

Abstract

Madeleine Mercedes Plasencia

Telecommunications in the Twenty-First Century: Global Perspectives on Community and Diaspora Among Net Citizens

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Abstract by Lauren T. Farber

In her article, *Telecommunications in the Twenty-First Century: Global Perspectives on Community and Diaspora Among Net Citizens*, Plasencia discusses the existence of a global gap with respect to Internet usage and access. The article begins with an examination of the “digital divide” based on race, describing an information apartheid whereby Internet access decreases in minority communities.

The author also points out discrepancies based on income. While middle-class families are purchasing the newest technologies, low-income households may not even have access to antiquated technological tools. Plasencia blames telephone and cable companies for giving insufficient attention to lower class neighborhoods. This, in turn, affects the business growth and job availability in these communities and for community members. Plasencia states that no attempt to spread information in low-income areas will succeed unless the effort is tied to the community’s own goals and needs. She recommends pre-school and after-school programming, along with other community initiatives designed to create an environment conducive to promoting technological awareness and education.

The author next examines Internet service on a worldwide scale, stating that it is crucial to attain global access to the Internet for a number of reasons. Plasencia contends that the future international trade market lies in the Internet and bringing developing countries into the global communities will enhance international competition. Moreover, Plasencia designates the Internet as the “Third Industrial Revolution” and claims that the situation of third-world countries will only deteriorate if they are left out of it. The author concludes by arguing for a fully “networked global economy” that will improve international trade with developing countries and remove the geographic constraints on economic advancement.