

JUST IN TIME

News from the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights (DEHR) Committee

According to a January 2009 survey by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 8 per cent of 17-year-olds with cellphones have sent a sexually provocative image by text and 30 per cent have received a nude or nearly nude image on their phone.

Sometimes I am so naive. I remember feeling a bit aghast when I first heard about *sexting*, a word that my computer spellchecker identifies as a spelling error. Not for long, I imagine, because sexting, the practice of sending sexually explicit messages or nude photos of oneself over the Internet, has not only entered the English lexicon, it has become a common activity among today's youth. According to a 2009 Pew Research Center study (Lenhart 2009), 4 per cent of US teens aged 12 to 17 say that they have sent sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images of themselves via text messaging. An Australian study found that more



than 40 per cent of teenaged girls have been asked to send nude or semi-nude images of themselves. As we know, society proceeds in an unceasing wave of extending boundaries. What seemed wild to our parents was tame to us; what seems wild to us seems tame to kids today. I remember how bold and naughty I felt many moons ago when I left a flowery love letter in the slats of the locker of a boy I had a crush on. How times have changed! And they will always continue to do so—it is the nature of the beast. One is pressed to wonder, though (and occasionally to hope), that there is an endpoint. Will there ever be a time when the envelope isn't being pushed? Probably not.

The Australian study cited above brings up another interesting issue; namely, the different ways that boys and girls use technology. We know that girls are often asked to provide explicit pictures of themselves, but are boys ever asked to do the same thing? Furthermore, it seems to me that I see many more boys playing video games than girls. Is that true? And if girls aren't playing video games, then what are they doing all those hours they spend online?

In light of all this, then, this issue of *Just in Time* looks at a brave new world of growing interest to educators and researchers (and moms and dads) everywhere: the relationship between gender and technology.

—Karen Virag

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Do Boys and Girls Use Computers Differently?

This article is a summation of an article titled “How Adolescent Boys and Girls View Today’s Computer Culture,” by Dr Alice A Christie; it was first published in the winter 2005 issue of Meridian: A Middle School Computer Technologies Journal. Dr Christie, of Arizona State University (ASU), is a President’s Professor and an associate professor of technology and education in the College of Teacher Education and Leadership at ASU. She conducts workshops nationally and internationally on how technology can enhance teaching and learning and researches gender differences in the uses of technology. Though this was a US study, the results can be seen to apply equally to a Canadian context. The excerpts in this article are reprinted with permission. Minor changes have been made to conform to ATA style.



The Beginning of the Computer Culture

Sometimes it seems as though computers have been around forever, but the computer as we know it today is only a few decades old. And the idea of a culture or set of commonly understood values and attitudes towards computers is even younger. As Christie tells us,

The term *computer culture* emerged in the mid-1980s and was used commonly in the literature on technology and gender by the early 1990s. Its origins stem from the work of Turkle (1984) who identified two different computer programming styles, that of hard masters and soft masters. Hard masters tend to be male, and

soft masters tend to be female. “In our culture girls are taught the characteristics of soft mastery—negotiation, compromise, give-and-take, while models of male behaviour stress decisiveness and the imposition of will” (Turkle 1984, 109).

Turkle and Papert (1990) went on to call for a less male-centred view of technology that recognizes and encourages diverse ways of thinking about and using tools such as computers.

The Study—Do Boys and Girls Use Computers Differently?

In 2005, Christie conducted a qualitative study of 250 Grades 7 and 8 boys and girls on how they assign meaning and interact with computers. Her focus was mainly on the girls, because they have historically been underrepresented in studies of technology. The mean age of the students was 12.5 years; there were approximately 50 per cent males, 50 per cent females. Three-quarters of the students were Caucasian, 18 per cent Hispanic, 5 per cent Asian American, 1 per cent African American and 1 per cent Native American. The classroom was structured around Grades 7 and 8 language arts and social studies standards that focused on problem solving, critical thinking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting. The teacher/researchers used a student-centred

approach whereby learning was seen as a social process and learners as active, responsible participants in their own learning.

