

# **To Mediate Or Not To Mediate- The Role Of The Mediator In The Online Classroom**

Fay Sudweeks  
School of Information Technology  
Murdoch University  
Australia

Networked computer media have brought significant changes to pedagogical paradigms. Educational environments, such as WebCT, provide a seamless interface for organising online learning and teaching activities, and virtual spaces for computer-mediated communication and collaboration during the learning process. The rate of diffusion of these new technology-enabled environments in education is so rapid that, quite often, tried-and-tested face-to-face pedagogical paradigms are being thrown out without sufficient and considered evaluation of the novel environments. In this paper, a framework for the analysis and evaluation of online seminars is proposed. The proposed framework is based on a quantitative analysis of participation and a qualitative content analysis.

*CV: Fay Sudweeks is a Senior Lecturer in Information Systems at Murdoch University, Perth, Australia. She has a BA (psychology and sociology) and an MCoGSc from the University of New South Wales, and is completing her PhD in Information Technology. She has given lectures in diverse countries such as Israel, Sweden, Germany, Bulgaria, Russia and South Africa. She has published five edited books, including Network and Netplay: Virtual Groups on the Internet (MIT Press, 1998) and Doing Business on the Internet: Opportunities and Pitfalls (Springer, 1999). Her research interests are social, cultural and economic aspects of computer-mediated communication and computer-supported collaborative work.*