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Blogging in the physics classroom: A research-based approach to shaping students' attitudes towards physics KATHERINE GARRETT, GINTARAS DUDA, Creighton University — Even though there has been a tremendous amount of research done in how to help students learn physics, students are still coming away missing a crucial piece of the puzzle: why bother with physics? Students learn fundamental laws and how to calculate, but come out of a general physics course without a deep understanding of how physics has transformed the world around them. In other words, they get the “how” but not the “why”. Studies have shown that students leave introductory physics courses almost universally less excited about the topic than when they came in. This presentation will detail an experiment to address this problem: a course weblog or “blog” which discusses real-world applications of physics and engages students in discussion and thinking outside of class. Student response to the blog was overwhelmingly positive, with students claiming that the blog made the things we studied in the classroom come alive for them and seem much more relevant.

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