Literature Review

Christie began her study with a literature review, which revealed unsurprising results: females are underrepresented in computer science and technology fields, and girls saw computers as associated with male computer nerds. She found that three times as many boys as girls participated in summer computer camps, and that

by high school, the gender gap in computer use was even more pronounced. Boys were more likely to own a computer, understand the electronic operations of computers, and be part

of extracurricular computer classes. Lack of female role models, gender-stereotyped computer course materials, and male-oriented names of computer science courses also contributed to students' existing connotation of computers as male domains (Schofield 1995). The trend continued at the university level where, in an introductory computer course, more than half the males used the computer lab after hours while almost none of the females took advantage of this opportunity.



At all levels, boys were more likely to be chosen to assist the teacher with technology than were girls (Sanders 1990). Christie (1995) and de Castell and Bryson (1998) observed that girls generally enjoyed computing less than boys because most available software appealed to boys rather than to girls; the software used gaming formats that were competitive and often violent and which pitted two players against each other or one player against the computer. Girls preferred to explore feelings, solve problems, and work cooperatively and interactively at the computer. They also preferred adventure, friendship, or creativity as the focus of software (AAUW 2000; Fiore 1999).

The AAUW survey (2000) also found that both boys and girls considered computers as more appropriate for males than females. And indeed, as the popular Mac versus PC television commercials illustrate, the advertising industry perpetuates these stereotypes. "The old adage that boys make things and girls use things that boys make is still unfortunately true" (Margolis and Fisher 2002).

What the Study Found

Christie found that all the adolescents in her study were competent, confident and frequent users of computers and the Internet. She also found that girls and boys viewed and used computers differently. Boys' uses centred on competitive, often violent, gaming activities such as war games, killing simulations and sporting games. In terms of school-related use, girls used computers for word processing, writing, creating multimedia presentations, and producing neat, professional looking work. Boys, however, mentioned that they used computers for homework and schoolwork

only now and then, and the only tool they mentioned was the Internet. Girls used computers to connect with others; boys used them to compete with others. Girls' main uses centred on communication: e-mailing, chatting, using instant messaging to communicate with classmates, and connecting to and flirting with guys. Few girls played computer games; some played only when they were exceedingly bored. Also, many girls said that they considered computer games a bad influence on boys because gaming made the boys into antisocial couch potatoes who did not know how to talk with girls.

In summation, the gender differences with respect to technology lie not in youths' abilities but in their attitudes. Given this, it is important for K-12 teachers to understand computer culture and its evolution.

Because there is a pervasive perception that the computer domain is male, parents and teachers need to work to disrupt the stereotypically gendered nature of technology. In general, technological use is often dictated by a rigid gender ideology: vacuum cleaners, washing machines and electric typewriters are for females; power saws, tractors and household tools are for males. But computers, although far from neutral, offer a way to interrupt and re-define gender differences. Technological advancements have changed both the computer and the image of the computer. Computers are no longer simply number crunchers; they are now multifaceted technologies that facilitate unlimited opportunities in application, use and vision. Males may have aligned themselves with a number crunching computer in the past, but the newer image of computer as more complexly functional opens the door to

differently gendered use. In fact, this study stands as firm evidence that girls are aligning themselves with computers and are using computers to defy long-standing gender stereotypes.



What This Means for the Classroom Teacher

Christie believes that the first step classroom teachers should take is to familiarize themselves with the inherent disadvantage girls have regarding technology. Margolis and Fisher (2002) provide ideas for how they can do this:

- Be aware of their own behaviour that disadvantaged girls.
- Make a greater effort to call on everyone in the classroom, not just the boys.
- Recruit girls into high school computer science classes.
- Work to retain girls in their classes by encouraging them.
- Be aware of gender equity issues.

For Christie, these steps must be taken early in girls' education.

