1998, p. 193) The state and corporate steering mechanisms intrude illegitimately into that lifeworld which threatens human capacity for self-realization, autonomous learning and active participation in public life as citizens, clients, and consumers. (Welton, 1993, p. 160) Women's autonomy can be viewed as intruded by the system of men consciously and unconsciously. Bourque and Warren (1990) reasoned that,

...women were absent from the calculations of most development plan-

ners. As a result, women's economic contributions were ignored or underestimated, and the negative effects of induced change on women's lives were not considered. (Boserup 1970; Chaney & Schmink 1976; Rogers 1980 as quoted by Bourque and Warren, 1990, p. 84)

In addition to cultural influences on educational freedom personally experienced by the author, the fundamental issues of: women as a separate and distinct entity, the concept of neutral education, effects of societal institutions and the teacher's role in empowerment will be discussed in relation to their educational impact on women.

Kirkup (1995) states,

Gender is analyzed as one of the foundational cultural categories of our intellectual world, providing an implicit framework on which aspects of our world are placed, almost arbitrarily, in dominant and subordinate oppositional categories. (p. 1)

Morse (1997) provides many examples of women in various fields who defy the general stereotype. It was evident that Morse herself struggled with the concept of being a woman.

Accepting the idea that "woman" is a culturally constructed category had evidently entailed corollaries in

Continued on page 10

ADETA

**Plan to attend
the ADETA Annual General
Meeting**

**in Edmonton
at Grant MacEwan College
Room 6-313H
on June 9 at 7:30 — 8:30 am**

**Free! breakfast
will be provided by ADETA.**

**For more details, see the
back page of this newsletter.**

In This Issue

The Need to be a Woman: Gender Issues in Distance Education	1
President's Message	2
What's Happening...	3
Australian Report: Part Deux	13
Conferences & Workshops	16
ADETA AGM Notice	20

Collaboration and Excellence in Distance Education and Training

President's Message



I hope that by now you have made your plans to attend Interface 2000, June 7- 9 (see <http://www.interface2000.gmcc.ab.ca/>). Clayton Wright and his people at Grant MacEwan College have put together an impressive program including practical pre-conference workshops (June 7), and a solid conference program of keynote speakers and sessions. There is also good provision for socialization, in comfortable and convenient venues.

Interface is the premier PD and networking event in the ADETA calendar. This year it should be particularly interesting: the theme, Learning Technologies: Practice and Promise, raises the point that, as we all know, the technologies we choose sometimes deliver less than we expect and less than they seemed to promise. Our practice suffers when this happens, but we should be learning to be better judges of both our needs and the potential of technology to deliver. Interface 2000 will be a place to compare notes and hear from others who have grappled with the challenge of making our tools serve our craft.

Part of Interface 2000 is ADETA's Annual General Meeting, this year to be held as a breakfast event on Friday morning, June 9, 7:30 - 8:30, in Room 6-313H, Grant MacEwan College. The AGM will include reports

on the major activities of the Association over the year and, all-important, elections. This will be my last AGM as president, and I look forward to handing over that position to someone new.

If you think you might wish to become involved in the executive of ADETA please contact me, or one of the other officers of the Association. We will be happy to explain the nomination process and answer any of your questions. If you are interested in serving on the Board, or wish to nominate someone, contact Past-President Bryan Shepherd, the Board member responsible for nominations (Bryan.Shepherd@norquest.ab.ca; 780-427-7766).

I want to take a minute in my last President's Message to talk about what the past two years have meant to me. I have been impressed by, and will remember this period for, several things:

- The phone or e-mail regularly brought questions from complete strangers about distance and virtual education in Alberta. Sometimes these enquiries came to ADETA through Internet contacts, but often it was because of our newsletter or our PD events (Interface or the Fall Workshop). Usually these were local (i.e., Canada) but impressively often they were from the USA, or even from overseas.
- When we meet we are a very diverse group. Gone are the days (if they ever existed) when ADETA consisted of technologists or technicians only. Our PD events are cosmopolite events, and we cater to an increasingly wide range of experience. Interestingly, novices and craggy veterans seem to get along just fine together.

- We are looked to for leadership. I have been approached by various groups (organizations devoted to causes such as adult education, professional and community development, even literacy and English as a Second Language) about how we might collaborate. This is testimony to the positive image we have and the good relations we have achieved with other entities.

- We have a lot of expertise, experience and enthusiasm among us. As with any volunteer organization, nothing gets done until someone puts up their hand and offers to help. I am pleased to say this happens regularly and easily in our organization.

What I have seen in the past two years has convinced me that an organization like ADETA, with willing and capable members and a positive image in the wider education and training community, can be an effective leader providing assistance to many audiences. It's clear that peer interactions among practitioners can be both mutually fulfilling and a useful way to help both parties continue their professional growth. It's also clear that those who work with technologies to bridge distances between learners and their resources are hungry for anything that will help them do this work better. They are also grateful to any organization which, as ADETA does, willingly offers collegial assistance.

While I'm stepping down as president I remain on the Board for two more years as Past-President. I'm happy to accept this new role, as I believe organizations need turnover to be fresh and to remain dynamic.

Continued on page 4

What's Happening...

Alberta Online Consortium

Over the last few months there have been a number of important developments within the Alberta Online Consortium. First, the Consortium has received continuing support from Alberta Learning. Additional funding will enhance the existing projects such as the development of K-12 online content among school jurisdictions in partnership with Learning Technologies Branch (LTB).

One initiative being undertaken by the AOC is a research project into the "effectiveness" of online education. The rapid growth of online educational opportunities for K-12 students in Alberta has raised important questions about the impact of online education on student achievement. Recognizing that there is much anecdotal evidence and jurisdictional specific data to support online learning it is important that a comprehensive study be undertaken to explore the benefits of online learning. The newly formed System Improvement and Reporting (SIR) Branch of Alberta Learning is also interested in research to address this issue. With funding from SIR and AOC, an advisory committee has been formed to oversee a research study on student achievement and to examine the social emotional and cognitive aspects of online education. The research report will be completed by March 31, 2001. For more information on this research project, please visit our web site www.albertaonline.ab.ca.

