

# FOCUS ON JERICHO TEACHERS AND THEIR ISSUES

October 2008

## Guest Editorial: Voting on the Issues Maureen Tracy, Retired, HS Social Studies

*Editor's note: this article also appeared in the October Jericho Retiree's newsletter.*

By the this issue of *Focus* comes out, I will have voted because I mailed in my absentee ballot in October. Today, I am mentoring young English teachers in Xian, China.

As a former Social Studies teacher at Jericho High School, I always attempted to help students make up their minds about candidates by presenting them with opportunities to consider both sides of political issues. Since I am no longer In-Service I can express a point of view that favors one candidate over another. Today I will be discussing the American election with young Chinese teachers and I fully appreciate the fact that I live and worked in a country where the basic rights of citizenship are granted to all. I also recognize the fact that American women only got these rights 70 years ago. Perhaps my discussions with young Chinese teachers and students will move them on to a different political path.

Whatever part of the political spectrum you inhabit, as our former Jericho Teachers Association president Emil Voigt told us constantly over the years that both of us were working at Jericho, "We are not Republicans; we are not Democrats; we are educators who vote for people who support and champion our issues." As a retiree my main issues include Social Security and Medicare. (Editor's note - someday you will retire too).

The following information is from the Alliance for Retired Americans and from NYSUT. Both of these groups strongly support Barack Obama and Joe Biden for president and vice-president. John McCain's position on Social Security is clear, having voted for George Bush's 2006 Social

Security plan. In 2006, McCain voted for the Social Security Reserve Fund. The proposal would shift Social Security's annual surpluses into a reserve account that would be converted into risky private accounts. (SCR 83, Vote # 68 3/16/06)

However you view other current issues, such as the Iraq war, the economy, energy, etc., consider and carefully evaluate the position of both candidates on the issue of Social Security. Consider financial investments you might have made over the past year and look at the amount of money you have lost. Ask yourself if you would want your Social Security funded by the ups and downs of the stock market.

As any good Jericho High School student could have deduced from listening to me when I was In-Service, you should be able to figure out who I voted for.

I will be in Beijing, China on Election Day and I hope that I hear good news; I was in Thailand listening to the counts and the hanging chads in the election of 2004 and look what happened to us then. I hope we have better news this election day.

### Absentee ballots

You can get absentee ballot applications at this address: [http://www.longdistancevoter.org/new\\_york](http://www.longdistancevoter.org/new_york) or at the post offices.

The final day for mailing the ballot is 10/28.



## Jericho Teachers Association

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## FOCUS

is the monthly newsletter of the Jericho Teachers Association.

We welcome input, articles, viewpoints, and questions from all members. If there is an issue

you would like to see addressed or if you would like to

contribute please e-mail

Denise Ryder, at  
[ryder@jerichoteachers.org](mailto:ryder@jerichoteachers.org)

# Fair Use and Unfair Use: More From the Copyright Police

by Denise Ryder

Last month's article managed to make some people *really* paranoid. That truly wasn't my goal; I was simply trying to raise our collective awareness about some of our every day teaching habits that may need to be altered now that the walls of our classrooms are digitally dissolving.

The good news is they can't make you break the law by forcing you to digitize and distribute homework materials such as worksheets (that are not entirely original), articles, or reference materials. The bad news is that you might no longer be able to give out all the materials you usually do, physically (as in the paper copy), or digitally.

Here is that infamous paragraph once again:

"The District will provide and the teachers will use technology that allows homework material (examples: worksheets, articles, reference materials), other than text book materials, to be copied, e-mailed, and attached to the District server."

What *can* we do?

## Periodical articles

If you want students to read an article for homework, you can still require them to read it, you just can't scan it and post it. Depending on the article however, you *can* send them a *special link* if it is contained in one of *our databases*. Before I go any further I have to explain what I mean by a *special link* and what I mean by *our databases*.

A link and a Web address are not *necessarily* the same thing. When somebody says, "send me that link," they almost always mean the Web address. You copy and paste the address and your friend can use it to get to the desired site. Databases don't work that way. The address that is displayed in the address bar for an article in a database is generally not a persistent link back to that article. Most databases do provide a special, persistent link, but you generally have to look around for it.

What I mean by *our databases* is the list of online resources (containing the full text of magazine, newspaper, journal articles, and other reference materials) that either the school library, the public library, or New York State Library subscribes to on our behalf.

Here's an example. Let's say I see an article in a scholarly journal and I want to share it with a friend (in administration?) who works in another school district (perhaps Locust Valley?). I access our database and send her the special link. One of two things can happen: either she can't read the article because the library in her school doesn't subscribe to that database (maybe they need a new librarian...ONLY KIDDING!), or, they do subscribe and

she simply logs on, click the link, and reads the article.

It's the same thing with students in a class. You *can't* digitize and distribute an article to all your students. You *could* give them the citation, which is enough to locate the article, but because you're awesome, you will include this:

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1550575051&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientId=6800&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

This is the special link for an article in *Newsday*. *Newsday* is in one of our subscription databases, so currently enrolled students (faculty, and staff) will be able to click on that special link, enter the password, and access the full text. If they happen to be on campus, no password is necessary. Yes, you can even access it while on the beach, on vacation. Vive le WiFi!

## Reference materials

Some of our databases include reference books articles. These can also be shared by posting their special links.

Here's something else - after time, reference works and literature can pass into the public domain. Say you want your students to read chapter XVI in the *Scarlet Letter*. In days gone by, before you realized just how illegal your everyday activities were, you might have copied that chapter and handed it out. Today you could just give them this:

<http://www.bartleby.com/83/16.html>

which is a direct link to chapter 16 that has been posted online and can be accessed for free.

