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A UniSA & University of Adelaide Joint Research Seminar

Does differential access to computer technology at home compound the educational disparities between rich and poor?

Would a program of government provision of computers to secondary students reduce these disparities?

Charles T Clotfelter, Helen F Ladd and Jacob L Vigdor use administrative data on North Carolina public school students to corroborate earlier surveys which document broad racial and socioeconomic gaps in home computer access and use.

Using within-student variation in home computer access, and across-ZIP code variation in the timing of the introduction of high-speed internet service, we also demonstrate that the introduction of home computer technology is associated with modest but statistically significant and persistent negative impacts on student math and reading test scores.

Further evidence suggests that providing universal access to home computers and high-speed internet access would broaden, rather than narrow, math and reading achievement gaps.



Jacob L Vigdor is Professor of Public Policy and Economics at Duke University and a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research.

He has written extensively on the subjects of education policy, immigration policy, and housing policy, with articles published at journals including the Journal of Political Economy, the Review of Economics and Statistics, and the Journal of Public Economics.

Prof Vigdor received his PhD in economics from Harvard University in 1999.

Date: **Thursday, 30 July 2009**

Time: **3.30 – 5pm**
(dinner to follow with Prof Vigdor)

Room: **H5-26, Room 26, Level 5,
Hawke Building, City West
Campus (Council Room)**