Finally, planning for the AOCs 2000 *Online Learning Symposium-The Journey Begins Here* (formerly the Virtual School Symposium) is well underway. Over the past three years the Symposium has turned away interested participants due to space

restrictions. Since 1997, the number of participants attending the Symposium has doubled every year. Additionally, the Symposium has attracted an increasingly diverse group of online educators from across Western Canada. With a new name and expanded presentation space, it is expected that the Symposium will provide an opportunity for members of the K-12, university and college sectors to share insights into the exciting journey of online learning. This year's Symposium will be held in Edmonton from November 22-24, 2000 at the Mayfield Inn and will offer more than 60 sessions. For more information about the Symposium please visit the web site at <http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca/ltb/symposium/2000>.

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Mount Royal College

The Advanced Studies in Mental Health program in the Centre for Health Studies at Mount Royal College is celebrating its 20th anniversary and 15 years as a distance program. In recognition of this, we are hosting a one week on site institute from June 13-16, 2000 at Mount Royal College in Calgary. The Institute is entitled "Mental Health Interventions for the 21st Century" and is an effort to bring Mental Health Professionals from the community as well as former students and graduates of the program together for a week of keynote and concurrent sessions. Each of the four days targets a theme dealing with interventions related to Adults and Older Adults, Children and Adolescents, Therapists and Nurses.

This event is a first for the program and aims to help students and graduates bridge the distance through connecting with one another from across the country. Individuals from coast to coast have already signed up and the institute is designed in such a way that current students can take it for credit.

For more information contact Mount Royal College toll free at 1 877 287-8001

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What's Happening...

NAIT

NAIT has produced a videotape that depicts best procedures for welding and detailed examples of assignments matched to our apprenticeship offering. This first tape, Oxyfuel Acetylene Welding and Cutting is very close to being in finished, ready-to-ship form. Our President has identified them as "National Geographic" quality. We have used some very creative video techniques to capture video not previously available without a welder's helmet and a lot of ambient heat.

As a provision of LEE funding, and if you currently offer welding at your post secondary institution, you're entitled to one copy for the cost of duplication, likely \$25. To receive your copy, please contact Bill Fricker.

We are planning now for pricing for individual sales and for site licensing of the rights to duplicate for students. We are also discussing CTS applicability with Alberta Learning.

Additionally, we will have three or four more tapes to complete, over summer, on a very broad realm expected to go beyond the scope of the Apprenticeship Board. Future topics are Gas Metal Arc Welding, including Flux Core; Gas Tungsten Arc Welding (TIG); and Shielded Metal Arc Welding.

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NorQuest College

Our new College web site was launched February 29, 2000. The site has met the criteria to receive Bobby approval. Bobby is a web-based tool



that analyzes web pages for their accessibility to people with disabilities. Check out the Bobby web site for more details. www.cast.org/bobby/. The intent of this NorQuest College initiative was to make our pages accessible, particularly to people with visual problems.

NorQuest College recently hosted 4 WebCT Training workshops. The workshops were made available through an initiative from Alberta North. These workshops have been very successful. Participants came from across Northern Alberta including Athabasca University, Fairview College, Northern Lakes College and NorQuest College. The attendees found the day workshop informative, easy to implement, and maintain.

The Learning Server, our synchronous audio graphic tool, continues to be widely used. Commencing in September, the regional sites accessing these high school credit courses will include 4 new locations: Hinton, Jasper, Drayton Valley, and Grand Cache.

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President's Message

Continued from page 2

As part of leaving the presidency I want to recognize the Board, with whom it has been my sincere pleasure to work. You are good examples of why distance education is such an interesting and enjoyable place to be these days. Thanks to all of you for your common sense, good ideas, hard work and dedication to ADETA.

Patrick Fahy 403-675-6216
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ADETA-Net

ADETA-Net is a free service for ADETA members providing the opportunity to electronically dialogue and share information with other distance educators and trainers.

The quality and quantity of messages posted depend on the interest and care of the list members. ADETA-Net is unmoderated, in that all members are free to post queries or items of interest and concern. This is done by addressing electronic mail to ADETA-Net@SAIT.AB.CA The list will automatically forward these messages to all registered members.

Registration in the list is restricted to ADETA members thus it is necessary to have your membership in the list approved by the list owner. If you are an ADETA member, and wish to join the list, send an e-mail message to:

Susan Kerr
Susan.Kerr@norquest.ab.ca

What's Happening...

University of Alberta

Opening of the Telus Centre

The TELUS Centre will be a financially self-sufficient world class facility housing the University of Alberta's Institute for Professional Development. Located east of the Timms Centre at 87 Avenue and 111 Street, it will showcase enhanced learning through the application of innovative technology. The 48,000-sq.ft. building will house "smart" multimedia classrooms, video conferencing facilities, computer labs, a digital library, and other resources to enable program delivery via global communication technology.

The new Chief Executive Officer for the Telus Centre is Ms. Sally Omar, whose last position was heading up a corporate university for a large multinational corporation.

The Centre is expected to be completed the week of June 18, 2000 with the official opening scheduled for June 23.

Synchronous Technologies

Academic Technologies for Learning has been looking at the use of collaborative, synchronous web based products for to enhance or offer alternatives for faculties wishing to develop web based courses. In late fall of last year, the University purchased twenty five seats of Centra 99 software.

Centra 99 is a web-based communications package designed to support computer/internet based telephony – real time discussions in conjunction with the viewing of documents, diagrams or any other application software. It can be used for a wide variety of applications such as distributed learning seminars, virtual class-

room interactions. It is also ideal for use by dispersed groups of users who need to meet and exchange information, interact and collaborate on projects. In addition to real time, toll-free discussions, the software also provides a rich array of collaborative tools which enable you to change documents in real time, have access to a whiteboard to brainstorm, as well as polling software. All interactions occur in real time, with users situated in their home or office many kilometers away.

The software is intended to support distributed learning initiatives of faculty as well as to support activities surrounding the Telus Centre. More information on the software, its capability and pricing can be obtained by contacting janice.picard@ualberta.ca

CAREO: Campus Alberta Initiates Online Collection of Digital Curriculum

Materials

The Campus Alberta Repository of Educational Objects (CAREO) project aims to create a free, searchable collection of digital curriculum materials for post-secondary educators both in Alberta and beyond its borders. This project is targeted at those who are interested in using educational technology, but who do not have the resources to develop and deliver technology-enhanced education entirely on their own. CAREO hopes to foster the development discipline-based communities of such individuals. These communities would not only use and contribute educational resources, but would also provide peer reviews of the scholarly, pedagogical, and technical qualities of these objects. The CAREO project is

funded through a LEE grant and is currently being developed at the Universities of Alberta and Calgary.