I believe it is imperative that we welcome girls into the computer clubhouse (Margolis and Fisher 2002) starting when they are infants in the home, then in preschool, then in elementary school and so on. If we wait until girls are in high school, we are too late. By then, they may have chosen not to take the courses necessary to become inventors and developers of the emerging computer culture. By then, their natural curiosity about how and why things work may have been destroyed. By then, gender stereotypes may be too deeply engrained for girls to feel comfortable moving

into a male-dominated culture. We, as parents, teachers, and school administrators can make a difference in how the computer culture emerges during the next decade if we employ any or all of the strategies and classroom practices described below (AAUW 2000).

What Parents and Teachers Can Do to Level the Technology Playing Field

- Establish same-gender classes in math and science.
- Establish girls-only computer clubs, summer camps, discussion groups and online meeting places.
- Create environments where boys and girls can work comfortably together with computers.
- Establish mechanisms at home or school to allow equitable access to computers by both boys and girls.
- Highlight female role models who not only use computers in meaningful ways, but who are designers, leaders and shapers of the computer culture.
- Use technology in the home and classroom to accomplish real-life, meaningful objectives and goals (eg, use a spreadsheet to show the computer as something other than a word processor).
- Establish a mentor program whereby female engineers and computer scientists interact on a regular basis with elementary, middle and high school girls.
- Provide all students with information on the courses and types and levels of education needed to pursue careers in computer science, engineering and other computer-related fields.
- Choose software that does not alienate girls, is not violent or overly competitive, and does not promote gender stereotypes.
- Expand your definition of computer literacy to that of information literacy.
- Understand that students learn by doing, so that the more opportunities they have for using computers in multiple contexts to accomplish a variety of goals, the more computer savvy they will become.
- Work collaboratively with other teachers in your grade level, your building or your district to create computer-based materials (eg, WebQuests) that honour multiple ways of viewing.

For more information, go to Professor Christie's website, www.alicechristie.org, which is a comprehensive resource for educators who want to use technology in their classrooms.

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Blame the Game: Are Video Games Causing Our Boys to Fail?

By Karen Virag



Leonard Sax is a medical doctor, a psychologist and the founder of the [US] National Association for Single Sex Public Education. He has

also been a keen observer of that alternatively frustrating and delightful creature known as the human child. And he has a lot of interesting things to say about them, particularly about the male version. In a landmark 2007 book, *Boys Adrift*, Sax examined the reasons for a noticeable downward trend in academic achievement of young American males, a trend that is also occurring in Canada. He attributes the decline to these factors: (1) changes at school, (2) medication for ADHD, (3) endocrine disrupters, (4) social factors that encourage boys to never grow up, (5) bad role models (for example, Eminem, 50 Cent), (6) a disappearance of the notion of official entry into manhood and (7) video games, which is the topic discussed in this article.



Boy world is a weird place.
—Leonard Sax

According to a January 2009 survey by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, teens who pay their own phone bill are more likely to send sexts (17 per cent as opposed to 3 per cent of those who do not pay their own phone bills).

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Text message volumes have been doubling every year since text messaging was introduced in 2002.

—Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association

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Nietzsche Knew

In the videogame *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, a game played almost exclusively by young males, the player robs a bank, picks up a prostitute, has simulated sex with her then shoots her in the head with a gun he stole from a cop that he has just murdered—players get extra points for killing police officers. He then retrieves the money he paid the prostitute. What a delightful and morally refreshing scenario! And if you are wondering why anyone would find this kind of so-called game appealing, consider Sax's explanation: "Video games [such as *Grand Theft Auto* and *Halo*] give the boys the feelings of power and control they crave: the power of life and death (Sax 2007, 57). Sax relates boys' fascination with such games to the Nietzschean concept of "the will to power." By this he means that many boys want to be in

complete control of their environment and hate to be told what to do (though some girls fit this mould, more often girls are concerned with being liked than with being in control).

Given that the average teenage boy in the US spends about 13 hours a week playing video games (compared with five hours a

week for girls) it is easy to see how the constant exposure to such enthralling, energizing electric material would be far more interesting to lots of boys than, say, conjugating French verbs or learning about the Fathers of Confederation.



