

# OPINION

## The Appalachian

Your student newspaper since 1934.

ASU Box 9025  
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Founded 1934.

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## Our Perspective ...

# Tech dependence cripples university

Technology in the 21st century has put ever-increasing amounts of information right at our fingertips.

It is now possible, within the span of a few minutes, to research for class assignments, access databases from universities all over the world, register for classes and e-mail friends and relatives back home.

Many parts of Appalachian State University have abandoned paper all together in favor of computerized systems.

In light of the recent attack of the "worm" an important question is being asked throughout the temporarily crippled campus; are we becoming too dependent on computer and Internet technology?

As students moved to campus this weekend, they were greeted by signs stating that "due to a virus, ASU's ResNET will be down indefinitely." Indefinitely? This seems quite a scary word for a campus that only recently switched all registration processes to a "user friendly" Internet system.

Here at *The Appalachian* we faced complications in producing our last issue as our server crashed, limiting our graphic design abilities to one computer station. We twiddled our thumbs and waited until someone could finally get us back online.

*The Appalachian* is a relatively small business organization in comparison to the entire 13,500-student

university, and we were almost shut down completely.

If that level of disability was campus-wide, just imagine the difficulty Appalachian was faced.

There is no paper system on which to fall back. There are no more printed class schedule booklets. We are completely at the mercy of our ability to log on to the Internet.

If the entire university were to lose Internet capabilities, no classes could be added, dropped, researched or moved.

Last year, the reasoning given for having an Internet-based registration system sounded fantastic. The university could save money by eliminating the newsprint booklets with class times and numbers listed, and students could spend less time pouring over hundreds of lines of listed classes. Scheduling for the 2003 fall semester was a breeze as there was minimal time and effort involved for most students.

However, what do we do now?

A backup system must be in place for the registration process. Surely printing out a few copies of the schedule books and placing them on reserve in the library would not be devastating costs to the university.

We're sure to receive plenty of "I told you so" letters to the editor, criticizing the university and the new registration system. Good luck finding a computer to e-mail those to us.



# Ignorant students learn lesson due to worm

I'll admit it: I'm an Internet junkie. My computer is an extremely useful tool for keeping track of news and friends scattered around the state and the world.

So, when after only one blissful day online at University Highlands, the campus Ethernet was shut off due to a series of problems with viruses and 'worms,' I was disappointed to say the least.

Still, these things happen, and since my Ethernet connection was back up in about 24 hours, I really had no complaints. Before I could re-register to get online, I had to go through a page telling me to install patches on my computer to protect it from future infection. Fortunately, I learned from tech support that my version of Windows was already immune to the virus. A few minutes later, I was back online.

But all was not well quite yet. Thousands of students were coming in on the next two days and about 98 percent of them were bringing their computers along. As

David Forbes



I learned from an interview Friday with Douglas May, director of Academic Computing Services, if even 50-100 of these incoming students registered their computers online without installing the necessary protection from the viruses, the entire network could be shut off again.

Well guess what happened? While I've had plenty of problems with the administration's handling of situations in the past, they did their job this time. Warnings

in bold print were posted on every residence hall I saw, telling incoming students to, under no circumstances, get online until they were sure their computers were safe. The signs even told them that doing so would bring ResNet down for an extended amount of time. RAs were also told to warn students about the possible consequences.

Despite these warnings, enough students ignored them that the network went down again.

The entire campus suffered because a small number of people ignored what was right in front of them, even when the possible consequences of their actions were clearly explained. Thanks guys. The human capacity for such self-centered ignorance never ceases to amaze me.

This trait doesn't just apply to computer problems either, from many students' driving skills (or lack thereof) to general approach to life, there seems to be a feeling of "I can do whatever I want and I

won't ever have to pay for it."

Maybe it just goes hand in hand with the fact that Appalachian has an affluent student body. In my experience, the students paying their own bills become more responsible in a hurry. There's nothing quite like living off ramen noodles for a month to teach one humility.

Whatever the reason, the consequences usually end up hurting others, and the Internet troubles are no exception. One can hope that seeing the Internet fall due to some students' ignorance and apathy will make the incoming students more careful, more wary of how their decisions affect others. But I doubt it. Life will probably have to bash such students on the head a few more times before they realize they're not the center of the world and never will be.

David Forbes is a senior staff writer. He can be reached at [theapp@appstate.edu](mailto:theapp@appstate.edu).

# Emo kids: Please cheer up, it's not that bad

"And then she said she just wanted to be friends...so here's a song I wrote about it."

