

National Science Foundation Science & Technology Information System (STIS).

Access: telnet://stis.nsf.gov.
Login: public.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is the principle provider of this telnet site where NSF publications and award abstracts may be obtained. Various ways to access the system are available, including gophering to the site, but the most useful is to telnet directly there, type "public" at the login, register as a user, and use TOPIC, described as a "sophisticated text retrieval software program" developed by the NSF and various contractors. It allows users to search using boolean operators. Many individuals have tried to use this telnet site unsuccessfully because it has unique idiosyncrasies.

Without using any user documentation it can be a lesson in futility. However, if the document, nsf9410, is ftp'd from the same address, a wonderful help aid is in hand. This document will be requisite for almost everyone utilizing this site to its fullest extent. To use TOPIC without documentation is difficult even though there are several help screens. The STIS USERS' GUIDE, nsf9410, is excellent and truly written from a user's point of view. It is exceptionally good at explaining the problems that may be encountered, and with the document is a tutorial which takes about 20 minutes to go through. Once through it, it becomes clear that this is a great site; one that will predominately

be used by academic faculty, administrators, graduate students, and anyone else who would like to obtain funding from the National Science Foundation.

Since one of the document types is "Program Guidelines," and since this site is updated weekly, many individuals will want to find out the procedures for writing proposals for grants, etc., and this is the site to use. Terminal emulation must be either VT100 or VT102.

A nice feature of this site is that it does make information available to people with only e-mail access to the Internet. For those, e-mail a message to stisserv@nsf.gov, leave the subject line blank, and in the text of the message type "get nsf9410". It will be quite useful.—*Laura Windsor, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University; e-mail: windsorl@bart.db.erau.edu*

June 2 deadline for summer classified ads

For those of you who will be placing classified ads over the summer, this is a reminder that the *News* publishes a combined July/August issue at the beginning of July and does not publish again until early September. If you have a position to advertise before September, the deadline is June 2 for the July/August issue. Late ads will be accepted on a space-available basis until June 14.

Internet Reviews

Sara Amato, editor

Music & Brain. Access: telnet://mila.ps.uci.edu. Login: mbi password: nammbi. Choose 1 at the menu. Author/producer: Center for Neurobiology of Learning and Memory, University of California at Irvine. For more information contact: Norman Weinberger at (714) 856-8512 or Gordon Shaw at (714) 856-6620.

Music & Brain offers references to scholarly articles, books, conference proceedings, theses, and preprints on music history, education, psychology, and the physiology of hearing and making music. This database is of use not only to faculty and researchers but also to upper level undergraduates in biology, psychology, and allied health.

Music & Brain resembles grandmother's attic. Treasures abound amid a great deal of disorder and irrelevant material. The database's SWAIS software is rudimentary. It allows Boolean searching but lacks proximity operators and truncation.

Music & Brain is not as current as most commercially produced databases. Although Gordon Shaw, one of the two database administrators, promises an update soon, he admits that an all volunteer staff adds records sporadically. As of now, the database has comparatively few items published after 1991.

The database's coverage of music's effect on human social behavior is weak. *Music & Brain* lists many articles on neurotransmitters and auditory perception, but few, if any, current entries cover rap lyrics and violence, heavy metal and suicide, or love songs' psychosocial effects.

Despite these imperfections, I still recommend *Music & Brain*. There are useful items for almost anyone doing a neurobiology project or studying music as it relates to medicine. A comprehensible help manual is part of the database's introductory menu, and for libraries without CD-ROM subscriptions to Medline or Psychlit, free searching with *Music & Brain* provides a supplement to and limited substitute for DIALOG's Psychinfo or Medline.—*Eileen H. Kramer, Utica College; e-mail:ehk@uc1.ucsu.edu*

LEGI-SLATE Gopher. Access: gopher://mudhoney.micro.umn.edu 7000. Comments/questions: legislate@mudhoney.micro.umn.edu

LEGI-SLATE Gopher is a prototype of a planned commercial database. The database will offer substantially enhanced access to House and Senate legislative instruments and the daily *Federal Register*. Legi-slate gopher is directed toward an academic market and will be of great interest to colleges and universities with user communities in need of timely and authoritative information about governmental activities.

The database is produced by Legi-slate, Inc., a subsidiary of the Washington Post Co., in conjunction with the Academic Computing Center of the University of Minnesota. At present, the database is static, containing a selection of files from the 103rd Congress and the *Federal Register*. The vendor plans a full commercial release of information about all bills and resolutions from the 103rd Congress and the 1993–94 *Federal Register*, with daily updates, in summer 1994. There are no immediate plans for retrospective coverage.

The information is extracted from Government Printing Office electronic tapes. The staff of Legi-slate provides extensive value-added services, including indexing to bills, content analysis, and information synthesis. Examples of the bill coverage include: CRS bill digests, legislative histories, committee actions, and comments by legislators. Laws which would be affected by the pending legislation are noted. An interesting and useful feature is a listing of relevant articles from *CQ*, the *National Jour-*

nal, and the *Washington Post*. The *Federal Register* will be searchable by keyword, date, section, agency, or *CFR* title and part.

The scope of the enhancements is substantial and may be evaluated by selecting a bill from the prototype and following easy-to-use, menu-driven screens. The search options for locating bills are displayed. Online help is available. Users should note that the information is under copyright protection.

Portions of the legislative information contained in Legi-slate gopher are available through a mix of print and electronic sources. A subfile of the Library of Congress catalog, available at no charge over the Internet, contains detailed information about current and retrospective legislative instruments. Librarians are familiar with other sources of access to bill digests, histories, and articles. The uniqueness and value of Legi-slate gopher is in the extensive scope of information, the comprehensiveness of the information package, the ease of use and currency. Legi-slate gopher cracks the code of the often impenetrable *Federal Register*. According to the very helpful Legislate, Inc. staff, pricing for the commercial product is not yet finalized. It will be a site-licensing arrangement with fees based on the full-time student enrollment of the subscriber. Portions of the database will remain available at no charge over the Internet, although the amount of free information is as yet undetermined.

As the "fee vs. free" controversy, especially surrounding governmental information, moves to the Internet, librarians should evaluate both commercial and noncommercial resources. Ultimately, each academic institution must determine the real value of value-added services.—*Lorrie Knight, Connecticut College; e-mail: lanki@conncoll.edu* ■

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