Do Video Games Make You Stoopid?

Do violent video games merely coarsen a boy's sensitivity, or do they actually impair his cognitive abilities. According to Sax, they do both. As to the former, the difference between watching violent show movies and video games is the difference between watching and actually doing, even though the doing is simulated. And many studies have proven that video games increase players' motor skills and reaction time, but those two talents have little useful application in the real world. Sax states that video games actually impair academic performance. "A series of studies over the past seven years has demonstrated clearly and unambiguously that the more time your child spends playing video games, the less likely he is to do well at school."

FSVS

In order to counter the negative effects of too much video gaming, parents need to be aware of how much time boys spend playing games. Know what they play. Limit the time (40 minutes a day is suggested). Don't permit violent anti-social games like *Grand Theft Auto* into the house. Don't let video games displace important family time, like eating meals

together. At the same time, be self aware—are there family dynamics and conflicts at work that a kid might want to escape? Finally, help your son get his priorities straight. According to Sax, these are family, school, friends, videos (FSFV).

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Gender and Blogging

With the rise of blogging, everyone can be a published author. This is perhaps not so great for the creation of profound works of lasting literary value, but blogging has proven to be a boon to teenagers in many ways: it allows them to be expressive in ways that many of them would never be in class. And because this freedom of expression can be anonymous, it offers a certain level of liberty and safety that social networking sites don't. The following text is an excerpt from *Using Blogs to Enhance Literacy: The Next Powerful Step in 21-st Century Learning* (Rowman & Littlefield, who kindly provided permission to reprint) by Diane Penrod, professor of writing arts at Rowan University, in New Jersey.

The Female Blogging Style

The following are considered markers of a “female style” in blogging:

- A personal or confessional tone in opinion writing
- Frequent use of the first person (I) in writing
- Contextualization in terms of one's own life or experiences
- Individualized or “little” blog that becomes cross-linked with other similarly themed blogs
- Discussions as a means for bonding, sharing experiences, creating a community or building empathy

The female blogging style parallels how linguists and discourse analysts describe female conversational style. ...



The Male Blogging Style

The following features have been identified through a close study of blogs written by men:

- An agent-less, impersonal tone (use of the third person focused on the subject)
- Assumption that one's opinions are universally shared
- An unwavering or unyielding tone
- The use of *fisking* (This refers to the ruthless point-by-point refutation or criticism that highlights another writer's or blogger's errors. When done well, fisking is witty, somewhat sarcastic and logical. When done poorly, fisking is snide and cynical in tone.)
- Contextualization in terms of current events, politics, foreign policy, war and media issues
- An aggressive communication style filled with rough-and-tumble exchanges, some vulgarity or profanity or crude jokes and references

The type of verbal play described here parallels the discursive strategies often connected to masculine language use. Masculine blogs attempt to talk in terms of power relations rather than in terms of a shared community. ...

We understand that the differences in how 6-year-olds and 16-year-olds learn are so substantial that it doesn't make sense to try to educate them together. But recent research suggests that gender may be even more fundamental to learning than age is.
— Leonard Sax

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Gender Similarities in Teenage Blogs

Huffaker proposes that there are important gender similarities between teenage boys and girls when they're blogging. In the just over 900 million current blogs, 52 per cent are developed and maintained by 13- to 19-year-olds. And of that 52 per cent, the gender split is basically even. So both teenage males and females maintain approximately 225 million blogs each.

Huffaker's research indicates that there are significant gender similarities among teenage bloggers. The sharing of personal data, contact information and content is consistent. Another surprising gender similarity from Huffaker's study is that most active teenagers' blogs show a high level of loyal readers, in terms of visible posts and the length of posts (an average of 2,000 words per page). This is true whether the blogs are created by males or females. In fact, Huffaker found that boys' blogs were longer than those of their female peers. ...

