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Fuller Theological Seminary

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Fuller “Technological” Seminary

In as much as some of us may wish it otherwise, technology has transformed the world we live in and the way we live. Fuller is no exception. Student ID numbers. Email announcements. PowerPoint presentations. Campus Pipeline. All of these are indications of how technologically advanced life at Fuller has become. This past summer I took a class that might as well have required students to have laptop computers since we had to turn in our class notes, typed and formatted, and were graded on how well we captured everything that was said in class.

Personally, I have a love/hate relationship with technology. I love the convenience and efficiency of technology, but it does have limits. I agree with contributor Jeanne McKinney who noted, “I enjoy technology but sometimes a simple project can take as long as no technology if there is a glitch in the connections or you are working with an updated program or everything crashes because of not enough memory!!”

Yes, technology is not infallible. Computers make mistakes—maybe not in math, but those computerized spelling and grammar checks aren’t always accurate! And auto formatting can really mess your paper up! (Trust me, I know.) Contributor Bill Roberts wrote, “Like a hammer or spoon, IT [information technology] is just a tool.... IT makes life easier. IT makes life more difficult. A paradox, isn’t it?”

What is your relationship with technology? Do you have a love/hate relationship—or is it simply one and not the other? Are you part of the “lost generation” who didn’t grow up with computers but are expected to know how to use them anyway? Or are you a “geek”? Do you consider email impersonal or are you like the person who told me that he’s only friends with people who have email—if they don’t have it, they’re not worth keeping in touch with.

We asked some people about how they viewed technology, how they did or didn’t get along with computers, if there was a “theology of technology,” and so on. Perhaps among these individuals, you’ll find a kindred spirit. Or perhaps you’ll find some insight on those who feel differently about technology than you do.

What do you think of Campus Pipeline?

I am still leery about it. I fear having even more information than I already have. I want to know what’s going on, but enough already. If I spend so much time getting information I won’t have any time left to do anything about it.

—Dean Gilliland, faculty

I think it’s a great start and will constantly improve.... My fantasy is registration on-line; lifetime email addresses issued to every incoming Fuller student (who wishes to have one); on-line, real-time interactions for alums, students, faculty, etc.

—Lucy Guernsey, staff

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'Technology' continued from page 1

It is a helpful means to communicate with those students who have signed up, and a useful place to put links for further information regarding class lecture/discussion topics. [However,] (1) Not even half of the class has signed up yet, and (2) I wish I could post assignment sheets, class notes, etc. on the class page (maybe it is possible to do so, but so far I have not found a way).

—Betty Sue Brewster, faculty

I like it but it is tough to get around. I got an email saying that my summer grades were online and I went to look for them. I poked around for like five minutes and could not figure out where to go. The next day I got an email telling me all of the steps I had to go through to find my grades. I did figure it out but it was a bit non-user friendly.

—Greg Parker, student

It is a great way of accessing information. I just wonder why FISH was not able to provide that. It is weird to have another email account, but the nice thing is that this is for life. I had great trouble accessing the FISH account from Bangladesh and I was “cut off” when they thought I was no longer a student. That was not nice! Especially when I still had emails on that account...now lost forever.

—Teresa Chai, student

It is great when you can know about campus events and get information on grades and registration status. There are some weaknesses though. For example, the account summaries are very confusing, causing me to question how I was billed and, in places, if I was overbilled, etc. I think it is just because of the way the site is organized that makes it look wrong. It caused me a lot of strife. Also, when I looked to see if there were holds on my registration before I turned it in, CP said I had no holds, when I actually did. That caused me a lot of wasted time and frustration.

—Shayna Dahl, staff/student

How old were you when you began to use computers on a regular basis?

42. —John Hull, staff
32. —Lucy Guernsey
51. —Jeanne McKinney

I wish computer technology had been around when I began my academic study. I am old enough to remember the invention, during the second world war, of the ball point pen. What a dream it would have been to attract all budding biblical scholars to computer mastery. Of course, things go awry if technology becomes an end rather than a means. But what a means!

