The

SimTeach

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The Who, Where, When and How of Second Life *as a teaching tool in 2006*

PEOPLE   **LOCATIONS**   **EVENTS**   **TOOLS**

With undergrads already dedicating a lot of their online time to chatting with friends or gaming, instructors are discovering that their pupils are ideal guinea pigs for a new frontier in learning online. - Boston Phoenix

They may be college teachers and students, but they're also pioneers — exploring strange new worlds that exist nowhere on Earth. That's because their classes and field trips take place only on computers, using an online digital world called Second Life*. - USAToday*

Using Second Life *as a supplement to traditional classroom environments also provides new opportunities for enriching an existing curriculum. - secondlife.com*

Compiled by Jeremy W. Kemp, MEd, MSJ, December 29, 2006. www.simteach.com

International Spaceflight Museum

secondlife://Spaceport%20Alpha

The ISM is easily the most breathtaking collection of objects, buildings and events in the *Second Life* education galaxy.

"The International Spaceflight Museum... hosts exhibits and events about real-world spacecraft, rockets, and space travel. The museum is located on the island sim Spaceport Alpha.

The organization that manages and develops the museum is the Spaceflight Museum Planning Group, a group of Second Life *residents from around the world who share an interest in spaceflight."*

‑ slispaceflightmuseum.org

Images by Jeremy Kemp

LLHttpRequest

Linden Scripting Language Command

LSL Wiki : llHTTPRequest
HomePage :: PageIndex :: RecentChanges :: RecentlyCommented :: UserSettings

```
key llHTTPRequest(string url, list parameters, string body)
```

Sends HTTP request to url with the specified body and parametere.

url must always be a valid HTTP or HTTPS URL, pointing to a location outside the

parameters is a list of <integer key, string value> pairs:

parameter	Value	Default	
HTTP_METHOD	0	"GET"	"GET", "POST", "PUT" a
HTTP_MIMETYPE	1	"text/plain;charset=utf-8"	text/* MIME types shc you to set the body to var=value&var2=value2

Linden Lab introduced this stunning tool in July, 2006. The command allows scripted objects in *Second Life* to request and deliver information stored in databases on the Web. Passing data out to the Web (and back) is unique in the history of immersive environment plat-forms. Other systems including *Multi-verse, There* and *Half Life* fall far behind the SL platform because content is pre-cooked for a learner and quickly used up.

The oft-recited "*Second Life* as the new 3D Web" is a little off target. With LLHttpRequest, SL becomes a 3D skin *over the existing Web.*

SL now integrates readily with web-based learning content. The breadth of teaching applications possible with 3D representations is breathtaking. Formula for success: Find a database of learning content, decide on an appropriate 3D metaphor, use LLHttpRequest to synch Web data with an in-world manipulable.

Though VRML was ostensibly meant to work seamlessly with the Internet, it never gained traction with developers. SL is taking the opposite route: The Linden scripter community is already in place and ready to open the door to Web applications.
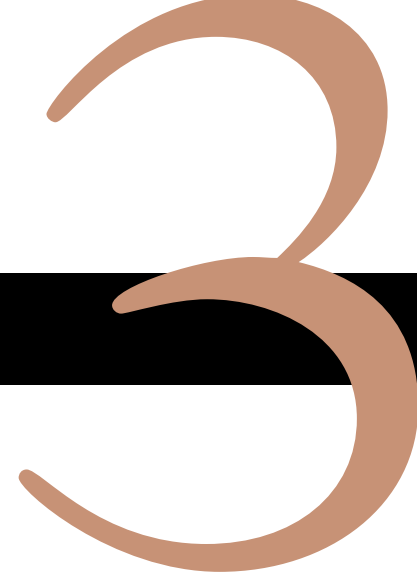
John D. Bransford's L.I.F.E. Lecture

Monday, October 2, 2006 from noon to 1:30pm Pacific Time

Images by Jeremy Kemp

Over 80 avatars gathered to hear about cutting-edge research in *Second Life*. A noted education researcher from the University of Washington runs subjects through a series of simple mazes to study communication and teamwork in collaborative learning settings.