Not only were the adolescent males' blogs more loquacious, they were also more inclined to use a wider vocabulary. Huffaker found that male blogs averaged 763.6 different words, compared with 666.2 different words found on females' blogs. The boys were also considered to be more flirtatious in their postings. But the content found on teenage boys' blogs was similar to the content found on teenage girls' blogs: school, relationships (boyfriends and girlfriends, crushes, intimate talk), sexual identity and musical tastes.



Huffaker's findings are remarkable given Thomas Newkirk's 2002 study of boys' literacy. Newkirk explains that boys consider reading and writing not to be an engagement with the world but a retreat from the world. A similar result emerged from Michael W Smith and Jeffrey Wilhelm's 2002 protocol study of boys and literacy. In those studies, boys who showed an interest in writing and reading thought it undermined their identities as "real boys." These researchers posited that boys wrote and read when it served a direct purpose, such as fixing a car or figuring sports statistics, or if it was connected to popular culture.

It may be that blogs are a form of writing and literacy that connects to teenage boys' interests. Various studies conducted over the past decade indicate that boys spend slightly more time on computers than girls, although this figure is shrinking. Because blog postings are short, frequent and connect to an individual's interests, educators might discover that they can encourage reticent teenage male writers to compose. Teenage boys might see blog writing as a "fortunate opportunity to release a myriad of emotions in a zone of safety," as Harvard Medical School clinical psychologist William Pollack explains in his book *Real Boys' Voices* (2000, 369). Talking about sports, music, cars or other "male" interests in a blogging environment might provide some boys with a sense that they are not alone in experiencing certain feelings or facing problems.

Decades of research have found that teenage boys maintain an absorbed or intensive relationship with their computers. Such absorption or intensity seems to extend to teenage boys' intrinsic online communication style in that boys consider blogs an arena for action and interaction between their cyber lives and real lives. Instead of viewing blogs as an instrument or tool for functional communication, teenage boys see them as a mode for discussing a range of different activities related to their lives, including schooling, socializing and thinking. On blogs, boys can manage the flow of conversations and topics and therefore direct the space and time invested in talking about some issues compared to others. Therefore, it might be that boys also view blog postings as friendly messages that show how they relate to the world at large and how they control their lives on a daily basis.

Gender Differences in Teenage Blogs

According to Huffaker, the following are the most common linguistic differences between teenage male and female blogs:

- More males use emoticons to express emotions.
- More male than female teens “come out” sexually on blogs.
- Males use more purposeful or definite language on their blogs.
- Males choose fantasy/mythical, sports-related, conceptual or nonsensical nicknames as pseudonyms.
- Females select musical or popular culture nicknames or use their first names or a variation of their first names.
- When selecting an avatar (image or icon representing the blogger’s identity), males choose abstract images or graphics. Females select a realistic photo or graphic of a person.
- Male blogs more regularly reflect aggression, accomplishment or motion/activity. Female blogs encourage communicative responses or action.

The gender differences in blogs suggest there are differences between teenage boys and girls in the underlying social relationships and purposes for creating and maintaining the blogs. While both groups share personal information, particularly name, contact information and school name, certain intimate data like sexual orientation or emotional state can reflect teenage boys’ ability to use technology to amplify their feelings and ideas in an abstract format.

... teenage girls prefer telephone communication over computer communication for intimate conversations. Thus, cellphones



and texting are preferred technologies for teenage girls’ intimate discussions, as these modes are less abstract and allow for expression at a one-on-one level. Blogs, because of their relative anonymity, are a way for girls to transmit purposive or functional information, such as musical tastes, interest in popular movies or actors and so on. Blogs can also become an instrument for spreading rumour and innuendo about classmates and rivals.

For teenage girls, the telephone might be a preferred mode of communication because of its spontaneity, mobility and wider applicability compared to blogs. Gender research over the past decade has shown that women perceive the telephone as a medium that builds community and social networks. For young women, the telephone seems to be a preferred method for lending support, empathy, and for counselling and maintaining relationships.