—Russ Spittler, staff

College.

—Greg Parker, student

Eighth grade.

—Shayna Dahl, staff/student

How much is your job and/or life, particularly at Fuller, dependent on technology?

100%. —Bill Roberts, staff

Very dependent, especially email through which I do most of my advising and correspondence. Since our students are non-resident, it has replaced hardcopy correspondence. Our office also changed to a new database program which enables us to record our advising conferences with students. Now all of our primary advising records are on computer.

—John Hull, staff

Put it this way: If we have a power failure I may as well go home.

—Regina Dorsey, staff

Personally I avoided computers but now, with the new copier technology, I had no choice but to concede to this computer technology or get a new job. This new computer technology allows me to do a more efficient job in less time with greater image quality but where do I find the time to keep up with all this great computer technology that is supposed to make my job easier?

—Vince Lu Visi, staff

I am totally dependent on my computer for my papers. Fuller has a wonderful computer lab but I get distracted in that type of environment.

—Greg Parker, student

Very, I rely on email, on-line calendaring, telephones, TV/VCR, cameras, stereos, automobiles, etc. every single day.

—Lucy Guernsey, staff

Work is extremely dependent on it in the bookstore. We are increasing our relatedness to technology and, though we are somewhat more advanced than our Christian colleagues, I’d say we lag behind our secular counterparts.

—Kim Gosney, staff

Perhaps “identity” is too strong, but technology certainly shapes my life. In particular, it has “forced” me to work at speeds that sometimes tax my comfort zone. In particular, email—which at first seemed an unqualified blessing—now comes with a student expectation that an email response from our office should be almost instantaneous (or at least come the same day!).

—John Hull, staff

If the electricity went out, would you be able to do your work and/or live your life without difficulty?

Of course, are you kidding? How do you think I lived in Bangladesh? Life goes on you know...

—Teresa Chai, staff

I lived most of my adult life without technology and feel I could do it again. I had my living quarters all set for Y2K and I am still prepared if an earthquake happens.

—Jeanne McKinney, staff

I would celebrate if the electricity went out! I often think of setting apart one day a week where I don’t answer the phone or turn on the computer, but then I remember how frustrated I am when people I deal with don’t check their phone messages or email...

—Laura K. Simmons, staff

Live my life? Yes! I made a deliberate decision about four years ago to have a “technology free” environ where I reside, and I am content if I need to go without electricity. Work? No! It is a hazard to have the bookstore open without our protection and security devices that require electricity. However, we can add, subtract, take cash, and write up a receipt without a calculator or register!

—Kim Gosney, staff

How does technology affect your identity and self-image?

Presently, I find that this great “gift” called computers gives me massive mental stress by which I find myself getting stuck...
A Theology of Technology

By Terry Larm

Have you seen the IBM commercial where the guy with the wearable computer shouts stock quotes amidst flighty pigeons in St. Mark's Square in Venice? Or the commercial where the woman buys a soda with her cell phone? The constant and ever-present evolution of technology, especially the Internet, has given this generation a powerful vision of advance, a worldview full of the future.

If you watched the Olympics you probably saw the above commercials. But did you know that human evolution is also on the minds of many people? I don’t mean natural selection. I mean using technology to advance the human species. There is a movement called transhumanism, there are web sites dedicated to Extropy, there is the idea that technology can be used to accelerate human evolution. And it’s not just an idea. There are people working on it.

Millions of people get on the Internet and enter multiple conversations. In those conversations they play many roles, many personas. Men pretend to be women. Shy people play extroverts. People practice being more assertive so that in the real world they can start to stand up to the pressures of work. Maybe the image of “playing” multiple roles isn’t right. They are multiple. Maybe these are all aspects of who they really are.

Did Jesus die for transhumans? Is the Trinity something like being a chat room conversationalist—presenting a different persona in different situations? The Internet is changing the way we think about being human, and the way we conceive of God. These are things theologians and the church are going to have to deal with; they are things we need to start dealing with now.