Keywords:
Cumulativity
Transfer
Collective inquiry
Distributed and adaptive expertise
The innovation dichotomy

"Dr. John Bransford, prominent education psychology researcher and editor of the book How People Learn*, gave his first presentation in the popular virtual world of* Second Life*. Dr. Bransford is the director of The Learning in Informal and Formal Environments (LIFE) Center, a National Science Foundation (NSF) Science of Learning Center. He presented his latest thoughts on different ways that virtual environment can help people learn and possibly reorganize our educational system."*

- life-slc.org

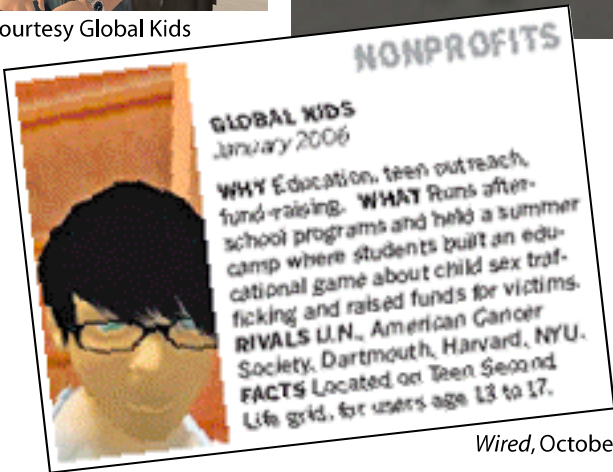# Global Kids Island

On the Teen Grid

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Managed from the New York offices of Global Kids, Barry Joseph's Teen Grid juggernaut set the pace of expansion for educators serving the younger set in *Second Life*.

"Teen Second Life is a space restricted to 13-17 year olds. Beginning in February, 2006, Global Kids has been exploring how to bring a youth development model around global issues into an island within this teen grid."
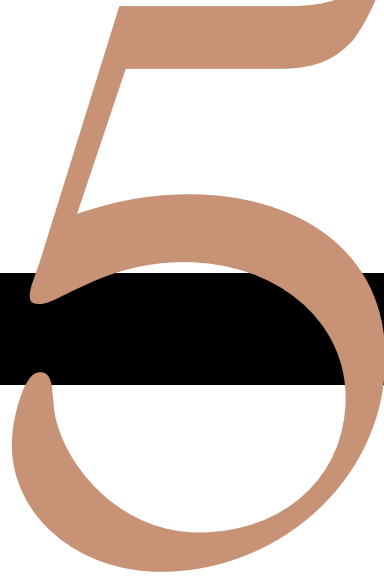   - holymeatballs.org
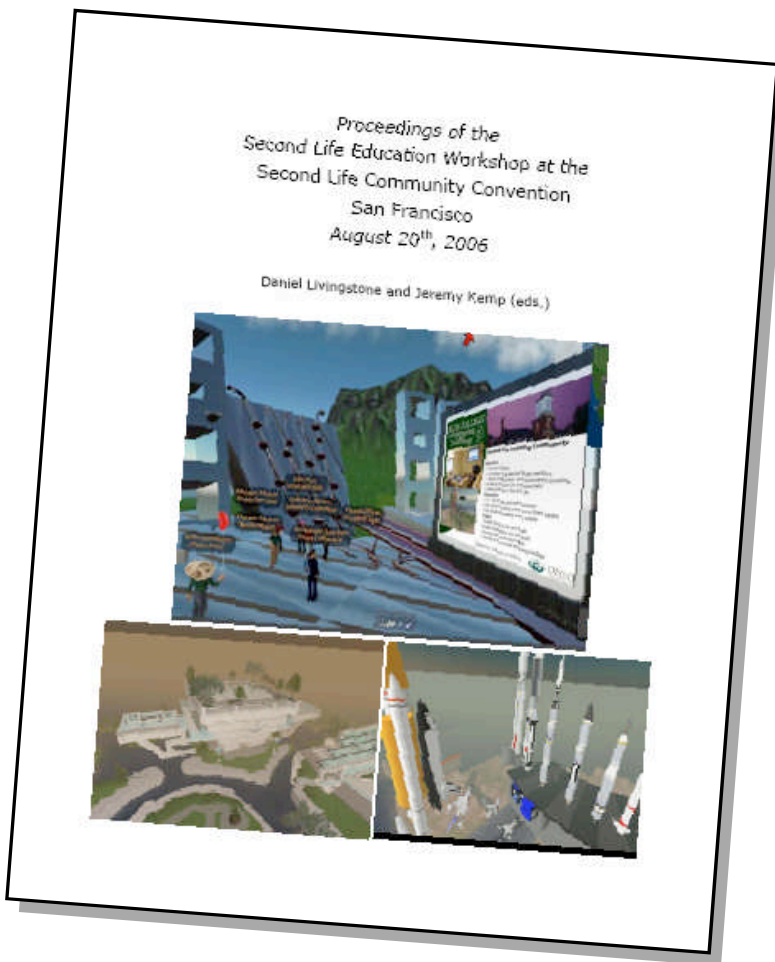

