

→ Fast Facts

→ Blooker Prize

The Lulu Blooker Prize is the world's first literary prize devoted to "blooks": books based on blogs or Web sites. The overall winner for 2006 is *Julie & Julia* by Julie Powell in the nonfiction category. The fiction winner is *Four and Twenty Blackbirds* by Cherie Priest. The third category, comics, was won by Zach Miller for his work, *Totally Boned*. According to lulu.com, a major provider of print-on-demand books, "blooks are the world's fastest-growing new kind of book and an exciting new stage in the life cycle of content, if not a whole new category of content." *Biodiesel Power*, a book written by Lyle Estill about viable, plausible alternatives to petrochemicals, was a runner-up in the nonfiction category.

"2006 Lulu Blooker Prize for Blooks," www.lulublookerprize.com. April 5, 2006

→ World Information Access

More computers are produced now than ever before, but they are more concentrated in richer countries than they were ten years ago, according to the World Information Access Report. Key computing and communication technologies, including Internet access, cell phones, and Internet servers, are more concentrated in a few countries. Internet access in the world's largest cities is still a luxury for most people. In the future, cell phone technology may enable more people to gain access to the Internet. "The five billion people who are now offline will probably join the information society through their mobile phones, not their computers," said one of the authors, Phil Howard, University of Washington assistant professor of communication.

P. N. Howard, (2006). World Information Access Report. Seattle, WA: World Information Access Project, Department of Communication, University of Washington, www.wiareport.org/

→ \$100 laptop project

The United Nations Development Program and One Laptop Per Child signed a partnership agreement to work with local and international partners to design and develop programs to deliver \$100 laptops to schools in the least developed countries. The \$100 laptop (not yet in production) will be an inexpensive computer with open-source software and very low power consumption. It can also be powered by hand cranking. One Laptop Per Child is a nonprofit association dedicated to research to develop a \$100 laptop. The initiative was first announced by Nicholas Negroponte at the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland, in January 2005.

United Nations Development Programme, "UNDP to support innovative child education project," January 28, 2006. www.undp.org/dpa/pressrelease/releases/2006/20060128-laptop.shtml

→ Metacritic

Metacritic is a portal for reviews of film, video, music, games, books, and television. It aggregates reviews from several dozen media sites and applies its own scoring system, called a Metascore. Metascore combines individual critic scores into an overall grade for each item. Individual critic scores are converted to a 100-point scale, and links are provided to the reviews for each source, making it simple to determine positive and negative reviews before reading each review.

Metacritic, www.metacritic.com/. April 7, 2006

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