Terry Larm is a Ph. D. SOT candidate and the coordinator of Academic Computing. He has been working with computers and technology since 1981.
**Wising Up to Internet Hoaxes**

by Dan Simpson

If you use email, chances are that you have fallen prey to an email-spread hoax at least once. And most of us have been naive enough to forward a hoax to a billion of our friends! We get an urgent email message alerting us that poor little Johnny Smith is dying of cancer and the only way to save him is by forwarding this email to everyone we know. I am convinced that there is some electronic force field emanating from our computers that cause bright, intuitive, critical thinking individuals to lapse into gullible dupes.

However, the phenomenon of urban legends isn’t simply a product of our technological age. American folklorists started collecting “urban belief tales” in the 1940s, and the field blossomed in the 1960s as researchers began analyzing why these bizarre narratives were accepted as truths. By the 1980s urban legends were a major topic for folklore researchers.

Urban legends can travel by word of mouth or print, but the Internet has become a prime vehicle for their dissemination. Alligators are living in the sewers of New York City. Black-market organ thieves abduct business travelers and remove their kidneys in the middle of the night. The glue on ATM deposit envelopes is laced with cyanide. AIDS-infected needles are hidden in pay phone coin-return slots. And one of my favorites is the tale of the $250 Neiman Marcus chocolate chip cookie recipe.

Regardless of how they spread, urban legends and hoaxes share the same characteristics according to University of Utah professor Harold Brunvand in a recent study titled The Truth Never Stands in the Way of a Good Story! “The tales are always about ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances and acquire a persistent hold on the imagination with their bizarre elements of suspense.”

“Many urban legends are a reflection of current societal concerns or a search for excitement,” said Barbara Mikkelson, who with her husband David, runs www.snopes.com, a Web site that debunks urban legends. The couple has collected more than 1,000 urban legends, with less than one percent of the tales actually being true.

Such tales create nightmares and a lot of extra work for companies, law enforcement, government agencies, and health department officials. For example, the recent hoax over the Costa Rican bananas supposedly carrying “flesh-eating bacteria” created a tidal wave of queries to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “At the peak of the scare, we were getting 250 phone calls and about 500 emails per week,” said Dr. James Watt of the CDC.

So how can we curtail this madness? Try a healthy dose of skepticism says Dr. Jeff Stier of the American Council of Science and Health. I have been informally studying and combating the hoaxes and urban legends for about two years. My most practical advice is simply this: Don’t pass stuff on! Virtually every email that sounds an alarm about some problem and enjoins you to “forward this to everyone you know” is bogus. Just put a personal moratorium on trying to be the Good Samaritan in warning your friends about every scare that pops into your inbox. Just stop. It’s that simple.

If you do receive an email alert that you just can’t ignore, at least stop and think. Take some time to authenticate it. Is the original message signed by a real person with a phone number and address? If not, it’s probably bogus. Does it give you a phone number or Web address for more details? Think about it, if the information is not important enough to be featured on the Web site of a legitimate organization, how important or true could the warning be? If there is a legitimately serious computer virus going around, it will be a top news story at ABC.com, CBS.com, NBC.com, CNN.com, and so on. If it’s a legislative issue, what specific law-making body is reviewing it? If the warning simply says “Congress,” it’s probably false—it should specify the Senate or the House. Does the congressman actually exist? Probe around the Web site of the appropriate agency (see my bookmarks page for some helpful links: http://private.fuller.edu/~dsimpson/bookmarks/Government.html).

One of the most informative and authoritative Web sites for dispelling Internet farces is HoaxBusters (http://HoaxBusters.ciac.org/HoaxBustersHome.html), a service of the U.S. Department of Energy. They have organized the various kinds of hoaxes into eight categories: Malicious Code (Virus and Trojan ) Warnings, Urban Myths, Give Aways, Inconsequential Warnings, Sympathy Letters and Requests to Help Someone, Traditional Chain Letters, Threat Chains, and Scam Chains. The web site displays many real samples of hoaxes in each area and tells how to spot them.