Images courtesy Global Kids

NONPROFITS

GLOBAL KIDS
January 2006

WHY Education, teen outreach, fund-raising. **WHAT** Runs after-school programs and held a summer camp where students built an educational game about child sex trafficking and raised funds for victims. **RIVALS** U.N., American Cancer Society, Dartmouth, Harvard, NYU. **FACTS** Located on Teen Second Life grid, for users age 13 to 17.

Wired, October, 2006

Global Kids

Educator's Workshop at SLCC '06

Sunday, August 20, 2006

**Proceedings of the
Second Life Education Workshop at the
Second Life Community Convention
San Francisco
August 20th, 2006**

Daniel Livingstone and Jeremy Kemp (eds.)

Daniel Livingstone of Paisley University in Scotland chaired the event and edited the proceedings: simteach.com/SLCC06

Second Life Community Convention 2006 organizers reported that the Sunday session for educators was the best attended of member-organized events.

Larry Johnson with New Media Consortium keynoted "Down the Rabbit Hole… or how the NMC took the red pill and got a *Second Life*."

**Catherine Cochrane** spoke on the International Spaceflight Museum.

Lori Feldman talked about New York's Global Kids working on the teen grid.

Chang Liu, with Ohio U., described a program with strong faculty buy-in.

Eric J. Hackathorn, with NOAA, showed his work-in-progress for a science exhibit.

Paul Doherty & Rob Rothfarb, of The Exploratorium, demoed exhibits.

Sarah Robbins' avatar chatted from Ball State U. about identity development.

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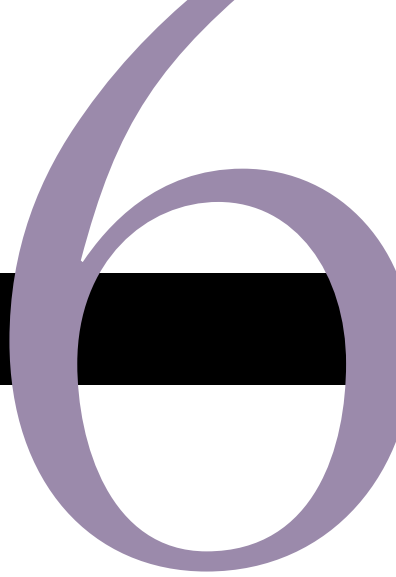
Aimee Weber

Principal, Aimee Weber Studio
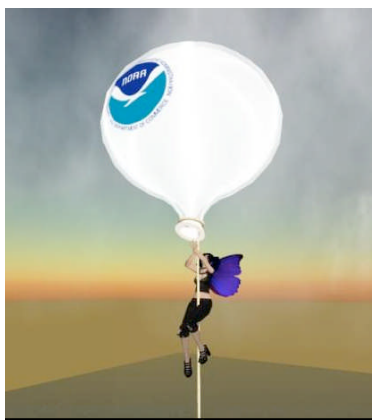

Images courtesy aimeeweber.com

Weber is undeniably *Second Life*'s grand artisan of architecture and learning installations. Weber is also the pixel poster child for Cinderella success stories in the metaverse -- a goofy-girl-next-door turned *Business Week*'s "most popular."

Her solar system exhibits built for The Exploratorium in San Francisco offer proof of her talent translating learning concepts into 3D lessons.

While best known for her architecture (see the Globe theatre build and Preen fashion store), she works in costuming for Play2Train's first responder training. And her skills are on display full-force with the NOAA tsunami and weather balloon exhibits.

See also the 1000-prim build of Saturn's rings in her stunning tour of the solar system machinima.

NMC Impact of Digital Media Symposium

October 10 - 21, 2006

"The New Media Consortium hosted a 12-day symposium on the NMC Campus in Second Life *focusing on the impact of digital media on all aspects of our daily lives.*

The Symposium on the Impact of Digital Media explored the ways we encounter and understand digital media -- inside such a setting.