References

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The **Canadian Centre for Child Protection** (CCCP) is a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to the personal safety of all children and a reduction in child victimization. In January 2010, CCCP and the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association launched www.textED.ca, an interactive website designed to teach teens to be safe, responsible and respectful users of texting technologies. Concerns about teens sexting are increasing, yet the vast majority of kids doing so are unaware of the short-term costs and the long-term ramifications associated with their actions. This website will incorporate games, quizzes, discussion pages, downloadables and other tools to help youth deal with these issues.

www.protectchildren.ca/app/en/home

The **Gender, Science and Technology Gateway** is a great source of information and resources for researchers, policy-makers and NGOs. It provides key links and information on research, practice, policy and partners in sustainable development that focuses on gender equality to promote sustainable and equitable science and technology for development. The site is organized according to the seven transformative action areas identified by the Gender Working Group of the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development: education, careers, needs of society, science and technology decision making, local knowledge systems, ethical issues, and collecting gender disaggregated data.

<http://gstgateway.wigsat.org>

Exploring Gender and Technology in Learning Environments: A Web-Based Instructional Resource—This site provides an interactive environment that allows educators to study existing research and explore innovative models to construct gender-equitable technology programs and policies.

www.gse.harvard.edu/~wit/exploring/index.htm



Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science and Technology (WISEST)—WISEST first began by investigating why relatively few women choose and remain in careers in the sciences and engineering, and initiated some ongoing programs to change the situation. Now, in addition, WISEST is looking at why more women than men leave the sciences and engineering after their first degree and again after about 10 years in the professions. The site provides information about research on the subject of women in engineering, science and technology, and about opportunities for students to explore these fascinating fields.

www.wisest.ualberta.ca

The mission of the **Media Education Foundation** is to produce and distribute documentary films and other educational resources to inspire critical reflection on the social, political and cultural impact of American mass media. One notable resource is *What a Girl Wants*, a half-hour DVD that examines how the media presents girls. Footage from a typical week of television is juxtaposed with interview footage of girls aged 8 to 16 from a variety of backgrounds.

www.mediaed.org

Media Watch, which began in 1984, distributes educational videos, media literacy information and newsletters to help create more informed consumers of the mass media. Its goal is to challenge abusive stereotypes and other biased images commonly found in the media.

www.mediawatch.com

The **Media Awareness Network (MNet)** is a Canadian nonprofit organization that has been developing media and digital literacy programs since its incorporation, in 1996. MNet promotes media and digital literacy by producing education and awareness programs and resources, working in partnership with Canadian and international organizations, and speaking to audiences across

Canada and around the world. It concentrates on equipping adults with information and tools to help young people understand how the media work, how the media may affect their lifestyle choices and the extent to which they, as consumers and citizens, are being well informed.

www.media-awareness.ca

Conferences

Creating a Legacy Together: A Conference for Global Citizenship

Date: May 6–8, 2010

Location: Canmore, Alberta

See back page for details.

5th Global Conference: Cybercultures— Exploring Critical Issues

Date: March 12–14, 2010

Location: Salzburg

This conference will explore the issues created by the growing use of information technologies for communication, and examine the continuing impact of emergent cybermedia for human communication and culture. In particular, the conference will encourage both theoretical and practical debates about the cultural contexts within which cybermedial and technological advances are occurring. Among the subjects for consideration are the following:

- Cybercultures, Cybersubcultures and Online Communities
- Videogame Cultures
- Digital and Interactive Arts
- Education Use of 3-D Videogames and Virtual Worlds

It is anticipated that a series of related cross-context research projects will develop out of the conference deliberations. Further information is available at www.inter-disciplinary.net/critical-issues/cyber/cybercultures/details/.

Career and Technology Studies Council Conference

Date: April 23–25, 2010

Location: Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, Alberta

Sponsored by the ATA's Career and Technology Studies specialist council. For more information, contact conference director Paul Bohnert at paul.bohnert@lethsd.ab.ca or council president Craig DeJong at craig.dejong@lethsd.ab.ca.

Conference website: <http://cts.teacher.ab.ca>

International Conference on New Media and Interactivity

Date: April 28–30, 2010

Location: Istanbul

New media permeate our everyday life and our change our habits and points of view. Discussion

Calling all those who want to change the world.

