

## **Foreword**

Information technology has presented the educational establishment with a number of perplexing problems. To date most problems have been related to ways of effectively using these new tools to improve instructional delivery. Without a doubt there is still much work to be done in planning for the effective integration of digital technologies in the classroom. Faculty need much skill training and conceptual work in how technology will be used. Yet, as with any innovation making substantial demands for change in the order of things, issues relating to doing the “right thing” versus doing “things right” have started to emerge. As information digital technologies have matured, gained acceptance, and become an integral part of our lives at least seven fields of inquiry have emerged. These form the basis of discussion for some of the questions of this issue of *Educational Considerations*. No one would be so presumptuous to assume that one short piece on each topic would be sufficient to provide a definitive answer to the perplexing questions presented by information technologies. The authors, who have so graciously agreed to write for this edition, have set out to establish a framework that allows others to contribute and eventually provide meaningful responses to these complex issues involved.

If it seems fair to define at least seven grand fields of discussion that address social and ethical implications of information technologies to education, they might be: access, credibility, speech, privacy, commercialism, intellectual property and crime. This issue of *Educational Considerations* begins a discussion on these broad issues and glimpses at the questions and their resolution for the exciting times ahead. No one article in this issue fits neatly into a single portion of this “grand scheme.” They should not, as these general fields of inquiry overlap. However, it might make sense to view the general thrust of each article as though it did fit into one of these fields simply to situate them within the overall discussion. For that reason I have chosen to view the authors’ contributions to this discussion based upon their expertise in their fields as if their articles were devoted exclusively to the topic even though they do not- indeed, cannot- do so.

- Access: Denise Dalamio: Promise or Peril? Electronic Technologies, Equity and Marginalized Students
- Commercialization: W. Franklin Spikes: Some Questions about Distance Learning and the Role of the University.
- Credibility: Gerald D. Bailey and David Pownell: Information Literacy and the Internet: Transforming the Practice of Teaching and Corresponding Ethical Consequences.
- Access: Ann Knackendoffel: Linking Collaborating Special Education Teachers.
- Intellectual Property: Linda Thurston: Collaboration and Conflict: Multi-Disciplinary Teams and Developing Multimedia for Pre-service and In-service Education
- Intellectual Property: Edward L. Meyen: Online Instruction as a Pedagogy: Implications for Higher Education Policy.
- Privacy: Tweed Ross: Privacy, Information Technology and the Educational Process.
- Credibility: Daniel Harden: The Great Stereopticon Revisited.

I wish to thank several people for their assistance in creating this issue of *Educational Considerations*. First, David Thompson, Chair, Educational Administration and Leadership, Kansas State University deserves the thanks of all for inviting us to participate in this project and his ongoing efforts to ensure this forum for educational discussion continues its illustrious agenda. Second, I wish to thank each of the authors for agreeing to contribute to this issue and opening for consideration these broad questions about the social and ethical implications of educational technology. As with any new innovation, attempting to predict and define future ethical and social implications is only done with considerable courage and trepidation. Our thanks must go out to these authors for embarking on such a perilous academic journey.

**- Tweed W. Ross, Guest Editor**  
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