Check these out:

*Project Gutenberg* (<http://www.gutenberg.org/>) the first and largest single collection of free electronic books

*Bartleby.com* (<http://www.bartleby.com/>) verse, fiction, nonfiction, quotations, and reference works online

*The Online Books Page* (<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu>) lists over 30,000 free books on the Web

*Alex Catalogue of Electronic Texts* (<http://infomotions.com/alex/>) is a collection of about 14,000 "classic" public domain documents from American and English literature as well as Western philosophy

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## Staff Recognition

### Reception

Wednesday, Nov. 5  
at 7 pm in the  
MS/HS Auditorium



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**Bibliomania** (<http://www.bibliomania.com/bibliomania-static/index.html>) more than 200 classic texts including fiction, drama, poetry, and short stories

### Sheet music

Looking for sheet music? Try:

**Gutenberg Music** ([http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Gutenberg:The\\_Sheet\\_Music\\_Project](http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Gutenberg:The_Sheet_Music_Project))

**Mutopia Project** (<http://www.mutopiaproject.org/>) 1472 pieces of music available to download, print out, perform and distribute for free.

### Videos in the classroom (or in the lunchroom)

This is what got many of us all shook up! Unless you have public performance rights, you cannot show a film as a reward (or as a rainy day recess solution, etc.). Most schools, especially elementary schools, do this!

There is a company called Movie Licensing USA that provides public performance site licenses to schools and similar organizations, so that movies can be used legally for non-teaching activities. The following is a list of studios that are covered:

#### Buena Vista Pictures

- Walt Disney Pictures
- Touchstone Pictures
- Hollywood Pictures

#### Paramount Pictures

- Paramount Classics
- Republic Pictures
- Paramount Vantage

#### Warner Bros.

- Warner Independent Pictures
- Hanna-Barbera
- Allied Artists
- Lorimar Telepictures
- RKO Pictures
- Ladd Company
- Turner Entertainment

#### Lionsgate

- Artisan Films

#### Sony Pictures

- Columbia Pictures
- TriStar Pictures
- Revolution Studios
- Screen Gems

#### DreamWorks Pictures

- Go Fish Pictures

#### NBC Universal

- Focus Features
- October Films
- Polygram

#### New Line Cinema

- Fine Line Features

#### MGM/UA

- United Artists
- Orion Pictures
- Pathé-Cinéma

#### Miramax Films

I know I opened a can of worms here (part of my job?) but the good news is that two of our five schools enjoy

the security of Movie Licensing USA's public performance site licenses. The bad news is that the three schools who probably need it the most, don't. It's not *that* expensive, especially compared to the \$250,000.00 fine! I actually spoke to the people at Movie Licensing and they have worked out a couple of money saving deals which have been presented to the principals. As a result, I understand the district is looking into it.

Movie Licensing USA's site (<http://www.movlic.com/k12/>) has some neat stuff on it too, such as promotional materials (posters, bookmarks, and activity sheets) that can be legally reproduced.



### Workbooks and workbook pages

Here's the other shoe... workbooks. Workbooks can not be copied. "Black line masters" are workbooks that you *can* copy, but you can only copy enough for your own class *not* the entire school or district (unless one copy of the book is purchased for each teacher). What can you do? Be inspired by the worksheets you've handed out over the years and create your own. Customize. And by customize I don't mean cut and paste similar worksheets together, but "transform" them into your own unique creation.

I could go on forever (really I could). If I can be any help, let me know. Questions with trying to find specific works online, or anything like that, just give me a call!

## A teacher shares a trick ...or treat

by Mellene Hederian

With the festivities of Halloween upon us, and bowls of treats sitting at arm's reach everywhere we go, I find myself doing what I do every year at this time: eating candy with reckless abandon.

Hershey's Miniatures. Even the name makes them sound harmless. How can anything miniature do so much damage?

With little to no thought involved, I unwrap strawberry Twizzlers and gobble them up. With no regard to hidden caffeine, and the not-so-hidden calorie, I indulge myself on more than enough fun-size Milkyways. In my house, my husband and I



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## Halloween Candy *continued*

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pop mini Peppermint Patties like they're aspirin.

Under normal circumstances I responsibly avoid unnecessary sugar intake. This is a challenge for me, however, during a holiday that seems to worship individually wrapped candy as a deity. Why is it that I order unsweetened iced tea or water when I'm out to dinner only to return home to scarf down three or four Kit-Kats? Have I gone mad?

I guess the first step is awareness. Which is why, if you're like me, and you start celebrating Halloween 30 days too early, you should probably start counting those chocolate mishaps as actual meals.

With all that we know about nutrition and healthful eating, I know it seems ridiculous to heed the advice of skipping a nutritious meal for a chocolate bar. I'm not suggesting adopting this habit. But haven't the cards changed once you've eaten that chocolate bar? I would argue that October is an entirely different card game, my friend.

Ideally, you should put the candy out of sight- and stop eating it- and resume normal, healthful eating habits. But, it's Halloween! One of my favorite things to do during this time of year is to fill a basket of goodies for my front foyer. So, if you are like me and you want to see the candy- and eat it too- something's gotta give.

And in my life, that "something" ends up being dinner. I take a month-long siesta from supper when I know I'm gorging on candy. My husband doesn't seem to mind. He likes eating "light" once in a while, and his big meal of the day is lunch. So, when we both arrive home after work, we discuss. Did his office hit Ruby Tuesday's for lunch again? Did I knock off a bag of Twix between classes? Okay, no dinner at our house tonight.

## Homecoming 2008

Despite the rain and the rescheduling, teachers enjoyed the carnival with family members, colleagues, and with students.