For more information about this project, see the CAREO Website (<http://www.atl.ualberta.ca/careo>), or contact Norm Friesen (norm.friesen@ualberta.ca) or Michael Magee (magee@ucalgary.ca)

Web CT Award

With the help of several well-regarded academic entities, WebCT recently evaluated hundreds of post-secondary courses developed with WebCT as the platform. Dr. Susan E. Gibson from Elementary Education, a Partner with Academic Technologies for Learning, received the recent WebCT's Exemplary Course Project award for her course "Instruction in Elementary Social Studies". She joins a select group of faculty from the United States and Canada whose courses will be highlighted at a WebCT Conference this summer.

Web CT Usage at the U of A

There were approximately 17,000 student registrations in 250 courses on WebCT for the fall term which represents a significant increase over the previous year when there were 6,000 student registrations in 100 courses. Web CT usage is primarily supports on campus courses.

Continued on page 8

University of Alberta



What's Happening...

The Learning Technologies Branch of Alberta Learning

The Learning Technologies Branch (LTB) of Alberta Learning is responsible for the design and development of print and electronic learning resources to support online delivery and regular classroom programs through use of modern technologies.

The LTB will have several electronic products available through the Learning Resources Distributing Centre (LRDC), Edmonton, over the next few months. Available on CD-ROM, these products include either multimedia segments or online courses. Each multimedia segment focuses on the teaching of one main curriculum objective. These segments may contain one or a combination of video clips, animations or interactivity. The

segments, which are accessible through a browser, are generally between one and four minutes long.

The descriptions of these items and the electronic requirements are already available in the LRDC online catalogue by entering the Product Number. The LRDC online catalogue can be accessed at www.lrdc.edc.gov.ab.ca.

The products in the table below (with their applicable LRDC product number) will *soon* be available:

For additional information and information on other print, online courses, and multimedia segments currently in progress see our website at www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb or contact us

via e-mail at ltbgeneral@edc.gov.ab.ca. The availability dates of these new products will be listed on our "New Products Page" of our website.

*Only the CD-ROM for High School Science MM Segments (English version) is now available. Watch our site to see what next is available.

[Suzanne Williams](mailto:Suzanne.Williams@gov.ab.ca)
780-674-5350, ext. 272
Suzanne.Williams@gov.ab.ca
<http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb>

Course Title	LRDC Product Number	Other Information
Biology 20 Online	416489	Teacher's edition 416497
Construction Technology 2040 Online	416372	
CTS MM Segments	416265 or 416356	English or French
Foods 3070 Online	416380	
*High School Science MM Segments	416182 or 416223	English or French
Information Processing 2190 Online	416398	
Mechanics 1040 Online	416405	
Molecular Explorer V2.0	416364	
Multimedia Chemistry (4 pack)	415192 or 415184	MAC or Windows
Science 20 Online	416421	Teacher's edition 41655



What's Happening...

Grant MacEwan College



Learn Online at Grant MacEwan College - What Have We Learned?

The Learn Online project recently completed a one-year research study evaluating the effectiveness of Web-based distance course delivery. The study focused on three courses already offered through print-based distance delivery by the Health and Community Studies division which were converted to a Web-based format. We asked students and instructors in the 1999 offerings of both online and print-based versions of the courses to assess their experiences learning and teaching at a distance.

In the October issue of ADETA, we posed questions we were facing midway through the project regarding faculty training, workload and support, student support, and college support services. This article will provide a brief summary of findings related to these questions and some recommendations to improve our distance course delivery at Grant MacEwan College. The complete research report is available at <http://learn.gmcc.ab.ca>.

Faculty Support, Training and Workload

Four of the five instructors in the study were first-time online teachers. Some instructors who reported feeling confident with computer and Internet technologies found they were able to "click and look" to learn how to use the course software. Other instructors acquired greater confidence over the semester in their ability to use the course software but wanted technical staff to provide support to students at a distance. The three instructors who were course

authors learned how to use the course software during the conversion of their course to a Web format. Instructors taking over an existing online course received a brief orientation to the software.

Most instructors felt comfortable by the end of the course in using the course software but had questions about how to teach online, indicating they wanted to develop or improve competencies for managing online communication, facilitating discussion activities, and incorporating online resources.

Instructors reported a perceived increase in their workload due to:

- ◆ Higher levels of interaction between instructor and student
- ◆ Being able to track student progress using course software
- ◆ Time to respond to online course communications
- ◆ Learning how to teach online while doing it

Some of the recommended teaching practices from our findings include:

- ◆ Instructors should specify compatible format(s) for e-mail attachments. Instructors and students encountered persistent difficulties with e-mail submission of assignments
- ◆ Instructors should provide guidelines for online resources linked to the course indicating their relevance to the course; students reported feeling overwhelmed by the volume of information available
- ◆ Instructors should acknowledge receipt of all messages from students to limit the impact of technical glitches on course commu-

nication; students were often uncertain if their assignment submissions had been received successfully

Student Support and Competencies

Students in both print-based and online courses valued the content and format of the courses, the usefulness of the knowledge and the flexibility to do the course at their own time, place and pace.

Online students ranked easy, timely communication as the number one benefit of online course delivery. Both online and print-based students preferred, generally, to work with course material in a print-based format, using the course software and the Internet for communication, learning activities such as self-scoring quizzes and access to resources. Several print-based students reported wanting e-mail communication with instructors.

Online students were more likely to be successful if they had access to a computer that met specified minimum requirements at home or work and if they had access to local, technical support. Students who has lost easy access to a computer or who had to travel to access a computer did not complete the course.

Some recommendations based on our findings include:

- ◆ Providing students with printed course materials and use the online format for communication, learning activities, exams and access to resources

Continued on page 8

What's Happening...

Grant MacEwan Community College

Continued from page 7

- ◆ Creating online tutorials of basic technical requirements for students to complete prior to registering in an online course
- ◆ Providing print-based students with instructor e-mail addresses to facilitate more timely communication

College Support Services

Integrating information about online course delivery into existing support and information services is an ongoing process as more students access College services from off-campus. Some recommendations to improve front-line support services include:

- ◆ Providing computer help desk staff with online instructors' contact information to ensure better continuity when helping online students
- ◆ Providing both print-based and online students with information about online College resources and services

One of our current challenges at Grant MacEwan College is to apply these findings to improve our distance delivered courses. For more information about the study, check out the Learn Online Web site at <http://learn.gmcc.ab.ca>.

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<http://learn.gmcc.ab.ca>



University of Alberta

Continued from page 5

Videoconferencing News

There are two programs using videoconferencing at the University, Faculte Sainte Jean's Masters in Education, and the Corporate Financial Diploma Program from the Faculty of Business. Both programs are planning to offer courses at select locations in Western Canada and the Yukon, NWT.