*Hoaxed* continued on page 5
The Reality of Compassion

By Greg Parker

A few days ago I got an email from a friend who I used to work with. The email was brief and simply said that his mother had passed away a few days earlier. I have known that his mother was dying of breast cancer and have been praying for her and for my friend and his family. As soon as I read the email I jumped on the phone to see how he was doing. He answered the phone and I identified myself and told him that I was sorry. I asked him how he was doing and then waited. I knew that he was hurting, how could he not be. There was a long silence between us. Being me, I would usually fill that space with words, but I have come to realize that just being there and not distracting him from the pain or trying to say the right words was what I needed to do and, more importantly, what he needed from me. As we sat in silence I could hear him getting in touch with his pain and the walls he had erected to protect himself began to crumble. We ended up having a great conversation.

I would not have been as aware of what to do in this situation if I had not spent my summer walking the halls of the UCLA Medical Center as a hospital chaplain. I spent 11 weeks at UCLA doing my CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education, an internship required for ordination by certain denominations). At UCLA I dealt daily with death and dying, gunshot wounds to the head, strokes, head traumas, nurses, seizures, cancer, shunts, doctors, brain tumors, and other traumas. It was a long summer—but one that I would not trade for anything. The experiences that I had and the ministry that I had the opportunity to do while at the hospital not only helped those I was ministering to but also stretched and matured me in ways that I never expected.

Everyone that I have talked to who has done a CPE has struggled through parts or all of their time in the hospital, but would not trade the experience. There is something very real about working with people who are in a great deal of stress and being the one that brings in a peace that surpasses all understanding. Patients and family members are constantly asking questions as to why this is happening and what they did wrong to deserve this from God. I spent a lot of time walking alongside people who were hurting and confused as to why they—or a loved one—were the ones afflicted with whatever disease they were suffering from.

There is nothing so real as the ministry that you perform sitting by the bedside of a 74-year-old woman at 3 a.m. She is suffering from an inoperable brain tumor and a stroke and is wondering if she could have been a better person so as not to have to go through this. You know her story, and her faith, and you sit there holding her hand and letting her know that she is deeply loved by a God who does not inflict people with cancer because they were mean to someone 40 years ago but is a God who weeps with her and wishes to hold her in his loving arms.

Or the ministry of comfort you bring to a husband whose wife has just had a tumor removed from her frontal lobe and is not as quick mentally as she was before the operation. Or the support you can bring to a woman whose husband was out on his first mountain bike ride only to end up in a coma. Or the tears that you shed with a family who is waiting for their loved one to pass away in front of your eyes.

I know all of these stories seem harsh, and many of you are thinking that you could never sit there through them and you have no clue what you would say. Let me tell you that it is in those settings that you rely fully on God and surrender all of your head knowledge and just sit in the presence of those struggling and hurting and hurt with them. You bring a presence as a chaplain that others do not. And all of the theology that you have been taught here at Fuller is put to the test as you see how it is played out in the real world.

I have so many stories from this summer there is no way that I could ever tell all of them. If you would like to talk about what it is like to spend 40-50 hours a week at a hospital as a chaplain come and talk to me. We can grab a coffee and talk.

Even if you are not required to do a CPE, if I can make a suggestion, do one. It will change your life—it did mine. Yes, I watched people die and comforted families of those who passed but I also got to celebrate with those who walked out of the hospital never to return. What is truly amazing is that how I interact with people still today is changed because of my time at UCLA. I know myself better and can sit on the phone with a friend who is hurting and simply be a presence without worrying about what I will or should say. Most importantly, I got to bring Christ into difficult situations which, as we all know, can be life-changing.

Third-year M.Div. student Greg Parker is in the process of being ordained in the Presbyterian church. He is continuing his relationship with UCLA by volunteering as an on-call chaplain once a month.
I can also contact people around the world via email! The latter though is a sad thing in this postmodern world where we can miss direct face-to-face, eyeball-to-eyeball people contact. Admittedly, I spend more time in front of my computer than I do with my God. To counter this, I can only say that God still speaks to me, even in front of my computer!