This virtual symposium was informed by the MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning.

This unique event brought that dialog to the current residents of Second Life*. The symposium was also a precursor to the NMC Online Conference on Digital Media (October 24-25), which reflected some of the same themes."*
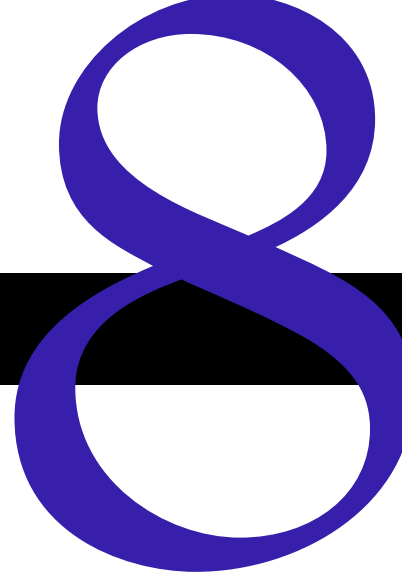
- nmc.org/campus

Avatars pictured (left to right)
  Terry Beaubois (Montana State University)
  Aline Click (Northern Illinois University)
  Josephine Dorado (Kids Connect)
  Sarah "Intellagirl" Robbins (Ball State University)
  Sharon Tettegah (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

Photos courtesy New Media Consortium

Info Island

secondlife://Info%20Island

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Officially launched by Alliance Library Systems on October 12-14, 2006, the Info Island "archipelago" is flourishing under the gentle supervision of Lori Bell. Beside the well-known Second Life Library, the group of six islands keeps land for non-profits, consumer medicine and an island with rentable campus space.

The SL Library now features branches in Science Fiction, Mystery, History, Computer Science and a presence on the Teen Grid. And be sure to visit Ross Perkins' ICT Library with the most exhaustive collection of gadgets and gizmos for new teachers in *Second Life*.

But perhaps most interesting is the growing collection of web-enabled information appliances island residents are tinkering with. Check out the Science Library and "Search Central" for interactive applications including a "Library Heads Up Display."

"Visitors will be able to search within Second Life *by speaking their search for google, Wikipedia, or OCLC Open World Cat where they can see where books are located all over the world."*

Images by Jeremy Kemp

- infoisland.org

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Larry F. Johnson

Chief Executive Officer, New Media Consortium

Images courtesy New Media Consortium

Image by Jeremy Kemp

Hundreds of the country's most prestigious universities look to Johnson's organization for advice on learning technology trends - making him the best positioned evangelist in our community, Along with **Alan Levine**, the NMC crew are prolific event planners, bloggers and podcasters.

Johnson presented the keynote address for the 2006 *Second Life* Community Conference educators workshop. He titled it ""Seriously Engaging: The Story of the NMC's Virtual Campus in Second Life."

His Consortium is slated to expand from seven islands in *SL* to a massive archipelago of more than 30 in 2007.

"In early 2006, Johnson conceived and implemented the NMC's experimental campus in the virtual world of Second Life. He serves on a number of boards, including the... virtual International Space Museum..."

- Wikipedia.com

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Reporters on the .edu Beat

It is safe to say that the mainstream press has made life much easier for educators using *Second Life* as a teaching tool. These reporters lent legitimacy to our work by taking the time to dig a little deeper - past the seedy side and into the high-minded corridors of SL's campuses, workshops and installations.

Kate Cohen, *Boston Phoenix*
"Right-click to learn: *Second Life* offers students a virtually real education" - August 17.

Jeff Howe, *Wired*
"Travel Guide: Second Life" - October 2006.
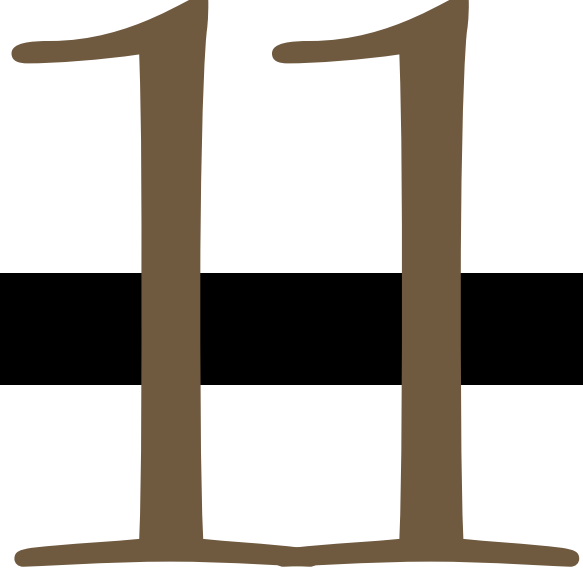
Reena Jana, *Business Week*
Aili McConnon, *Business Week*
"*Second Life* Lessons" - November 27.