Two new videoconference facilities opened their doors on campus in the Faculties of Physical Education and Recreation (with a system donated by Sony Canada) and in Business (Tandberg). The dedicated JPEG facility in the Faculty of Engineering will be undergoing renovations this summer to convert the system to an MPEG, and to install an ISDN codec.

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Statements, opinions and points of view expressed by the writers do not necessarily represent those of the officers or members of ADETA.

What's Happening...

Athabasca University

Athabasca University will celebrate its 30th anniversary and significant growth by holding the 23rd annual Convocation in Athabasca over two days, Friday, June 9 (graduate studies) and Saturday, June 10 (undergraduate studies).

New IT degree: A Masters' Degree in Science - Information Systems is being planned. I should be up in the next year. Also being planned is a Masters in Counseling. Starting in the fall AU will also be offering a Masters of Integrated Studies. For more information, go to <http://www.athabascau.ca/main/procrs.htm>

Athabasca University is leading in the creation of the Canadian Virtual University/l'Université virtuelle canadienne (CVU/UVC). Representatives of 13 universities attended an organizational meeting in March and the CVU/UVC was launched at the World Educational Fair held in Vancouver in May.

Linux, anyone? If you want to find out more about using this open source operating system, AU's Mike Sosteric, Coordinator, Digital Educational Systems has written a series of article in the Edmonton Journal. You can still catch the articles which ran in the Edmonton Journal Technology sections at:

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/technology1/linux.html>.

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Athabasca University
Canada's Open University

International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning IRRODL

Athabasca University, Canada's Open University is pleased to announce the launch of the *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* (IRRODL). IRRODL is a refereed, interactive, online journal to advance theory, research and practice in open and distance learning worldwide.

IRRODL is published on the WWW twice a year. Subscriptions are free to individuals. The first issue will be available June 15, 2000 at:

<http://www.irrodl.org>

Here is a preview of the first issue.

IRRODL Volume 1, Number 1

Theme Issue -- The Problems and the Promise: Into the New Century

The Main Section

- Editorial

Theory

- Randy Garrison (Canada)
- Otto Peters (Germany)

Research

- Hilary Perraton (UK)
- Farhad Saba (USA)

Practice

- Judith Calder (UK)
- Armando Trindade, H. Carmo and J. Bidarra (Portugal)

Departments

Online conferences with authors

"Notes"

- "Book Notes": book reviews and links to open and distance learning journals
- "Conference Notes": announcements and reports of conferences and professional development activities
- "Field Notes": notes and abstracts on exemplary practices and notable innovations from the field
- "Research Notes": short reports concerning research projects in open and distance learning

IRRODL is the forum to learn about and describe new developments, activities and ideas in open and distance learning. For more information, contact:

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Veronica Yu

my mind that were far more questionable...it is in setting precepts and ideals into praxis that I am able to shed those tired old codes, creating whatever it will mean, in my case at least, to be a woman. (p. 322-325)

I feel the concept of 'Woman' is a personal one. There is enough room for many different expressions of being a woman and all of them serve as a basis for inspiration to us all and as an educational springboard for another valid version of universal knowledge.

One aspect not covered in the articles was the potentially negative influences of women towards women with emphasis on the intergenerational differences that may be present in a household. In certain cultures, it is not uncommon to have 3-4 generations living under the same roof. The intergenerational cultural gap can cause a massive amount of stress on the younger generation if the message consists of the separation of education and women.

The Chinese culture has a long history of de-valuing the female existence to the point of punishing families for having female children. Having been brought up in a family made up of members from a communist Chinese background (from China), from Hong Kong (previous British Colony) and first generation Chinese-Canadians, my growing up experience was quite varied and at times extremely confrontational.

An issue I personally struggle with as a second-generation Chinese-Canadian woman is the lack of vali-

dation of the female experience. This is an issue that I find many women I see in my practice also comment on regardless of race. There seems to be an inherent downplaying of the female emotions and ideas not only by some males and the social patriarchy but also it becomes ingrained within the female herself without being fully aware of it. It is considered normal.

My role model as a child was a very controlling and dominating mother. She was deprived of an education because she had to work in the family business thus she became very supportive of educational endeavors as I grew up. Her mother (my grandmother) on the other hand is a very traditional Chinese woman who did not approve of higher education for women though she speaks of her own ambitions for schooling—to an extent. Even today, as I work towards this Masters degree, she finds this extra studying as unnecessary as the payback of increased knowledge does not justify the financial expenditure. She feels that higher education for education's sake is a luxury. Women do not deserve such luxury. The woman's place is to support endeavors of her husband.

The issue of silencing by cultures is not inclusive to men. The ideas of my grandmother and the culture that she grew up in endorsed the view presented by Grace (1991) described...

...the distinct character of women's experience of the world is not acknowledged or positively valued...Common patterns for women around the world [show]... cultural attitudes which endorse the domestication of women as right and proper and negatively sanction education as unnecessary and undesirable (p. 56-61).

The neutral view of traditional academics was a very poignant realization for me because that constitutes a large percentage of my 'knowledge' base. It felt like someone was literally pulling the rug from under me. Critical analysis is also something that was not taught at home. Instead I learned that education was the key to reaching my goals. Most of my schooling consisted of 'playing the game' in order to become successful. I never considered my existence as a woman as a male construct.

I found myself questioning my existing ideals and wondering if they were really my own or as a result of masculine implantation. After the initial feeling of shock, I realized that I do have unique ideals and ideas as a result of processing of what I have learned. I do not feel that I believed everything I was taught although most of my formal educational experiences have consisted of rote memorization and regurgitation.

Faith's (1988) opening quote of Josephine Butler (1868) described an innate desire for education and learning that I can relate to. It is that yearning that has led me to this current pursuit of a Masters in Distance Education. I do not need to have a degree and the subject area is certainly not one I am comfortable with, having existed within a predominant science milieu for the last 7 ½ years of schooling. There is an inner voice telling me to keep going, that there is more to learn and the process of learning is what makes placing myself in a challenging new situation so exciting and rewarding.

Education and women are two areas that have existed closely in the past. Faith describes pioneer families and the role of women in the education of their young. One can postulate that the role of the mother-teacher became less

important as schools became available and communities became more 'developed'.

Homeschooling is a trend that is growing in popularity in North America. The early role of women and childhood education has transformed into a renewed educational venture where parental viewed deficiencies within the existing educational system have created this surge in popularity. Could this be history repeating itself?