—Teresa Chai, student

I have to say that it does allow me to be in contact with a number of people that I would not be in touch with if we did not have email.

—Greg Parker, student

Doing email every morning is like an addiction. I hate the unsolicited stuff that people send me. Please stop sending me these well-meaning jokes and all sorts of news about disasters in the world that make me feel guilty.

—Dean Gilliland, faculty

Doing things on computer feeds into my perfectionistic bent—what would have been a half-hour job ends up taking more time to make it look better and better. Also, I suspect email actually takes quite a bit more of my time. Yesterday I received 29 emails and my "snail mail" seems to not have diminished.... I feel like I am drowning in communication.

—Betty Sue Brewster, faculty

Do you see a theology of technology?

Technology usually means speed so we have to be reminded to listen for that still, small voice that says, “Be still and know that I AM God!”

—Jeanne McKinney, staff

I can’t see separating out technology as a theological discipline any more than having a theology of cultivating yogurt cultures. It is the character of the person interacting with the “thing” that makes it profane or redemptive or neutral.

—Kim Gosney, staff

Definitely. What values does it assume? What values does it promote or hinder? All theological questions worth exploring.

—John Hull, staff

In what ways is technology good? In what ways is it not so good?

Things are quicker, the world is more connected, and routine activities are streamlined...along with it comes higher expectations, and with the expectations comes more stress when something doesn’t go quite as quickly or smoothly as planned.

—Heather Reed, staff

People stay up around the clock to work on papers, check their email, and chat with some guy or girl on the other side of the world. It’s not so good because now people are spending more time on their backside and getting less exercise and sleep.

—Regina Dorsey, staff

Technology has brought us to a faster, cleaner, quieter, environment for sure. Email, voicemail, Internet, intranet. PDF files downloaded directly to a high-speed digital printer and “poof” multiple, two-sided copies, collated and stapled, in minutes without leaving your office.

—Rick Steiner, staff

Technology can increase the already widening chasm between rich and poor, allowing the rich to get richer while the poor are further alienated.... The money we spend on computers and software could be used to help others. Also we may model a style of ministry that is not practical nor feasible for much of the world—the use of overheads, PowerPoint, email, computers, etc. What are we communicating by this? Does the technology get in the way of relationships?

—Betty Sue Brewster, faculty

Sometimes a blessing, sometimes a curse, technology can make your life better while at the same time making it worse. I have no clear-cut right and wrong answers but rather a great closing thought from Teresa Chai: “In one word—moderation! Use technology, do not let technology rule us!”

The following awards are now available:

1. Northern Baptist Grant deadline is October 27. Applicants must be American Baptist students enrolled in the MDiv program and whose home states are Mass., Maine, Vermont, or New Hampshire. Awards averaged $600/quarter last year.

2. Grace Foundation Scholarships deadline is October 31. Application criteria are as follows:
   a) must be from China or Southeast Asian country with preference given to those planning to return to minister there
   b) at least 3.0 GPA and at least 500 on TOEFL
   c) Have financial need
   d) Have completed at least one year at an accredited four-year college or university.


Check your current status through Campus Pipeline or call 584-5421.
CAMPUS EVENTS

CPE Day
Tues, Oct 17
11 a.m. – 1 p.m., Payton 101
A panel of students who have recently completed their clinical pastoral education (CPE) internship in hospital chaplaincy will describe their experience. Area supervisors will be on hand as well to explain the CPE program and to tell you about their sites.

Children’s Art Day/Contest
Tuesday, October 17
5-7 p.m. at Madison House
ResCom and the Development Office are running an art contest for ALL AGES of children of Fuller students. The best 12 drawings on the theme “What God is to you” will be featured in a calendar. Supplies will be provided. To enter the contest or for details and/or registration, contact the Rescom Office at 577-6742 or the Development Office at 584-5490.