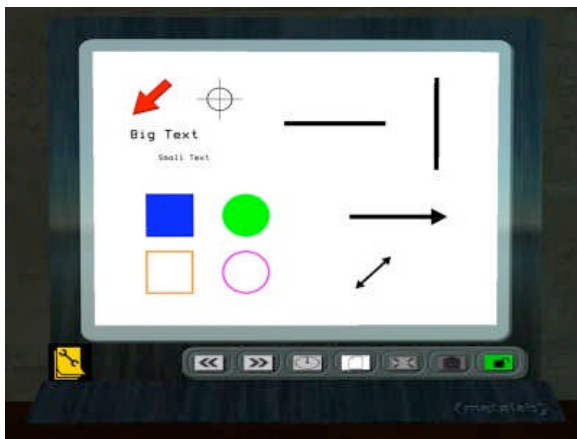**Gregory Lamb**, *The Christian Science Monitor*
"Real learning in a virtual world" - October 5.

Angrybeth's Whiteboard

Annabeth Robinson's scripted image presenter

Images courtesy angrybethshortbread.blogspot.com

Progressive educators have long bemoaned the over use of Powerpoint in lecture halls. But in a *Second Life* class-room environment, image files are often the *only* resource the faculty member has time to share. 3D models are not easily rendered so pictures do the job.

This whiteboard is best in its class and a great bargain at... free! It combines easy-to-use slideshow controls with primitive drawing tools and a simple security system. And the one touch swivel control cover is very slick.

"The main ideas behind its design - are to have a slideshow presenter, that anyone can add or remove pictures from, plus a range of overlay tools that can be used to annotate or point to areas of interest within an image. These overlay tools can also be used to create simple mindmaps or visual polling events."
                                    - metalab.blogspot.com

"Annabeth is a multi-media artist and lecturer, based in England. Her focus is moving image and online technologies."
                                    - annamorphic.co.uk

The Lindens

Robin, Claudia, Pathfinder, Joe

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Business card art courtesy Linden Lab

The buzz for educators in *Second Life* is expertly nourished by Linden Lab's community team. Several key players at corporate have education publishing and consulting positions on their resumes.

Community VP **Robin Harper** was senior marketer at Ninth House, an early-stage e-Learning network.

Claudia L'Amoreaux founded the edge-ucation.com consultancy on global distributed learning environments.

John Lester (Pathfinder Linden) pioneered the use of web-based support communities in 1993 and later held an academic appointment at Harvard Med.

Platform VP **Joe Miller** led Knowledge Universe Interactive Studio and MindQ Publishing and developed curriculum for the PLATO educational network.

PEOPLE

Going Global - Educators arrive in force from Europe, Asia (Japan, South Korea, China), and the UK.

"You" - Sites like YouTube and MySpace send folksonomy tendrils and bring millions of students with them.

LOCATIONS

Edens of affinity - The "archipelago" groupings of sims such as NMC, Info Island and Spaceflight will be the norm.

Teen Explosion - Watch the work of Global Kids and Claudia & Blue Linden.

EVENTS

SLCC 2007 - Tentatively in Chicago for fall with an expanded .edu presence.

Escape Velocity - Linden Lab beats the MMOG curve to fly beyond the boom/bust lifecycle for immersive games.

TOOLS

"**I'm over *hear*!**" - SL's spatial voice tool passes There.com in functionality.

LMS Mashups - The ever-important LLHttpRequest command continues to propel SL into Blackboard's tragectory.

Jeremy "Kabumpo" Kemp is a *Second Life* design team manager at San Jose State University and started teaching online in 1999. He has presented at national conferences on M.U.V.E. trends and will speak at AERA in Chicago and the CADE/AMTEC conference in Winnipeg. He is a doctoral student at Fielding Graduate University and has master's degrees from Stanford and Northwestern. His two infant daughters prefer Muppets to avatars.