...most home-schooling parents choose to teach their children at home at great cost to themselves because they reckon the public schools are missing the mark; and, in many cases, they are right. A surge of defections may finally send a wake-up call to the whole public system. Rather than merely talking of a change, it is time to bring some about. (The Economist, 1998, p. 28)

Distance education (DE), a mode of learning which does not require mandatory personal attendance has been chosen by a significant number of women who wish to pursue education at their own location, allowing for more scheduling flexibility. Athabasca University boasts a consistent 60-62% female enrolment. (Coulter, 1989) Therefore the need to develop an understanding of the feminine perspective is crucial for all distance educators.

...women's need for non-authoritarian, non-coercive, cooperative learning, and for interactive learning themes throughout the feminist writing on education. (Coulter, 1989, p. 14)

Distance education and home study is positive with respect to convenience but loses a bit of luster when presented as a segregated form of learning with the home serving as a 'ghetto'.

There may always be an imbalance with the amount of time a female spends at home versus a male especially when there are children involved. Women who chose to breast-feed their children for example, even with the new technologies available still have to contend with the exhaustion of the birthing process and the frequent feedings. From a health perspective, this is not a negative. Motherhood is a physiological aspect of womanhood that should be celebrated.

Women who do not have children should not be pressured to fit into a societal stereotype. A mental, emotional and physical need to learn should not be laden with guilt. Women report that they feel obliged to set higher standards of domestic duties as compensation for their education. (Kirkup, 1995) Education should not be an aspect of life that should be tradable or used as a bargaining tool.

Society's institutions constitute a major roadblock for women. Just saying the word marriage brings forth a myriad of roles and responsibilities. It can mean compromise and self-sacrifice for many women. Fortunately, the institution of marriage and the definition of the relationship are starting to change especially in the larger metropolitan areas where the family unit consists of 2 working parents. Parallel to that change is also the increase in common-law relationships, gay/lesbian relations, single parent families, stepfamilies, cultural diversity and the emerging views of religion vs. spirituality. As societal perceptions of the 'validity' of 'different' styles of relationship changes, so will the pressures of 'traditional' roles as tradition itself is questioned. Collectively, this change will set the scene for women all over and will act as support for change and acceptance.

Three or four years into the new millennium, Toronto, Canada's largest city, will mark an unusual milestone. In a city of 3 million, the words 'minority' and 'majority' will be turned on their heads and the former will become the latter. (Bissoondath, 1998, p.20)

I agree with Burge (1988) that a novel approach towards education is necessary—as the 'old' voices which constituted the male bias is re-worked instead of worked with. That is what Grace describes as the 'add women and stir' approach. More women within the status quo will propagate the status quo as it stands for the 'neutral universal knowledge' without any realization that it is male conceived. Equality in numbered ratios is not enough. Equality within the substance of education is the challenge. Women need to be encouraged to reflect upon their existence.

As conscious human beings, we can discover how we are conditioned by the dominant ideology. We can gain distance on our moment of existence. Therefore, we can learn how to become free through a political struggle in society. We can struggle to become free precisely because we know we are not free! That is why we can think of transformation...so liberatory classes illuminate the conditions we're in to help overcome those conditions, offering students a critical distance on society in place of an uncritical immersion in the status quo, to think of changing it. (Shor & Freire, 1987, p.14)

The authors, Kirkup, Grace and Faith emphasize that education is not about accessibility, comfortability. The issue is much more expansive. The entire basis from which the discussion initiates has to be changed.

...we want to change the nature of what has previously constituted the disciplines so that we are in the content as well as in the institution, in the lecture as well as the lecture theatre. Or in the case of distance education, in the text as well as in the armchair studying it. (Kirkup 1998, p. 287 as quoted in Grace, 1991 and Faith, 1988)

Empowerment has been a recurrent theme in a number of articles. I feel that society places undue pressure and stress onto the teachers' role in nurturing and developing that attribute. Educators should recognize that their authority (spoken or not spoken) could be a barrier to women's education. Previous abuse can cloud feelings and create an atmosphere where self-doubt, insecurities, silence and suspicion are created. That is why methods such as journal writing can provide for some women, the only sacred personal space. Cultural differences and the economical realities of the region have to be considered as well. (Bourque and Warren, 1990) Coulter (1989) describes the concept of the 'midwife' teacher as someone who is the drawer of knowledge versus the 'banker' style of teaching, which relies on memory and regurgitation.

Female teachers may very well have to contend with their own issues. As women we need to empathize with other women in all walks and professions of life. The tragedy would be unfair pressure as the process of recognition of feminist issues can be a gradual one. Support during this time for all women is crucial. Teachers should not be placed on a pedestal but looked onto as a guide/facilitator who are also human and not immune to personal changes.

Women of the world need to bind together and empathize with each other's unique educational plights.

The process of transformation and enlightenment for women is not easy but is necessary and definitely worthwhile.

Sometimes it seems as if we work all the time just to stay where we are. But in trying to do these things, even when we have lost, we have changed, we have changed others, and we have let loose a new spirit that will not go away. (Minnich, 1983, p. 322 as quoted in Burge, 1988, p. 20)

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Australian Report: Part Deux



By Andy Asselin

Our last exciting episode featured an unusual “Spiderman” comic flashback of the author, senior instructor of distance education at Northern Lakes College on leave of absence down under. See previous newsletter for details. I would like to introduce this presentation with a special hello to new Australian readers.

Each year ADETA puts on a wild “Interface 2000” conference. The exchange is fantastic. There is this acceptance and tolerance for one’s own exploration that I have rarely seen with any other group. This tolerance energizes me to take the risk and attempt to be the best I can be, because it can be reflection of you or more elegantly, we can be a reflection of each other.

This year, I will not be physically present at Interface so I would like to incorporate a Virtual Interface Presentation:

Outstreaming: Exploring Connecting and Transforming (ECT) Networks

Background:

At a previous Interface, I presented a talk about “paradynamic shifting”, techniques used to shift paradigms. Using a paradigm shifting technique

I came up with the term “outstream” which has a nice ring and a diametric yet harmonious opposition to the Internet. I then pondered at what an outstream would mean and created a model by which to explore it.

Outstreaming is about ECT networks with each other. If the concept is valid, there should be a biological similarity. Indeed there are many, a very interesting example being the “anastomosis” process undergone by many species of fungi. Anastomosis is a physical bridging of two individual fungi. The bridge that is formed allows nuclei of the individuals to be exchanged. The individuals are now changed. Outstreaming is simply exploring connecting and transforming...ECT....

