

## ***How far have we (really) come?***

**Helen Beetham**

e-learning has come a long way since SEDA was brave enough to devote its main conference, ten years ago, to what was then an emerging issue. From the 'computers in teaching initiative' through virtual learning environments to digital literacy, e-learning has evolved from the preserve of a few mavericks and pioneers to a mainstream concern. Indeed the mavericks and pioneers are often directors of large departments now, and have conferences of their own. So why should SEDA revisit this topic, ten years on, and what has really changed? In this keynote I will argue for e-learning not as a specialist approach within educational development, but as the way learning should be understood - and supported - in a context saturated with digital technologies. I believe that we should move beyond thinking about how institutions make room for computers and start asking what it means to be a University - a site of public knowledge and learning - in the internet age. These questions will guide my exploration of the last ten years, and a modest peep into the future. How far have we really come, and are we travelling in the right direction?

### **Biography**

Helen Beetham has been writing, researching and consulting in the field of e-learning since 1999. Originally an educational developer at the Universities of Plymouth and Bristol, she has since played a leading role in the JISC e-learning programme, advising on programmes in e-Learning and Pedagogy, Design for Learning, Learners' Experiences of e-Learning, Curriculum Design, Open Educational Resources and (most recently) Digital Literacies. She also advises HE Institutions on issues ranging from learning environments to graduate outcomes and curriculum design. An experienced workshop facilitator, she has a track record of delivering materials and development events that have achieved national recognition. Two edited volumes, *Rethinking Pedagogy for a Digital Age* (Routledge 2007) and *Rethinking Learning for a Digital Age* (Routledge 2010) are widely used as set texts. Helen was a member of the last Government's education taskforce *Beyond Current Horizons* and collaborated on an ESRC seminar series 'Literacies in the Digital University', papers from which are forthcoming from Routledge.