



Mallisa the Hawaiian dancer teaches Nelson Costa, second-year Advertising & Media Sales student, how to hoola.

photo: David J. Wylie

Student apathy at debate

by *Melanie Irvine and Melanie Justason*

The constitution wasn't available for the constitutional debate so it was no surprise that only three non-members, two of which were from the Et Cetera, attended.

Lisa Dawson, executive director of external affairs for SAC, said the lack of support by Humber students was attributed to not only the fashion show in the student centre at the same time but also indifference towards student government and affairs.

"Students would rather be at the fashion show," she said. "You can't hold a gun to their heads."

The meeting lasted a total of 15 minutes. The issue was postponed due to the constitution not being ready.

Toby Warnell, Lakeshore SAC president, said the constitution is going into its second and hopefully final draft and the next meeting will

be held no later than March 31, 2000.

Once the constitution is completed he said it will be accessible to every student.

"There is no particular reason for the constitution not being ready," he said. "It's a team process, we started it together and we are going to keep it together until the end."

Warnell said he wants to put pressure on executives and student council to attract people to the special meetings and annual general meeting (AGM).

"It's anticipated that there will be a low turnout ... that's the perception," he said, "but it's unfortunate."

Last year's AGM, only had a turn-out of two students who weren't part of the student governments.

"We want to have enough students out there to make up a good student representation," Warnell said.

He also said the new constitution will state

that a minimum per cent of the student population must attend and vote to pass an HSF proposal at a special meeting. McMaster University in Hamilton has a rule in their constitution that three per cent of the student body must attend for the meeting to even start.

"We don't have this in our current SAC structure but the new HSF will," he said.

Warnell said advertisements for this meeting were placed in the school newspaper, SAC newsletter and could also be found on the walls of both North and Lakeshore campuses.

"Word of mouth is key," he said, "we did our part".

Warnell said he urges all students to keep an eye out for the next special meeting and to attend and voice their concerns.

"This is their chance to come out and give their say," he said.



Internet: Visual comm

"The Internet is so big, so powerful and pointless that for some people it is a complete substitute for life."

—Andrew Brown

"Surfing on the Internet is like sex; everyone boasts about doing more than they actually do. But in the case of the Internet, it's a lot more."

—Tom Fasulo



Cracking the world of Hacking

by Derek Malcolm

Computer users have come a long way since pocket protectors and taped-up horn-rimmed glasses.

The same can be said for hackers. There's no need for average computer users to lock themselves in their basements fearing an impending hack because contrary to public perception, hacking is not an evil subculture of destructive geeks.

Not all hackers and crackers are malicious, hell bent on crashing every computer they can 'hack' in to. While pirating and distributing software, and breaking into Web sites is illegal, most hackers do it for nothing more than bragging rights. Some hackers even have a patriotic agenda to inform governments and security organizations of their Web site security flaws by hacking them.

Hackers wouldn't waste their time breaching a system the hacker community would most likely laugh at; so it is safe to leave your basement after all.

"I know people who work at banks that are hackers... it could be anyone," said Radiation (his online alias). He is an active member of various online organizations who are, let's say, less than legitimate.

"All the hackers I know that do this sort of thing, it's more for fame than any type of malicious act," said Radiation. "It has to do with showing your friend what you can do than having your friend try to hack a site that's a bigger and better site."

Hackers impress one another by hacking into various Web sites on the Internet, leaving an array of messages for the site's administrators while giving the appropriate 'shout-outs' (saying hi) to each other.

Several hacker Web sites on the net like hackers.com and 2600.com, often display lists of recently hacked sites with links; a perfect bragging tool. Some notable site

hacks include the U.S. Army, the city of Beverly Hills, the U.S. Department of Energy, and Canada's Department of National Defense.

The messages, ranging from elaborate cartoons and pictures to simple text, are rarely intended to harm the site's systems or steal information. Those types of hacks are done by what Radiation calls 'poser hackers.'

"They like to call themselves hackers," he said. "They're generally the people who'll try to log in with some little 'how-to-hack a site' instructional text file they grabbed from the Internet and pretty much delete every file they see there."

According to Radiation, these types of hackers cannot gain recognition for their malicious hacks because the hacking community generally frowns upon it.