The model I am using to explore this concept is my life right now. Using ADETA as a starting point, I have physically come to Australia and looked at what connections can be made. I then reported back to ADETA and to those of you who have made specific connections. One level of success would be to connect an ADETA sub-network to an Australian one. This is ongoing and happening out of the foreground. Another is to present relevant information to ADETA members on the Australian experience. Judging from the feedback this success has been achieved. Building on this success, this presentation incorporates the further Australian adventure of a walkabout.

The Walkabout:

The walkabout is an Australian journey. I took one, repeating the same risk when I began teaching. With a well-equipped backpack I stuck my thumb out onto the road. I had no idea what I was going to discover. I had no idea who or what the teachers

and learners were. I just felt this would be great. And it was. It was rich with experience and insight. There was ECT.

Right at the start I was kidnapped by a “Kangaroo Davey”, a hunter who picked me up, took me to Pyramid Hill, a small 2-3000 community. I was touched to discover that the small pyramid mountain had a braille trail specially designed for one blind girl. We then moved to Swan Hill and I stayed at a bird farm where I had a chance to canoe the Murray River. This farm’s main house had recently burned down, and eight of us, kids and adults “camped out” at a smaller cottage. We swapped hunting stories. I entered as a guest to a family community; I left as part of it.

Here was southern rural (inland) Australian farmland. Grazing to be sure, grapes, apples, corn and other familiar crops. Of course some more exotic items such as citrus, cotton and edible nut trees. The irrigation system was phenomenal and went on for kilometers. Apparently when the pumps go full till for the cotton it makes the river flow backwards.

I scooted along to places like Griffith, Hay, Orange and Katoomba (get your local maps out) trying to keep ahead of a nasty weather front. Lost that race and visited Sydney to dry out. There, I met up with a whole group of Canadian high schoolers from Calgary. It was very elegant to be able to catch up on the hockey situation even when one has nhl.com at one’s fingertips.

I then took a train trip to explore further. I can now directly state it is an excellent mode of travel here. I had my first good discussion with a “half-caste” or “métis” as we would call it back home. A member of the lost generation. Wonderful connection.

I ended up at “Surfer’s Paradise” at the southern tip of Queensland, a place essentially built on Asian money and as touristy as Niagara Falls or Las Vegas.

There is a whole sector throughout Australia dedicated to the backpacker, a booming tourist industry. They provide very cheap accommodation and connections to various forms of exploration and recreation. Each one is unique. You never know what to expect. On the way back I stayed overnight at Grafton. This was run by an ex-heroin addict who had discovered salvation. It was an old orphanage and you could feel the place had a presence certainly on par with “Anne of Green Gables.” Plants and children flowed everywhere. People picking themselves up. Transforming.

This sub tropical region presented new crops of bananas, avocados and sugar cane and absolutely exotic sub tropical plants. Never saw any animal wildlife, but I could sure hear it rustling as I walked along the road. I slowly took the coast way back absorbing all I could from the people who picked me up; a military man, a family, a deep sea diver, some university students, a nature guy with a bus full of feathers, skulls and vertebrae...all walks of life, each with their own story.

Now hitchhiking is not a media recommended for most people and believe me I became very well informed before taking on this task. Yet the richness and quality of the experience was absolutely sublime. Many elegant connections were made.

Outstreaming: Transformation Possibilities

The outstreaming process also has a transforming feature. New connections with ADETA members have been created, others disengaged and

others are business as usual. New Australian connections are being incorporated and directed. The world as well is undergoing such quantity/quality transformations as a result of the connections that are being made. This is very exciting considering the global education potential. It makes me wonder what will happen to both the individuals and institutes who are life long learners.

Will individual educational institutes learn that to offer their courses to a global audience (with a strong electronic presence such as the Internet) is the most elegant way of providing the educational service? Or will the success of an educational institute lie with its ability to partner and network with other institutes (including communities, business and governments) globally so that local physical support is provided along with the electronic presence? I wonder.

I also wonder about the quality transforming affect on the global classroom. We have a strong local mandate for our education to provide career employment. Yet education has other potential. The particular education I have regarding what to do when I meet a bear is quite different to the one I needed the other night when I came across a scorpion. I now have a richer experience having dealt with both situations. For this instance my prior education had a survival/health aspect.

While we can quantify any quality parameter (e.g. employment records after training) we should remember that we can have many quality parameters for education and that these may need to be addressed more dynamically as we move to a global educational system.

Outstreaming: Quality Transformation.

Moving back to my “small town” locale of Barwon Heads, I will re-

view the parameter of art, which I perceive as having a greater (perhaps unique is a better word) community penetration compared to regions of Alberta. Consider these few simple quality observations and compare them to your small local community.

- a. Walking into the post office of Barwon Heads there is art and photos for sale on the wall. It is all tastefully done, mostly local sceneries.
- b. The local “chemist” (pharmacist) has a whole range of scenery photos that he takes, develops and sells himself.
- c. There is an art shop that is run by a surfer who does everything from surfboards to murals to buses. A local hero.
- d. While there is no gallery at Barwon Heads per se, people display and sell art from their home. A lot of other local industry display and/or sell local art.
- e. The town contains a whole network of painted bollards done by a local artist (see photo).



Now the impact of this artistic penetration is also seen when I visit people’s homes, and find most have local art and a “this is from a local artist who...” story about the art.

Now if an institute is engaging an individual into a global course, this quality can be brought to the table. On the other hand an institute that partners with another may be able to add this cultural feature as an interface to a course structure, development or market penetration. It could extend to a community who sees benefit from developing it's local artistic talent.

Whatever the case, these quality transformations are going to become very dynamic as we move to a global stage of education as well as other sectors. The outstream (new network explorations and connections) has the potential of transforming the educational institutes and courses as well as the learners (a topic for future discussion).

Regardless of the mode and the status of your particular educational connection, outstreaming offers you a degree of connection from one network to another. The more connections you make, the more you can make. As we exchange flows of information and networks we evolve both our personal and global experience. We are at a stage where the Gaian electronic nervous system is evolving to a new state of awareness and mobility of life forms.

Outstreamers: Conclusion and New Directions

This tale entails physically leaving a network while maintaining its electronic communication qualities. Physically and electronically, new network connections are sought out. These experiences are transforming. It can be part of our daily individual activities; surfing, classrooms, conferences, business meeting are opportunities that allow us to meet new people and exchange information. We can all view ourselves as outstreamers. A key point is how we view our transformation. Do we steer

or follow the flow? What do you want to be tomorrow?

