The Berkeley Center for the Information Society presents its fourth talk for Spring 2003, "Technology, Social Groups & Community Technology Development." The presenter, Blanca Gordo is a researcher at Berkeley with a fascinating and varied background. The talk promises to be very valuable for those interested in Technology and Development.

The talk will take place at 4 PM at 107 South Hall on Tuesday, April 22. The talk is free and open to all.

Technology, Social Groups & Community Technology Development

Abstract
This presentation examines the "digital divide" problem in relation to social and economic development. For Gordo, digital divide is the difference between those sites and the individuals who are able and have the opportunity (or not) to participate, compete, and prosper in knowledge-based economies and network society. The thesis is that ownership and the ability to use and manipulate the productive function of technology is becoming an important component in the process of production, consumption, and exchange in society. The negative result for those who are unable to create through the process of technology is digital destitution. The alienation suffered may be a result of deprivation and unequal opportunity to experiment and learn how to create and relate to people through the use of technology.

Gordo proposes public policy intervention in the way of creating valuable opportunity to experience and develop the social technical skills necessary to attain and retain gainful employment. The proposal is provision of new Community Technology Development (CTD) programs that support the process of social and economic development at the community ground level. Giving people the opportunity to experiment the process of production is key to addressing the ongoing process of poverty and inequality.

About the Speaker
Blanca E. Gordo is a doctoral candidate at the Department of City and Regional Planning and researcher at the Public Policy Institute of California. Her primary area of interest is that of Regional and Local Economic Development Links to Poverty and Inequality.

Blanca has research experience in the areas of Technology and Development, Urban Poverty and the Digital Divide, Use of the Welfare System, and Prison Reform. Blanca has taught several courses on campus and has won the "Distinguished Guest Lecturer" at Berkeley for her work on the course, Planning Institutions and Organizations. In the past, she has been the editor of the Berkeley Planning Journal.