Others like the infamous ycracker who, according the hack Web site 2600.com, recently hacked into the NASA Web site with a message displayed on their index page. Part of the hacked message said: "To the U.S. government and military - I have warned you about these security flaws. Please secure our military systems to protect us from cyber attack."

While the message on NASA's site also included the appropriate 'shout-outs,' ycracker, the self-proclaimed "original digital gangster," displayed a genuine concern for the country's security. "I don't think there's anything wrong with that. I think that's genuinely what a hacker should do," said Radiation.

For the user interested in hacking, the only way to do so is to read everything and anything on the subject and get a hold of a 'how-to-hack a site' text file like the one available on hacker.com.

The 50-page manual contains a step-by-step tutorial, hundreds of Telnet dial-up

phone numbers to connect to, definitions, disclaimers and more.

"Hacking is the act of penetrating computer systems to gain knowledge about the system and how it works," states the manual.

Among the listed 'rules' of hacking are: 1. Never damage a system, this will only get you in trouble, and 2. Never alter any of the system files, except those needed to insure that you are not detected.

On the other side of the disc is cracking. A form of hacking, crackers concentrate on the alteration of software code instead of Web sites.

"Generally, a cracker is a person who will work on bypassing security on a software level," said Radiation.

When software like games, programs and multimedia are released, there are several security features included in the programming, preventing the software from working when duplicated. "Crackers are people that make it work for the average Internet user to use," said Radiation.

"NHL 2000 is a prime example," he said. "You burn (copy) the CD, try to run it...it'll keep telling you to insert the CD because it knows it's not the right CD." The crack, created by any number of crackers around the world, will 'patch' the security measure making it possible to play with a copied CD.

The usually small crack file will then be distributed freely over the Internet through sites like Dupecheck.com who lists thousands of recently released cracked software or 'warez' for surfers to get a hold of.

Dupecheck provides only a list of warez, not the actual programs. To get a hold of the software is a different story. This is where being a member of an FTP

ring can come in handy. An FTP (File Transfer Protocol) is a platform where files like software; mp3 music can be transferred between individual computers.

Unlike the Internet where anyone can have access and download, the owner of the FTP site gives private access to users of their choosing.

An FTP ring is "a totally organized group of people who run FTP sites," said Radiation, a member of the BloodGod ring.

"Being a member of BloodGod has its advantages. It'll help you find any piece of software you're looking for within a matter of seconds," said Radiation.

The BloodGod FTP ring is well organized and has its own software for users to browse other member's FTP sites. It has its own password protected Web site, contests, chats and open discussion forums, and even online Quake tournaments.

"It's a small family," said Radiation who's been a member for almost a year.

To become one of already 130 members, a high-speed connection like cable or ADSL is necessary and 15 gigabytes (lots and lots) worth of warez must be available to members 24 hours a day.

Along with FTP-ring distributed cracked files and patches, small text or information (nfo) files are attached, giving fame to all the crackers or hackers involved in creating or distributing it. The more people who use the crack, the more hype the cracker or group gets.

Although they're not a legitimate group of watchdogs, government and corporate organizations could benefit from the skills of non-malicious hackers who poke holes in their Internet security. For the average home user, be cautious, but don't get too carried away fortifying your computer and be glad that most hackers don't give a damn about you.

Communication of the future



graphics by Natalie Daye, Shaun Hatton and Erik Martensson

facts and figures:

- Number of Web pages in 1996: 250,000
- Number of Web pages today: over 1 billion
- Number of days for that total to double: 100
- Percentage of pages which contain pornography: 4
- Number of people with Web access in the U.S. and Canada: 90.6 million
- Number of people online worldwide: 163.25 million
- Number of people that go online each day: 15.7 million
- Average hours user spends online per week: 12.1
- Average age of user: 35
- Percentage of users that are male: 85
- Current number of online gamblers: 25 million
- Average loss per gambler: \$48
- Number of web auction purchases in 1998: 1.2 million
- Average amount of purchase: \$47

www.metacrawler.com

Music industry rocked by MP3

by Derek Malcolm

We all know what happens to the playground bully. Eventually someone has to step up to him and knock his block off.

For the past few years the MP3 audio format has put its stamp on the digital music realm while starting a spiral of piracy that could threaten artists and their record companies. While free MP3 music may be a Godsend for independents, the music industry is getting organized to deal with an insecure digital future.

