

Toward a New Understanding

**'un-der-stand-ing
\\an-dar-'stan-dir\\ n
1 a: knowledge and
ability to judge:
(a person of
understanding)**

*Understanding computers is about as easy
as understanding a bank statement.*

*— Nicholas Negroponte,
professor of Media Technology at MIT*

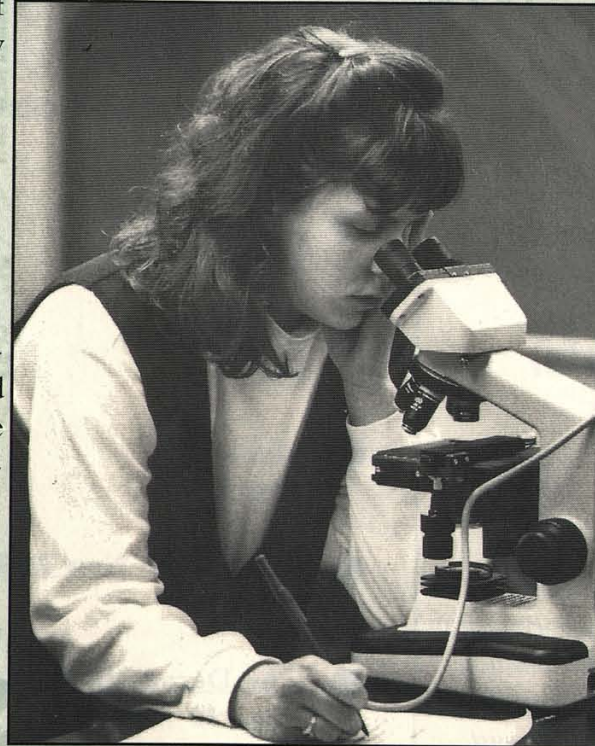
In the year 2020, the amount of information we have at our disposal will double every seventy-three days. Microprocessors double in speed and halve in price every eighteen months. The number of Web sites doubles every fifty-three days. Every four seconds, someone creates a home page.

Growth in the physical world is geometric. In the digital world, it is exponential.

How does a university cope with the flood of new information, the demand for new equipment and services, a commensurate decrease in public support for institutions of higher learning? As East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania prepares to enter the next millennium, it faces some tough questions about what to teach, how to teach, and where to teach. The question, to paraphrase Bill Gates, is not "Where do you want to go today?" It is "Where do you want to go tomorrow?"

In today's society, the medium is the mes-

sage. We fixate on tools, not the reason for using the tools. We focus on features, not benefits. With computers, we have lost the big picture on the little screen.



As East Stroudsburg University enters the next millennium, it faces a more demanding society, and a new set of economic strictures. The economy remains erratic. The public continues to demand greater accountability of its resources. State-supported universities must wrestle with deep cuts in funding; at the same time, they must maintain and advance their technology to keep pace with the demands of their constituents.

East Stroudsburg University has been preparing for these changes. While it cannot anticipate every variation, or fund every need, the University has positioned itself to deal with the challenges by ensuring funding for instructional equipment and materials, stabilizing academic governance, and providing quality academic leadership.