OK, maybe that is overstating it, but if you are interested in gender issues in the classroom, have we got an opportunity for you. The Gender Equity Subcommittee of the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee is currently recruiting new members. This is your chance to meet interesting colleagues, explore resources for teachers, help plan conferences and events, and influence educational policy. And we even feed you!

Next meetings take place on Thursday, March 11, and Tuesday, May 4, from 5 till 7:30 PM at Barnett House (11010 142 Street, Edmonton).

For more information, contact Andrea Berg. Phone: 1-800-232-7208, ext. 423; e-mail: andrea.berg@teachers.ab.ca.

will focus on new media and human-computer interaction and their effect on media, economy, advertising, sociology, psychology and education. The main topics of this conference are as follows:

- Theoretical and Conceptual Framework of New Media
- New Media and Visual Culture
- Communication Networks and Web Technologies
- Everyday Life and New Media
- Economy of New Media
- Practices and Cases in E-Society

More information about the subjects to be considered within each topic can be found at <http://iletisim.marmara.edu.tr/newmedia/index.php?type=content&page=1>. Of particular interest to educators will be "Everyday Life and New Media," which includes "New Media and Society," "Identity and Gender in New Media," "Online Friendship and Virtual Relationship" and "Trust and Privacy Issues in Cyber Society," among many others.

Explore IT 2010

Date: May 5, 2010

Location: Calgary

Explore IT is an interactive conference for Grade 9 girls to explore the exciting world of information and communications technology (ICT). Explore IT

*In total,
Canadians
sent 3 billion
text messages
in September
2009.*

*—Canadian Wireless
Telecommunications
Association*

Who Needs the Draft When You Have Video Games?

Albeit unwittingly, the video game industry is helping to provide the world with its next generation of soldiers. Consider this: the British government is openly recruiting secondary school students as future squadron pilots for Apache helicopters. Apparently piloting an Apache requires someone who can process huge amounts of data from many sources without losing concentration. Our multitasking children, raised on video games and addicted to Xboxes, have these abilities as well as the requisite hand-eye coordination. And the Pentagon is increasingly partnering with the video games industry to train and recruit soldiers based on the knowledge that most kids know how to use a game pad. In the early 2000s, the US Army founded Creative Technologies to connect academics with entertainment and gaming industries. Two websites in particular, “Full Spectrum Warrior” and “America’s Army,” provide unparalleled—and cheap—recruitment opportunities. Furthermore, our kids have learned the sine qua non of video games—the pleasure of vanquishing a virtual enemy, a nonmember of the tribe, and they’ve felt that special shiver of joy aroused by the elimination of the other.



was created to increase young women’s awareness of the opportunities available in ICT as they begin to make their career decisions and plan for the future. Using state-of-the-art technology at Mount Royal College, SAIT Polytechnic, and the University of Calgary, the girls participate in hands-on sessions in areas such as multimedia, networking, cinema, television, Java programming, robotics, geomatics and webpage design, and get a sneak peek into the tantalizing world of high tech. For more information, go to www.explore-it.ca.

CCWESTT Conference (Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology)

Date: May 13–15, 2010

Location: Winnipeg

In May 2010, Winnipeg will welcome approximately 400 delegates for the 13th Biannual CCWESTT Conference, “Leading the Way: Empowering Women, Building Communities.” Conference participants will be inspired and rejuvenated by keynote speakers, and will be challenged through workshops and presentations to enhance their personal and professional lives. For more information, go to www.cccwestt2010.ca.

e•Youth: Balancing Between Opportunities and Risks?

Date: May 27–28, 2010

Location: Antwerp

UCSIA (University Centre Saint Ignatius Antwerp) and the University of Antwerp are pleased to announce a two-day international, multidisciplinary conference on children, adolescents and ICT. The conference will focus on national and international research dealing with the social, cultural, economic, legal, psychological and ethical issues surrounding

youngsters’ uses of Internet applications and mobile telephony. Topics include the following:

- Youngsters and ICT: A Heterogeneous Group
- Youngsters and ICT: Developmental Changes and Related Needs
- Youngsters and ICT: A Vulnerable (Target) Group?
- Youngsters and ICT: Awareness, Protection and Empowerment
- Youngsters and ICT: Ethical and Legal Issues

More information is available at the conference website, www.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=.EYOUTH.

