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Digital Divide



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Author

Message

eer3@duke.edu
Guest

Posted: Tue Apr 06, 2004 11:02 pm Post subject: Digital Divide



Names:

- Hillary Lewis
- Cesar Aranguri
- Lillie Ris

The Digital Divide refers to the gap between those individuals and communities with technological access and those without this fundamental asset. More specifically, the divide refers to a separation between individuals with Internet access and those without this ability. In the United States, while 51% of all homes have a computer, only 41.5% have Internet access, and as the Internet has become increasingly important as a means of communication and economic advancement, a lack of access to this technology exacerbates the pre-existing social and economic divisions between low-income and high income communities. A U.S. Department of Commerce study in the fall of 2000 found that while 86.3% of all households earning \$75,000 and above per year had Internet access, only 12.7% of households earning less than 15,000 per year had Internet access. In order to bridge this gap, the government must enact initiatives to subsidize access to poorer communities and implement cheap yet effective technologies to enable such areas to become connected to the rest of the world. These innovations are necessary to provide Americans with the fundamental right of communication which has been affirmed by the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

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Against Government Subsidization



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Author

Message

jdo
Guest

Posted: Wed Apr 07, 2004 1:50 pm Post subject: Against Government Subsidization



Group Members:
Josh Owen (jdo)
Amanda Wheeler (acw13)

Position: Against Government Subsidization

Point: While the digital divide exists, it is a symptom rather than a cause of racial and economic disenfranchisement. Given that the government has finite funds with which to fight this disenfranchisement, we feel that the money is better spent on root causes like education. While computers and internet access are useful education tools, they are often seen as sufficient in and of themselves. This is not true. Given the limited funds, it is more important for the government to buy up to date textbooks and to hire qualified teachers than to put computers in classrooms and homes. by combatting root causes of the inequality, the government can bridge the gap more efficiently than by putting computers in the homes and schools of people who aren't always sure where their next meal is coming from.

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Against Digital Divide



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Author

Message

gm18, skg7
Guest

Posted: Tue Apr 06, 2004 11:50 pm Post subject: Against Digital Divide



Gisselle Molinar (gm18)
Sarah Goor (skg7)

Position: Against Digital Divide

Many have defined digital divide as being the gap that has developed between those that have access and knowledge of how to use a computer and/or the Internet and those that do not. But it's not that simple. The digital divide concept is not a "bipolar societal split." Instead it is a gradation based upon the access one has to such technology (i.e. computers and/or the Internet). Being this the case, we are of the position that the public should not subsidize computer and/or Internet access for underserved areas and communities. If we define subsidize as making computers further available than public libraries and public schools, then computers and/or internet access should not be subsidized for any area or community be it underserved or not. The first premise being that computer and/or Internet access is a privilege, not a right. Access to the information provided via computers can easily be obtained from a public library amongst other resources. Computers themselves as well as the internet may be found within public libraries, universities, schools, and/or jobs, thus one is not truly deprived of them. It is evident that people with a larger amount of money have a greater degree of access to computers and vice versa. However, having a higher social standing does clearly gives one access to other such "gadgets" that make life easier. One cannot say that computers and/or Internet access are a basic human necessity and without them one would die. Furthermore, as new technologies become available (i.e. faster computers, larger memories etc.), and computer and/or Internet access becomes further wide spread, the prices for computers is expected to go down. Hence, there is no need to subsidize as of right now.

References:

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For Bridging the Digital Divide

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Author

Message

ess18 and dzh2
Guest

Posted: Tue Apr 06, 2004 11:47 pm Post subject: For Bridging the Digital Divide [quote](#) [edit](#) [x](#) [ip](#)

Names –

Evan Sherman (ess18)
Dulcinea Hanuschak (dzh2)

Position –

Supporting legislation to bridge the digital divide

Argument –

The digital divide must be bridged for the sake of educating America's youth. Education is a high national priority in the United States. Due primarily to increased technologies, educational strategies have (necessarily) changed dramatically. Previous generations of students were taught based on the assumption that the best way to prepare them for future careers was to compel them to acquire as much factual knowledge possible. In today's world, however, where bodies of knowledge are increasing exponentially, education should be primarily focused on developing intellectual strategies: methods of acquiring knowledge quickly and applying it, as well as flexibility of thought. Access to technology is an integral part of this principle, and providing computers and internet access in the classroom will prove vital to the education of the current generation as well as future ones.

Related Source –

PBS's Series of the Digital Divide:
<http://www.pbs.org/digitaldivide/>
<http://www.pbs.org/digitaldivide/class-main.html>

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No government subsidy



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Author

Message

ddp and cf15
Guest

Posted: Wed Apr 07, 2004 10:48 am Post subject: No government subsidy



CPS 1
Dave Preston(ddp)
Chris Freiman(cf15)
Position Posting

Position: Our position is strongly against any government subsidy of digital access.

Point: The Internet and digital access in general is a privilege and therefore should NOT be subsidized by the government.

In the last 15 or so years have digital access has become more and more commonplace. People have become accustomed to using the Internet every day for work, for information at home, as well as for entertainment. It has become an extremely valuable and timesaving tool, though it is not crucial to surviving in our society. The Internet and other digital tools are just that, tools. They save time, connect people more quickly, and transfer massive amounts of information all over the world. But in the final analysis, the Internet is nothing more than a time-saver. There is no information on the Internet that cannot be found somewhere else, such as a library. The proof of this is that there are millions of people without digital access are able to function perfectly well in society. They communicate with others via mail, telephone, telegram, or other means and are not in any way unable to function. The fact is that 15 years ago nobody had digital access and everyone was able to prosper in our economy, provided they worked hard. If all of this is true than the Internet is nothing more than a tool to make communication and information-gathering easier and should absolutely not be subsidized by the government. The government should subsidize universal health care before they try to subsidize each person's America Online screen name.

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Support Subsidizing Computers and Internet Access



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Author

Message

kbh4 tee
Guest

Posted: Wed Apr 07, 2004 8:54 am Post subject: Support Subsidizing Computers and Internet Access



Position: The public should subsidize computer and Internet access for underserved areas and communities.

Argument:

A digital divide exists in America. Many people in the United States are uneducated and computers equipped with Internet access can provide a proper education. Besides providing educational information, computers with Internet access teach job skills that are necessary in order to find employment today. Therefore, if we subsidize computers and Internet access for underserved areas and communities, we will improve the United States economy because it will improve the quality of the work force.

Underserved:

"We concentrate on groups who are "underserved" today in terms of access to computers and the Internet, including Americans who have low incomes, live in rural communities, have limited education, and are members of racial or ethnic minorities. Low-income is defined as having an annual family income of less than \$14,150 for a family of three, the level used by the federal government to define poverty."

Reference:

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