Cheer up, emo kid. Just for this article, put away the Dashboard Confessional albums, dry your eyes, and hear me out.

Look, I'm not here to hate on emo kids. Really, I'm sorry your girlfriend broke up with you in seventh grade and you haven't been able to reclaim that lost love since. I'm deeply concerned that your boyfriend of two weeks turned out to be a jerk and dated all your friends. I know the pain of trying to find a hairstyle that will let the world know your pain.

But come on, can't you just cheer up for one second?

I'm approaching this article with the best intentions. Anyone who's read my music columns in the past has noticed I drop the "E" word on quite a few occasions. In fact I think I do it in this very issue. Being a feisty rock critic, broad generalizations are the backbone of what I do. Truth be told, I also have a bit of the "saves the getup glory" in me. But then again, who doesn't?

Kevin DeLury



My problem is when a music scene turns into a fashion statement, and a rather ridiculous one at that. Recently, the emo trend has swept mainstream America, popping up in Seventeen Magazine, YM, and Time Magazine.

So what in the world are they talking about? What is "emo" music?

Plain and simple, we're talking about emotional music. Correct me if I'm wrong, but if an artist — any type of artist — pours his heart and soul into a song, are there not some elements of emotion in that? Have there not been countless songs written in every genre about lost

love and all that other nonsense? So what makes this emo thing so special?

As far as I can figure, the main purpose of labeling oneself "emo" is to set you apart from every other person who feels something.

In brief, it's screaming: "Look, I'm wearing my emotions as a badge! My pain is a special kind of pain, much more unique than yours, and more deserving of attention!"

What's worse is that the style of music thrives on never really being happy, thus it follows that the people who adhere to this life can never really be happy. They remain tragic victims in their own melodrama. Seriously, what would happen if little Johnny Shoegazer were to meet a very nice girl and have a great time? Sadly, that would make him just like every other schmuck on campus. And then what do they have, save for a bunch of 20-year-old men dressing in clothes that were made for a 12-year-old girl?

One of the disturbing trends that has reared its ugly head as a side effect of this emo craze is a sense of arrogance, the likes of which

have never been seen. For kids who are supposed to be so sensitive, I've never seen a bigger group of smarmy wanna-be intellectuals.

Seriously, I've known quicker crack heads. Yet the image must be upheld.

So why is any of this important to me? I guess it's not, but I'm just trying to understand this arrogant geek chic that seems so awfully popular these days.

So for those of you seething in your deep ideas and self-pity: let it go. It's just music. Remember music? It was that thing you sang along to that made you feel better, and then you got on with your life. It was meant to bring people together, not set the stage for elitist fashion punks to launch into ultra hip sarcasm and disdain at the slightest hint of someone having enjoying themselves.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go cry in a corner and write a song about the girl who cut in front of me in my fourth grade lunch line.

Kevin DeLury is a senior staff writer. He can be reached at [theapp@appstate.edu](mailto:theapp@appstate.edu).

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*The Appalachian*, a student-run publication at Appalachian State University, strives to provide fair and accurate news for the campus community; to inform, entertain and create a forum for ideas; to be a watchdog for student, faculty and staff interests; and to remain independent and reserve its First Amendment rights.

### EDITORIAL POLICY

*The Appalachian* is run and produced by Appalachian State University students. It operates under all First Amendment rights with no prior review or censorship by university officials. *The Appalachian* is published every Tuesday and Thursday of the academic year with the exception of selected holidays and breaks.

The opinions expressed in the commentaries appearing in *The Appalachian* are those of the individual columnists and not those of *The Appalachian*.

The opinions represented in the unsigned editorial are the majority views of those on the Editorial Board of *The Appalachian*. Comments left on the "Free For ALL" hotline may remain anonymous. Comments may be abridged for space or content.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*The Appalachian* welcomes Letters to the Editor. Letters should be 250 words or less, typed and double spaced. They should include the author's name, ASU Box, phone number, year in school and campus affiliation, if any. *The Appalachian* reserves the right to decline publication of any letter and to edit letters for the purpose of clarity and space.

Although we are unable to acknowledge those letters we cannot publish, we appreciate the interest and value the views of those who take the time to send us their comments.

Letters can be mailed to "Letter to the Editor", *The Appalachian*, ASU Box 9025, Boone, N.C. 28608. We can also be reached by e-mail at [theapp@appstate.edu](mailto:theapp@appstate.edu). Letters may also be brought to the newsroom, located on the second floor of Plemmons Student Union.

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