Looking back we have the opportunity to review our history. Outstreamers such as Columbus or Cook explored, connected and transformed our view of the world. Some of this transformation has hindered certain cultures and benefited others.

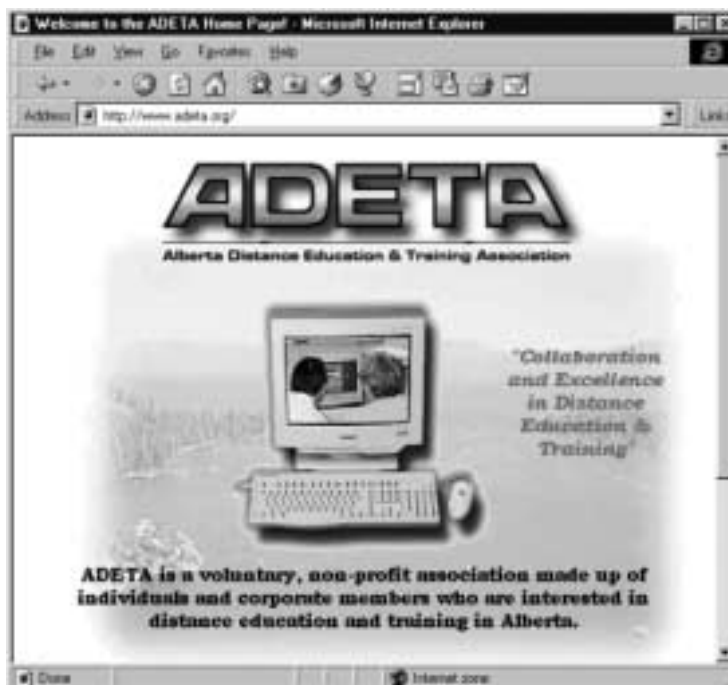
Right now we can see some of the results of this type of exploration. There is one glaring opportunity that I see with the global process. On my journey, I meet people from all over the world. I question the sheer physical absence of certain "aboriginal" groups (& Russians, although the

historic buffer zone countries are well represented). I know that they are making their mark via other sectors, but we should reflect upon their spiritual presence at the global (educational) table.

The future looks so potentially elegant. We are on the verge of discovering that we are all native to the planet. Optimistically there will be an evolution of travel concepts (which the Internet is promoting) so that global citizens can visit their home on their own outstream.

Andy Asselin
andy@iloveapple.com

**Check out the new look
of the ADETA Website at
WWW.ADETA.ORG**



Conferences & Workshops

Expanding the Learning World: A WebCT Project Workshop

May 29 – June 2, 2000

Grande Prairie Regional College is holding a week-long WebCT Project workshop from May 29th to June 2nd. Mornings will feature a range of pedagogical and practical presentations and discussions led by some of Alberta's leading alternative delivery practitioners. Afternoons will be spent in the lab learning WebCT under the direction of U of A's Norm Friesen and working on individual courses and projects. Labs will also be available for evening work.

With the province-wide license enabling all public educational institutions in Alberta to use WebCT, training in the use of this powerful program has become an urgent priority. Come and learn with us, visit the Peace Country at our best time of year, take the opportunity to get your fall preparation done, and enjoy a community of educators with common goals.

Expanding the Learning World is being sponsored by Alberta North. Participants from Alberta North member institutions will pay only \$150 for the week. All others are welcome to attend for a fee of \$300. GPRC can offer residence accommodation and breakfasts and lunches are included in the conference fee. The workshop is limited to 20 people on a "first in line" basis: please register as soon as possible.

Your institution should have received a brochure for this event. If it hasn't reached your desk, contact Cheryl (king@gprc.ab.ca) or Joanne (stiles@lib.gprc.ab.ca) and we will send you the information.



Get Connected: The Educational Technology Summer Institute

The Third Annual Get Connected Summer Institute is an innovative and exciting week-long Summer Institute on the use of web-based technology to enhance, develop and deliver curriculum. Offered in partnership with PanCanadian Petroleum Ltd., this program runs June 19th to 23rd, 2000, at Mount Royal College in Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Objectives of the Institute are:

- To provide hands-on technical training in educational technology, web courseware and the use of technical resources
- To assist with the development of curriculum
- To build an actual mini-module using templates and tools specifically developed for the Institute
- To explore the issues around the use of web-based technology to enhance curriculum through discussion groups, panel forums and workshops
- To encourage networking and social interaction with other educators

For further details, pre-requisites and registrations:

Visit the website at: www.mtroyal.ab.ca/summer_institute

Or call the Summer Institute Coordinator at 403-240-6042

Or email adc@mtroyal.ab.ca



16th Annual Conference on

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Teaching & Learning

August 2-4, 2000

Madison, Wisconsin

Plan to join more than 1000 colleagues from around the world at this leading forum on distance education and training. Practitioners, managers, and researchers from education, business and industry, and government agencies will come together to exchange information and explore new developments at this 16th Annual Conference.

To receive a printed brochure that describes the conference, please call 1-800-462-0876. The brochure is also available at the conference website: <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/>



AMTEC 2000

Where Eagles Soar

The Association for Media and Technology in Education in Canada (AMTEC) will be holding its Year 2000 convention in Vancouver from May 28 - 31st. The conference theme is "Where Eagles Soar: Discovering New Educational Horizons" and reflects the organization's ongoing effort to challenge all of us to discover creative ways of using media and technology in teaching and learning.

Delegates from all areas of Canada and international destinations will gather to share research and best practices in applying media and technology to education.

For more information visit www.langara.bc.ca/amtec2000

Conferences & Workshops



The Second Annual WebCT International Conference July 9 - 12, 2000 At the University of Georgia

We invite you to the University of Georgia for the 2nd annual WebCT International Conference to join your colleagues from around the world to exchange information and share dreams in the setting of our classic city. We have planned the conference to be both informative and enjoyable.

Over **100 Presentations**, Posters, and Special Sessions

This conference will be content rich and feature **6 concurrent tracks** including:

- Technical Issues
- Training Issues
- System & Institutional Issues
- Faculty Development
- WebCT Course Showcase
- WebCT Partner Presentations

The **WebCT Demo Area** will be where WebCT representatives are available to meet with conference attendees one-on-one throughout conference

The **WebCT Partners Area** will be where participating WebCT partners will have booths or displays to showcase their products and services and meet with conference attendees one-on-one throughout conference.