Diffusion 2.0: Computing, Mobility and the Next Generations

Date: June 15–18, 2010

Location: Vancouver

The biennial CATaC (Cultural Attitudes Towards Technology and Communication) conference series provides an international forum for current research on how diverse cultural attitudes shape the implementation and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The conference series brings together scholars from around the globe who provide diverse perspectives in terms of both the specific culture(s) they highlight in their presentations and discussions, and the discipline(s) through which they approach the conference theme. Of particular interest among the conference topics are the following:

- New layers of imaging and texting interactions fostering and/or threatening cultural diversity
- Impact of mobile technologies on privacy and surveillance
- Gender, sexuality and identity issues in social networks
- Cultural diversity in e-learning and/or m-learning

The conference website is www.cataconference.org.

Creating a Legacy Together

A Conference for Global Citizenship

Featuring:

Chris Turner, author of *The Geography of Hope: A Tour of the World We Need*

Craig Kielburger, founder of Free the Children Foundation

Geoff Green, adventurer, educator and founder of Students On Ice

Sigrid Niedermayer, international coordinator for the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) Program

Pauline Théoret, Green Street program coordinator for the Canadian Teachers' Federation

About the conference:

Teachers, administrators, education system leaders and community representatives are invited to attend this conference, which will be a forum to share and celebrate promising practices for developing engaged global citizens for the 21st century.

Thursday May 6: Reception, welcome and keynote by Chris Turner

Friday May 7: Keynote by Craig Kielburger, 18 workshops and banquet with keynote by Geoff Green

Saturday May 8: Participants will be engaged in facilitated action planning on the topic "How can we advance global citizenship and environmental education in Alberta?" followed by a Saturday evening social and dance featuring the fabulous band TR3!

Keynote speakers:



Chris Turner is the author of the national bestseller *The Geography of Hope: A Tour of the World We Need*, which the *Globe & Mail* named one of the best books of the year. Turner is also the author of the international bestseller *Planet Simpson: How a Cartoon Masterpiece Documented an Era and Defined a Generation*. He writes a monthly feature on sustainability for the *Globe & Mail*.
nsb.com/speakers/view/chris-turner



Craig Kielburger is founder of (Kids Can) Free the Children, currently the world's most influential international children's organization with thousands of young people from more than 35 countries who participate in its activities. Among its many accomplishments, Free the Children has helped raise funds for the construction of more than 300 primary schools, potable water projects and health clinics, and the distribution of medical supplies to families.
www.metowe.com/speakers/craig-marc/marc



Geoff Green is a 40-year-old Canadian entrepreneur, adventurer and educator who has been leading expeditions and adventures from pole to pole for the past decade. A former school teacher, Green has skippered yachts; taught skiing in the Swiss Alps; was the first person to water-ski in both polar regions; has been through the Northwest Passage three times; and led the largest ever expedition to Antarctica during the millennium.
www.studentsonice.com/

Register online today! www.geoec.org

Registration: \$350 early bird special. All meals included. Space is limited.

Accommodation: \$129/night (single or double occupancy)

Hotel reservations: Call 1-800-263-3625, or visit www.radisson.com/canmoreca (conference code geoec)

Project sponsors:

This conference for global citizenship is a collaborative initiative sponsored by

- Alberta Council for Environmental Education
- Alberta Teachers' Association
- Calgary Regional Consortium
- Canadian Commission for UNESCO Associated Schools Network
- Canadian Rockies Regional Division
- Global, Environmental & Outdoor Education Council (GEOEC) of the Alberta Teachers' Association



May 6–8, 2010

Canmore, Alberta
Radisson Hotel and
Conference Centre

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