Imagine never having to pay for your music again. With cable modems and Internet speeds getting faster and faster, it's just a matter of time before entire albums can be downloaded by internet users in compressed, digital MP3 music files in a matter of seconds.

While this new technology continues to rob artists of deserved royalty payments,

ironically it's the technology that is allowing the music industry to get a plan together.

"Right now a download takes a long time for a person with a phone line and a 28.8k modem, and people don't really have the patience," said Tara Luft, The New Media Manager at Warner Music Canada. "I don't think you're changing consumer culture overnight."

Until the majority of consumers can catch up to Internet advances like high-speed computers and Internet connections, organizations like the Secure Digital Music Initiative (SDMI) will continue to prepare for the future in a virtual marketplace.

Made up of more than 120 companies and organizations from Internet service providers to major record labels including Warner, the SDMI's goal is to ensure a secure framework for the distribution and delivery of digital music in the emerging

marketplace.

All this tech-speak might be confusing, but the SDMI and the new digital file formats cropping up are all pointing to money.

"Artists don't get paid their royalty payments," said Luft. "MP3 doesn't offer any security features. That's why MP3 sort of has a bad name in the music industry."

The lack of security on the MP3 format allows someone with minimal computer savvy to convert music from CD to an MP3 format using one of several simple programs like Xings Audio Catalyst which is available on the net.

The files are easily transferred over the Internet and played on a user's computer, or transferred again to portable Walkman-like MP3 players like the Diamond RIO, which holds up to 64 megabytes of music.

Gaining the support of the SDMI, are other digital formats like Liquid Audio and

Real Audio, each with encryption features designed to prevent copying and distribution.

"With Liquid Audio you can make downloads expire within a set amount of time...and then you'd have to buy the record if you still wanted it," said Luft.

Record companies are embracing the digital music realm, but it's in the best interest of the labels and the artists to do it in a fashion that protects each of them while providing superior quality. Unfortunately for MP3, with organizations like SDMI fronting the revolution, the future of digital distribution may exclude MP3 in favour of more compliant formats. But that means no more free music, the trump card that might keep MP3 alive.

"Definitely digital music is the future," said Luft. "One year, all of a sudden, that's going to be it and the transition's going to happen."

Television is caught in the Net

by Stephanie Hess

With the addition of the Internet in people's households, TV and the net seem to be co-existing quite nicely.

According to two separate studies conducted by Burke Information Communications and Entertainment Research for MTV Networks and Turner Entertainment Networks in the U.S., Internet usage and television viewership have displayed a clear link between the two prominent forms of at home entertainment.

The study was to determine whether increased Internet use is the reason for decreasing television viewership which was noted in previous surveys.

Those studies indicated that 64 per cent

of Internet users spent less time watching TV now than six months earlier.

In Canada a survey conducted by Statistics Canada in April 1998 found that Internet use has increased 25 per cent from the previous year. Approximately 4.2 million Canadians use the Internet at home, work, or school.

Burke's problem with the previous studies was they attributed less TV watching to more Internet use without the possibility of outside activities.

"We wanted to survey Web site visitors to see how significantly Internet usage may be affecting television viewership. Based on these results, the impact has been overstated in previously released findings," said Cary Nadel, vice president of

Burke, Inc.

Only 23 per cent of those surveyed said they spend less time watching TV now than before and 55 per cent reported watching the same amount of TV.

The survey, put together between December 1998 and August 1999, asked if Internet use was the sole reason for watching less TV in those households reporting lower viewership. Only 1.5 per cent said they were online more than they were watching TV.

In fact, the survey concluded that most of the households reporting low TV viewership was actually due to a variety of activities. More families are spending quality time together, people are working longer hours and participating in physical

activities.

"This research, for the first time, makes a direct link between a decrease in television viewing as a result of increased Internet usage, not merely an assumption that Internet use is affecting television viewing," said Nadel.

The Burke survey also found a link between a TV network and its Web site. About 66 per cent of people visit a program's Web site for more information after watching it on TV. The link works the other way as well with 42 per cent of people watching a program on TV after finding out about it on the net.

Almost 39 per cent of people surveyed watch a program on TV and at the same time are online at that network's Web site.

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