

## Lecture is Dead “nostalgia and amuser

I read Jensen's (2007) letter about technology and large-class teaching with both nostalgia and amusement. To date myself, I remember Audio-Visual was an educational technology, not the place where you could find projectors.

We appear to be of similar vintage—I started teaching biology (968 students) in 1969, and I remember the first thing that was to revolutionize large-class teaching: Media! What that meant at the time was you used two side-by-side projectors. Then there were personalized instruction applications, modular education, programmed learning, PSI, Keller Plan—almost all gone today. Today we have anonymous CAI, podcasting, etc. All are all destined to go to the Great Valhalla in the Sky, along with projectors and carousels.

When I went to college in the '50s (Berkeley), we had huge lecture halls and they were by and large wonderful then as they are now—they were a handful of instructors who were such good large-class teachers that they changed my life; not only of the facts they transmitted but principles I learned, but because they were able to convey the magic of science, even to the multitudes. I grew up wanting to be like them. Technology can provide the means. Students never say, “Give me a Macintosh here.”

I think that what we in the profession have been in denial about for a long time is that the reasons there are so many rotten large-class lecturers is because there are so few good large-class lecturers, and there is no incentive in a research university to become one. We don't admit that there is a skill art about delivering a large-class lecture effectively, and we certainly compare people to be good large-class instructors with preparation, public speaking, stagecraft, etc. We let a recent M.D. do a residency bypass without an internship or residency, and it still blows that we will take a fresh postdoc with nothing but teaching assistan-