Gary Pattillo

Fast Facts

Recent science and engineering graduates

According to a newly released study, about 95 percent of 1999 and 2000 science and engineering baccalaureates were U.S. citizens. Among master's degree recipients, however, only 75 percent were U.S. citizens. Nearly half of recent science and engineering baccalaureate recipients reported that they attended community colleges.

John Tsapogas, et al., National Science Foundation, Division of Science Resources Statistics, "Characteristics of Recent Science and Engineering Graduates: 2001," NSF 04-302. www.nsf.gov/sbe/srs/nsf04302/start.htm. December 23, 2003

Trends in Internet usage

While online activity continues to grow for much of the U.S. adult population, the growth in the *number* of Americans going online has slowed. For the past two years, the proportion of adults using the Internet in the United States has remained near 63 percent. Internet users are doing more things online. Online banking showed the highest growth of all Internet activities, increasing 127 percent for the period 2000–2002. E-mail continues to be the primary activity of most Internet users.

Mary Madden, "America's online pursuits: The changing picture of who's online and what they do." Washington, D.C.: Pew Internet and American Life Project, www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=106. December 22, 2003

Reading to children

The percentage of children read to frequently by a family member increased from 78 percent in 1993 to 84 percent in 2001. Children whose parents read to them become better readers and perform better in school. Other family activities such as telling stories and singing songs also encourage literacy skills in children.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "The Condition of Education 2003, NCES 2003-067, Indicator 37." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2003.

J. R. R. Tolkien and the OED

While familiar to scholars and aficionados, it is not widely known that the author of the Lord of the Rings trilogy worked on the staff of the Oxford English Dictionary in 1919 and 1920. Tolkien was an assistant to editor Henry Bradley. He worked on words near the beginning of the letter *W*, including *waistcoat, walnut, walrus*, and *wampum*. Later, in 1969, he even contributed to the entry for the word *hobbit*. The slips of paper on which some of his work appears in Tolkien's handwriting survive in the OED archives.

Peter Gilliver, "J. R. R. Tolkien and the OED," Oxford English Dictionary News, June 2002 newsletter. www.oed.com/newsletters/2002-06/tolkien.html. December 22, 2003

Literacy in U.S. cities

A recent study using data from the U.S. Census, newspaper circulation rates, library resources, publishers, and other public documents, profiled the 64 largest U.S. cities. In the "Overall" rankings, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Seattle, Washington; and Denver, Colorado rank as America's most literate cities. One of the indicators was a public library index created for the study. Miami, Florida; Las Vegas, Nevada; and Louisville, Kentucky, ranked highest in this indicator.

John W. Miller, "America's most literate cities," University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. www.uww.edu/cities/. December 26, 2003

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