For more information visit the Web site at <http://www.webct2000.org/>



The Fourth-Annual Online Learning Symposium 2000 November 22 to 24, 2000, at the Mayfield Inn in Edmonton

Sponsored by The Alberta Online Consortium and the Learning Technologies Branch of Alberta Learning

This conference is directed at educators from the K-12 and post-secondary sectors that have an interest in online learning for students at all levels. The conference will feature a concurrent stream of sessions specifically for college and university faculty that are also applying information technology to teaching and learning.

The purpose of the symposium will be to:

- discuss trends and directions in online education
- provide an opportunity to network with online educators
- present an opportunity for online educators to view and explore new technological tools for online learning
- discuss Alberta Learning's priorities for online schools and post-secondary support for online learning
- explore opportunities for collaborative distributed online development projects among online educators from across Alberta and Western Canada
- discuss potential collaborations between provinces



- enable online educators to present and share current practices in online education

Join us for the first Online Learning Symposium of the Millennium!

For more information visit <http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca/ltb/symposium/2000>



2000 Conference on Information Technology November 15-18, 2000 Anaheim California

The League for Innovation's annual Conference on Information Technology (CIT) is the premier showcase of the use of information technology to improve teaching and learning, student services, and institutional management in community and two-year colleges. Celebrating sixteen years of excellence, the CIT features a technologically sophisticated and topically diverse program that aims to enable educators to explore and expand their use of technology.

CIT regularly attracts more than 3,500 attendees made up of community college faculty and faculty leadership (55 percent), presidents through mid-level administrators in all areas of community college operations (35 percent), and a good number of corporate and other higher education leaders (10 percent).

For more information visit http://www.league.org/league/conferences/cit2000/CIT_2000.htm



Conferences & Workshops

ADETA

ADETA Fall 2000 Workshop

October 13, 2000

At Bow Valley College in downtown Calgary

The theme of this one-day workshop will be **Collaborate for Success**.

Call for papers and registration information can be found at <http://webct.bowvalley.ab.ca/fallworkshop>

BOW VALLEY
COLLEGE



Special keynote speaker will be Larry Katz

Dr. Larry Katz is Associate Professor and Director, Sport Technology Research Centre, Faculty of Kinesiology, and Adjunct Associate Professor, Graduate Division of Educational Research, Faculty of Education specializing in the application of multimedia technology to improving human performance. He was a principal investigator with the Telelearning Network of Centres of Excellence, and has developed the Collaborative Electronic Learning Model and Kid TV projects.

His multimedia projects have received endorsements from national and international agencies and he has received over 2 million dollars in research and development grants. Recently, he developed (with M. Maitland and R. Hannah) a web based multimedia anatomy laboratory series and a video 'What Moves You: An Introduction to Functional Anatomy' - which was broadcast on television and is being distributed by ACCESS Corporation.

His research interests include investigating the impact of technology on performance and learning. Dr. Katz's Collaborative Electronic Learning Project was sponsored by Shaw Communications and the Canadian Cable Labs Consortium and was trial tested with schools from the Calgary Public School Board, Calgary Separate School Board and a number of private K-12 schools within the Calgary area.

He is interested in how people learn and how to use technology to improve human performance, communication, and collaboration.

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20th World Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education

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01-05 April 2001

The Future of Learning-Learning for the Future: Shaping the Transition.

For more information visit <http://www.fernuni-hagen.de/ICDE/D-2001/>

To find out more about other Conferences that are coming up, check out The Distance Education Clearinghouse conference list at www.uwex.edu/disted.

Conferences & Workshops



Interface 2000 is shaping up to be a truly exciting event! It will be held at Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton on June 7, 8, and 9, 2000. This conference on learning technologies and their applications will have:

- 5 keynote speakers, including Dr. Lyle Oberg, Minister of Learning for Alberta; Jay Ingram, Co-Host and Producer at the Discovery Channel; Dr. Diana Oblinger, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, University of North Carolina; and Murray Goldberg, President of WebCT Educational Technologies Corporation, Canada; Daniel Richer, Director, Office of Learning Technologies.
- a thought-provoking video produced just for the conference by ACCESS TV.
- 12 preconference sessions, including a session on costing online education by Tony Bates from the University of British Columbia.
- 22 hardware and software exhibitors, including Apple, IBM, Sharp's Audio-visual, Telus, and WebCT.
- 57 concurrent sessions covering a variety of subjects and issues.
- door prizes, including a Dell desktop computer.
- an opportunity to travel back in time at Fort Edmonton Park.
- low registration fees - \$290 is the conference fee. This fee covers the opening reception, all keynote

speakers, exhibits, all the concurrent sessions you can attend, most meals, and a delightful social evening.

So plan to be in Edmonton June 7, 8, and 9, 2000. And if you haven't sent in a concurrent conference proposal,



Dr. Lyle Oberg



Jay Ingram



Dr. Diana Oblinger



Murray Goldberg



Daniel Richer

there is still time. See the conference Web page <http://www.interface2000.gmcc.ab.ca> for details or contact Judith Johnson at johnsonj@admin.gmcc.ab.ca. We would be honoured to receive a conference proposal from every institution in the province and from across Canada.

Interface 2000 will be hosted by:

- Alberta Distance Education and Training Association
- CML Provincial Users' Group
- Grant MacEwan College
- NorQuest College
- Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

The key conference sponsors are:

- ACCESS TV
- Apple Canada
- Telus
- WebCT

The above sponsors have helped us to keep the conference fee as low as possible, yet give you good value for your money.

Please join us as a participant, a presenter or both! We have openings in the concurrent sessions and roundtable discussions.

ADETA



NorQuest COLLEGE



ADETA

**Plan to attend the ADETA
Annual General Meeting
in Edmonton at Grant MacEwan College
Room 6-313H on June 9 at 7:30 am
Free! breakfast will be provided by ADETA**



This is our one annual meeting where all ADETA members can get together to network with each other and take care of association business. The annual reports from the board will be presented at this meeting.

This year, the AGM will be held in conjunction with the Interface 2000 conference at Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton on June 9, from 7:30 - 8:30 am. But, you don't need to be a conference registrant to attend the AGM.

Please plan to attend, we need your participation.



The winner of the ADETA Research Award will be announced.

Elections Notice

The elections for the ADETA Board will take place at the ADETA Annual General Meeting Thursday, June 9 from 7:30 - 8:30 am at Interface 2000. Nominations will be accepted from the floor for the Board positions and for the position of President.