Ministry Enrichment Seminar
Thurs, Oct 19, 3-6 p.m. Payton 101
Rev. Michael Cocoris, Certified Funds Specialist, will present "Mastering Money Matters for Ministers". Rev. Cocoris will address the special challenges pastors face in handling money wisely including how to set and reach financial goals, how to save and budget money, and how to get out and stay out of debt. Co-sponsored by American Baptist Theological Center & Field Education.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

"All Wigged Out and Nowhere to Blow"
Wednesday, October 18
Koinonia Community Life Center, 7-9 p.m.
With communication tools and strategies, you can turn stressful periods into very productive times. Come and learn how to "talk through" stressful transitions and actually use these periods to your benefit. For more info, call Susanne at 792-4464.

Harvest Festival
Friday, October 27
5:30-8:30 p.m. Campus Mall
This annual family event features game booths, rides, food, and costumes. Mark your calendars for Fuller’s celebration of the fall! Watch the SEMI for more details or call Heather at 584-5860.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

All-Seminary Worship Jam Session
Every Wednesday from 5-6:30 p.m. in Payton 101. Bring yourself, your instrument of choice, and your music—and join fellow music lovers. Sponsored by the Chapel Office. Call Kristina Lee at 584-5560 for more information.

Parenting Support
Fridays from 4-5 p.m. at Koinonia Community Life Center there will be a parents’ forum. There will be a brief presentation, discussion and prayer on topics such as discipline, managing family transitions at seminary, and child development. Your kids can participate in the Kids Club during this time. For details and registration, contact Katie at 584-5464.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Coordinator of the Career Resources Center
Update and maintain career development materials and job listings in the Center. This position also assists the associate director of Career Services in planning and implementing various seminars and workshops for students and alumni/ae of all three schools. For more information, contact Amgad Beblawi at 584-5665.

Fundraising Positions
Join a great team and earn extra money! The Office of Development is seeking callers for the Fall 2000 Phonathon (Nov 6-16) to help raise money for grant-in-aid and other Fuller Fund needs. $8.50/hour. We’ll be calling Monday-Thursday, 5:00-9:00 p.m. and we’d like you to work 2-4 nights per week. Paid training provided. Come to Human Resources (next to Amy’s) for an application or contact Barbara Clavo in the Office of Development at 584-5490.

Immediate Job Opening
The International Student Services Office has two opportunities for flexible part-time work serving new and returning international students. These positions must be filled ASAP. For more information, please contact Brenda at 584-5394.

The Campus Chaplains are Here for You!
The Campus Chaplains will be available for prayer support after Chapels and Tuesdays@10. They can also be reached at the Chaplains office (next to OSS). They are here for you! 584-5322

“Making Space for God.”
10-10:45 each Tuesday in the Catalyst for singing, meditation, and prayer. All welcome.
The Campus Chaplains will be available for prayer support following each service.
This section of the SEMI is for the announcement of events or services not directly offered by a Fuller office or organization. For information about rates, contact the SEMI at 584-5430. Note: Individuals are personally responsible for checking on the quality and type of service before contracting or using it. The SEMI and Office of Student Services do not recommend or guarantee any of the services listed.

SERVICES

Group Therapy Sessions Announcing two therapy groups facilitated by Sam Alibrando, Ph.D. 1. Helping Professionals Therapy Group for mental health professionals and pastoral counselors; and, 2. Sex Addiction Recovery Group. For information call 577-8303.


Queenie’s Salon Haircut specials for men $ 10 and for women $15, and 10% off all other services. Located at 1644 E. Walnut Street at Sierra Bonita. Call 796-6484 for an appointment or just walk in.

Mountain Retreat Beautiful country-style cabin, 2 bedrooms, sleeps 6 to 8, located in the Big Bear area, available to the Fuller community. Rates: $125 per weekend, $295 per week, $45 weekdays. Call John Hull (D. Min. office), 584-5312.


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Loving God,
Loving Our Neighbor
The Fall Day of Prayer
is just around the corner.

Come and participate on
Oct. 18 from 10 - 1:00
Payton 101
A simple lunch will be served.
Join us for a contemplative
time of prayer.
Offices closed and classes cancelled.