

An Electronic *TAPA*

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Since the spring of 1993, some of the articles for this issue of *TAPA* have been available to readers with access to the Internet through the "anonymous ftp" and "gopher" protocols. Erich Gruen's presidential address had the distinction of being the first posted, back in March. A long delay followed, but other articles have now been available since late August. This came about as an experiment approved by the Publications Committee of the APA at its New Orleans meeting last winter, and has been made possible through the facilities of the Center for Computer Analysis of Text at the University of Pennsylvania, of which I am Coordinator. By the time you read these lines, these "preprints" will have been deleted from the computer system at the point when this paper volume is distributed, and we will be waiting for next year's material to begin accumulating.* Since the delay between final acceptance and print publication is anywhere from three to fifteen months, there is a real opportunity to make good current work available while it is still more current than the print medium will allow it to be. The excision of the computer versions at the time of print publication is a concession to the economic exigencies of a world in which "publication" depends on the revenues generated by print, even for a learned society like ours, to survive; but especially in learned societies, the possibility that electronic distribution will prove cheaper and easier than paper in the not-so-distant future is an exciting one.

Users of the electronic versions of *TAPA* articles will have been forcibly reminded that the networks are not yet quite friendly to Greek characters, so we use the TLG Beta code to give everyone something half-intelligible to read. We are also making Microsoft Word files using SMK Greekkeys conventions and fonts available on an experimental basis, but there are technical obsta-

*To see what is available from *TAPA* at any time, and to see a variety of other materials of interest to classicists, including Bryn Mawr Classical Review, journals abstracts and tables of contents from Johns Hopkins University Press and from the tocs-in project masterminded out of Toronto, and other new kinds of material constantly, "point your gopher" (someone on your campus knows how to do this and will be happy to tell you if you don't already) to the server ccat.sas.upenn.edu, and look under the menu item for "Electronic Publications and Resources" and see what you can find. The e-*TAPA* materials are also available for "anonymous ftp" on the same machine, in the directory "/pub/TAPA".

cles that render this form of delivery still problematic. Better machines and network connections and possibly a new national standard code for non-Roman writing systems should eliminate these problems in a few years, but for the time being, we do what we can do.

What is all this leading to? Our scholarly publishing system is in crisis and getting worse, with university presses and university libraries particularly threatened. The Mellon Foundation has sent a wake-up call with its recently published book, *University Libraries and Scholarly Communication: A Study Prepared for the Mellon Foundation* (Washington: Association of Research Libraries, 1992), but there is still little widespread recognition that the problems *and* the possibilities that electronic technology addresses are no longer hobbyist's concerns, but issues central and vital to the whole academic community. In a time when both traditional and venturesome work in the humanities is threatened, the new technologies give us a lever and a place to stand to begin to get some control over our own destiny.

The luxury of having TLG and PHI at our fingertips has made classicists unexpected pioneers among humanities computing users. Perseus points to exciting possibilities beyond, and other projects (like e-Marouzeau) will be along soon enough. An e-TAPA can be one way the APA as an organization declares its commitment to ventures that offer much promise. And if we could ever move to an exclusively electronic TAPA, think of all the trees yet unborn that would be left to grow to shady maturity, sheltering who knows what philosophical dialogue yet unspoken!