

**Statement of Purpose**

Dec. 27th 2005

I'm looking for a program where I can experiment in the areas of educational technology, experiential journalism, and social networking under the umbrella of humanizing technology. I have worked and studied in these areas since 1994 when I discovered the Internet and became a Webmaster. I then founded a humanizing listserv that is still active, wrote shorts for publications such as *Wired* magazine, and in the late 1990s studied instructional design. Now I'm thirsty to explore more creative applications of interactive technology with like-minded and diverse people in a supportive environment.

I have visited ITP on three occasions, November 9<sup>th</sup>, December 12<sup>th</sup> and December 18<sup>th</sup> for the end of year show. I immediately felt comfortable in the space. During my visits I discovered the vibe among the students, faculty and staff fit my temperament and style of learning. Small alternative schools were a big part of my early education and the ITP space felt like a more mature version of those experiences. I was especially intrigued to see a fully equipped woodshop, having grown up around carpentry in Maine until the Web came along and yanked me into the world of screen-based construction and communication. At ITP, I was attracted to the diversity of talent and the reflected ferment of the New York City cultural environment.

School has always been a joy for me: it's a place to learn and explore, a place to teach and be helpful. I was taught to love school, to follow my heart and interests, with no pressure to perform or succeed by any standards other than my own. Raised by counter-cultural

parents, I didn't go to school full-time until I was eight years old. When I did, I attended the 35-year-old School Around Us, a very small alternatively "hippie" school in Maine focused on creativity and consensus. I was immersed in project-based classes, collaborative art, and the governance of the school by daily consensus-style meetings (Oi!). This type of education, devoid of external pressure to perform, along with my parents' influence, fostered creativity, comfort in leadership roles, and left me perpetually thirsty to learn and share.

My transcripts demonstrate my love of exploration, but also show a number of mediocre grades in subjects I wasn't interested in. But after I found my focus in undergraduate school in journalism and broadcasting, my grades greatly improved. Years later I gravitated more towards the educational aspects of the Web, when I dropped out of the commercial dotcom boom and enrolled in the Masters program in Educational Technology at San Diego State University. I was awarded Outstanding Student of the Year when I graduated in 1999.

Since then, I've been working as a project manager of educational technology projects at high schools, universities, and as a consultant. I've supported myself by working to contribute to the greater good and have found that I naturally move into management positions. However, my early schooling was not without sacrifices that affect me as an adult. I have challenges in math and English that I've had to work around in order to be successful in what I have chosen to do. I have published articles in magazines such as Salon.com and in academic journals by working well with editors. I've learned to manage

by doing what I do well and delegating the rest through total empowerment of those around me. I've Blogged since 2000 to practice writing. Last summer I spent eight months directing and producing my own documentary for film festivals and building a site called <myprimers.com> for tutorials I've written over the years.

Currently I'm working at Antioch New England Graduate School in Keene, NH as the Access Services Supervisor of their library. I've been brought on to create training systems (including a Wiki farm), manage a staff of thirteen, and make the library more of a Digital Commons. As I work I'm taking notes and pictures on the fascinating changes I've seen this university library go through. Books are shrinking back into dark corners. Students want big tables and soft couches with lots of power strips for their laptops. They want librarians to protect them from the chaos and noise outside, and to help them surf databases other than Google. This process fascinates me, and I love working in university settings, but right now I want more from life than settling down to a 35-hour workweek in a small New Hampshire town. I'd rather be experimenting more on the new systems libraries may use in the future in a more creative and robust environment. But I find myself yearning to steer my career's direction towards more creativity and away from routine management. Graduate school at NYU is where I want to initiate this career shift.

I want to re-energize myself by going back to school again to learn and create in the supportive environment that high education provides me. I'm currently fascinated by such ideas as dumb bots that teach us by having us teach them, wiki/blog/degrees of separation sites that let good information rise to the top, PDA instruction, and AI therapists for long

duration space flight. In terms of physical computing, I am interested in objects that promote collaboration, learning and kindness. But there will be an end to being a student, even though I intend to stay very involved in academia. My goal after school is to work in non-profits, schools, museums, universities, or small companies, while I continue to publish.

I am convinced that interactive technology is one of the most powerful tools we've created so far. Powerful tools need devoted legions of people to constantly discover new and positive ways to use them. I want to work on this in the best possible environment in order to help make the most impact.

I believe the ITP program could help me achieve these goals and focus my varied interests on experimenting with new ways of humanizing technology. I believe the program would be a lifelong asset to me and I would be an asset to the ITP program.