

EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT

By Susan Copeland Henry

One of the most interesting sessions I attended at the ISETA 2000 conference was Carolyn Johnson's session entitled, "Web-Based Instruction: What's Holding You Back?" As she indicated in the presentation and in her abstract, Carolyn Johnson (2000) has done extensive research in order to identify the reasons why college and university instructors have been more hesitant about using the Internet for instructional purposes, while K-12 teachers have "embrac[ed] the web as a powerful resource" (p. 99). The various concerns that she cited among higher-level instructors were issues regarding traditional tenure tracks, anxiety about the web replacing classroom instructors, copyright problems, the rapid pace of changes in hardware and software, confusion about the pedagogy of teaching on the web or using the web, etc. Her ultimate purpose was to encourage instructors both to address these issues from various perspectives and "[t]o practice using the web as a component of student learning rather than a means of delivering instruction" (p. 99).

I do not think that technology should be ISETA's singular focus. However, since ISETA has a history of developing pedagogical principles vis-à-vis technology, and since, as our Mission Statement indicates, ISETA is composed of members across the disciplines who "share a commitment to improving the quality of their teaching and the quality of their students' learning" (Watson, 2001), I think that we should address the issues that Carolyn introduced and expand upon them. We need to recognize that the advent of the Internet is not unlike the advent of the printing press: the printing press allowed for more active and constructive modes of interpreting and learning for new readers who had been more passive learners through listening to others' readings of texts and interpretative offerings. We as educators now accept these text-enhanced learning strategies as the norm. With the Internet, methods of learning are bound to change, and if we want to be effective educators, we need not to hang back and worry, but to be on the cutting edge, helping to shape the pedagogy of web-enhanced instruction so that the quality of learning improves in the multimedia environment.

What can we do to address this era of change with all its incumbent issues? As this and the next issue of Connexions seek to do, one move is to talk more openly about the concerns Carolyn brought up. The second move is to encourage more conference presentations that employ effective cutting-edge ideas using technology. In connection with this, the third move we should make is to insure Internet access at conferences so that presenters can "take us" to their sites and show the kinds of web-enhanced methods they have developed. Let's really connect.

REFERENCES

- Johnson, Carolyn. (2000). Web-Based Instruction: What's Holding You Back? In B. Saulnier (Ed.) ISETA 2000 Conference Proceedings. Redondo Beach, CA: California State University.
- Watson, George. (2001). ISETA Mission Statement. <http://www.iseta.org>. (2002, February 21).