

study proposed to investigate. Eriksson-Backa admits that her study does not fit well with theories on the relationship between information source and knowledge level, perhaps causing her to concentrate on possible demographic explanations instead.

The strengths of this volume are its logical organization of chapters, impressive literature review and bibliography, and the inclusion of the complete questionnaire. Despite weaknesses in the flow of the English text and the lack of detailed description of methodologies used in the empirical study and their relation to its philosophical underpinnings, this book could serve as an excellent bibliographic source for researchers in the field of health information and its relation to preferred media and health behavior. — *Nancy Schaefer, University of Florida.*

Digital Media Revisited: Theoretical and Conceptual Innovation in Digital Domains. Eds. Gunnar Liestol, Andrew Morrison, and Terje Rasmussen. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Pr., 2003. 554p. alk. paper, paper \$24.95 (ISBN 0262621924); cloth \$45 (ISBN 0262122561). LC 2002-35064.

Digital media now permeate our lives, from bank teller machines to digital art to online classrooms. Much of the first wave of academic investigation and thought about the impact of these increasingly pervasive new technologies was limited to specific academic applications. Art critics who turned their attention to digital media creations quite naturally drew on the theories and vocabulary of their own field. Sociologists studying online communities did the same, and so did librarians, literary theorists, ethicists, and others, each operating within his or her own scholarly paradigm. Perhaps the most useful and enlightening aspect of *Digital Media Revisited* is the editors' attempt to bring thinkers from a wide range of theoretical traditions together in one volume. The nature of this work invites the reader to break academic boundaries,

to link and weave together the insight of multiple thinkers and their academic disciplines. This is especially appropriate for a work that investigates media that often have their greatest impact due to an interactive, interwoven, and hypertextual nature.

The work's nineteen essays are informed by literary theory, semiotics, philosophy, aesthetics, ethics, media studies, sociology, and education. They are arranged in four sections: "Education and Interdisciplinarity," "Design and Aesthetics," "Rhetoric and Interpretation," and "Social Theory and Ethics." Within these general subject areas, authors look at a wide-ranging set of issues from Jay David Bolter's investigation into the divide between the media of theory and the media of practice in the new media studies ("What we need is a hybrid, a fusion of the critical stance of cultural theory with the constructive attitude of the visual designer") to Mark Poster's questioning of the relationship between real-life encounters and mediated or virtual interactions ("Can we apply to acts that are distanced by information machines the same norms, value judgments, and moral and ethical criteria that we use in evaluating face-to-face speech acts?"). Found between are essays that explore theatricality and performance in multi-user dungeons (MUDS), subjectivity and agency in the use of new technologies by the disabled, and the representation of women in gaming culture, among others.

Particularly noteworthy are the essays, "The Paradigm Is More Important Than the Purchase" and "Computer Games and the Ludic Structure of Interpretation." The former is by George P. Landow, the influential author of several highly cited and important works on hypertext theory. Landow notes how developers of new media often view their creations as simply versions of old media and thus do not make use of their full potential (e.g., museum Web sites become simply online print catalogs, lacking interactive and multimedia components that are

possible online). He then illustrates the stretching of such a traditional paradigm by drawing on hypertext theory and the works of poststructuralist literary theorists while thinking critically about the University Scholars Programme, which he created and directs for the University of Singapore. Landow discusses how this multidisciplinary program's curriculum emphasizes a high degree of participant (student) interactivity and multivocality (multiple voices from the "evidence" and the thoughts of others about that evidence) to develop critical thinking skills. The Programme also attempts to stress the links between the traditional disciplines found within the curriculum. Multiple voices, interactivity, linkages: it sounds like hypertext. His is an essay that successfully bridges the sometimes great divide between theory and practice. The other especially noteworthy essay is Eva Liestol's investigation into the potential cultural, sociological, and aesthetic understanding that might be made possible by the close reading and criticism of computer games, a scholarly interest like that shown to more traditional media such as art, music, film, and print literature. Liestol looks at the game, *Duke Nukem 3D Atomic Edition* (1996), and what evolves in her exegesis is a compelling mixture of the critical elements employed by the more traditional media.

Although some of the essays are more accessible than others, none are written for the general reader or casual thinker about things digital. A fairly thorough knowledge of various schools of thought and theoretical camps in a number of disciplines also would aid the reader in a full appreciation of the work as a whole. Although a simple listing of the subjects covered by this volume might suggest a jumble of disparate ideas only loosely connected by shared friendship and conference hobnobbing, this is not the case. In most instances, the subject of one essay logically follows from a discussion begun in a previous piece. Ideas shared in one chapter appear later in another's writing, and often works

cited by one author provide a bridge to the thoughts of another who cites the same work. It is a situation that might have been exploited by a digital edition of the text. Still, taken together, these essays—even on the printed page—show the broad range of scholarly attention that has been brought to bear on the bits and bytes that now inform, educate, entertain, and sometimes frustrate us.—Kevin Cherry, *East Carolina University*.

Wilhelm, Anthony G. *Digital Nation: Toward an Inclusive Information Society*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Pr., 2004. 161p. alk. paper, \$27.95 (ISBN 0262232383). LC 2004-42848.

It is commonplace for college and university admissions offices across the United States and Canada to strongly encourage electronic submission of applications to various undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. Given the time it takes to complete applications screen by screen, prospective students with access to high-speed Internet connections clearly have an advantage in completing and transmitting their work and managing the web of application procedures, test scores, and financial aid forms. This is yet one bit in the world depicted in *Digital Nation*, an engaging new treatise on the prospects for inclusion in a technology-based information society.

As of this writing, author Anthony G. Wilhelm is Director of the Technology Opportunities Program in the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce. He has served as Benton Foundation Program Director for Communications Policy and Practice and as Director of Information Technology Research for the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute at Claremont University. Given his background and current position, his words are especially pertinent to higher education and, in particular, to libraries that are concerned with governmental and NGO policy analysis regarding both perception and resolution of the nation's