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Preface

ICCAL, the International Conference on Computers and Learning, is a forum for the exchange of ideas and presentation of developments in the theory and practice of computer uses in education; its focus is post-secondary education. ICCAL '92 is being held at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada, June 17-20, 1992.

ICCAL '92 is the fourth in a series of International Conferences on Computers and Learning. The previous ones were held in Hagen (Germany 1990), Dallas (USA 1989), and Calgary (Canada 1987). Due to ICCAL's success, future meetings will be held annually and enlarged in scope. The next one will be in Orlando, Florida, in June 1993 under the name ED-MEDIA-World Conference on Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia; it will be sponsored by the Association for Advancement of Computers in Education. Further information about ED-Media is available from Dr. Hermann Maurer, IIG, Schießstadtgasse 4a, A-8010 Graz, Austria, fax number: (0043 316) 82 5394, or e-mail address: hmaurer@iicm.tu-graz.ac.at

ICCAL '92 whose proceedings are presented in this volume, features forty-five submitted and six invited papers. Another twenty-nine short papers are included in the supplementary proceedings (not included in this volume). We thank the authors of all submissions for their contributions.

Papers were selected from one hundred submissions by the following program committee: I. Benest (UK), M. Brown (USA), P. Carlson (USA), S. Cerri (Italy), B. Clark (Canada), N. Coulter (USA), G. Davies (UK), M. DeBlasi (Italy), N. Gardner (UK), A. Derycke (France), J. Hammond (Australia), F. Hill (USA), D. Jonassen (USA), E. Luque (Spain), G. Kovacs (Hungary), R. Hartog (Netherlands), H. Hamburger (USA), F. Makedon (USA), H. Maurer (Austria), G. McCalla (Canada), R. Mizguchi (Japan), A. Montgomery (Australia), D. Norrie (Canada), M. Mulhauser (Germany), G. Oberem (South Africa), Th. Ottmann (Germany), D. Paramskas (Canada), M. Petruk (Canada), C. Prescott (Thailand), B. Shneiderman (USA), I. Tomek (Canada), S. Wills (Australia), C. Unger (Germany), B. Woolf (USA), M. Yazdani (UK). We thank them all for the careful reading of their share of the numerous submissions and for adherence to the short deadlines.

Much appreciated are also the contributions of the steering committee consisting of H. Maurer (Austria), D. Norrie (Canada), F. Makedon (USA), and Th. Ottmann (Germany), and the advisory board whose members are D. Bitzer (USA), A. Bork (USA), W. Clark (Canada), G. Davies (UK), K. Friend (USA), H. Six (Germany), G. Kovacs (Hungary), W. Srisa-an (Thailand). Special thanks go to Dr. Hermann Maurer, the indefatigable spirit of the conference.

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Wolfville, April 1992 Ivan Tomek

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Why Hypermedia Systems are Important*

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Abstract

In this paper we argue that the original vision of hypertext-pioneers in North America and Europe (yes, Europe also has had its hypertext visionaires!) that a non-linear widely distributed corpus of information accessible "everywhere by everyone" is still very much alive and becoming more and more a reality, even if some of the glamour has been stolen by stand-alone developments as started by Hypercard. We further contend that the advent of computer supported multi-media systems does provide not just acute alternative to present information but an enrichment of our sensory and communicative possibilities that will impact society in a major way. We finally conclude that the merging of large wide-spread hypertext systems with computer supported multimedia technology into powerful hypermedia systems will indeed provide a new kind of infrastructure for working, communicating, and thinking whose influence on how mankind will live, work, teach, and learn could be quite dazzling.

*The support of my hypermedia work by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Science and Research is gratefully acknowledged.