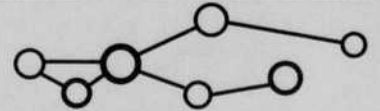


Computer communities VERSION 2.0



Online experience has evolved to include sites where users can create profiles, network and make new friends

BY DAHVI FISCHER
PULSE REPORTER

Remember the good ol' days when people were satisfied with the simple privileges of being able to surf the Internet, check e-mail and talk in chat rooms? Times have changed and it

appears the Internet has evolved into much more than a simple communication tool. The latest Internet phenomenon: people building entirely digital communities.

While online communities have been around for quite some time, it wasn't until recently that these

communities became a crucial aspect of many Internet users' online experience. Online communities are Web sites people can join (usually for free) to share pictures, create profiles, network, search for other users and make new friends.

University student Stacey Malstrom believes the popularity of these forms of community has a lot to do with the way people live their lives today.

"As peoples' lives get busier, they don't have the time to go out.

These communities are easy ways for people to socialize. Everything nowadays is about accessibility and easibility," she said.

Leung, who is a member of My Space, Thefacebook, Live Journal, Yahoo! Groups and Friendster said she is very involved with online

communities.

"I think everyone is a bit narcissistic," she said. "You know that when you post your information, other people are reading it. I've been approached at the U of O by people who

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Reporter's notebook

Buzz's open mic performances prove entertaining, worthwhile

Campus readings range in theme from cowboy poetry to grisly imagery

BY RYAN NYBURG
PULSE EDITOR

There is a big difference between liking poetry and liking poetry readings. Poetry is the ultimate form of written expression, using a stark economy of words to define humankind's innermost emotional states.

Still, poetry readings are generally pretentious horse crap, using a wide range of clichés to define a load of meaningless drivel. All forms of performance art suffer from the same problem. For every piece of great work there are a dozen pale imitations. Poetry, especially free verse, has it worse off than most other art forms. It is so easy to write awful poetry that the crap tends to flood out the quality work.

It probably goes without saying that I went to the open mic poetry reading at the Buzz with a certain level of cynicism about the whole event. I came expecting to suffer through the usual amount of bombastic blandness I've found at previous open mic performances, but oddly enough I found myself pleasantly surprised by how much I enjoyed the event.

Almost every Monday at 8 p.m. or whenever enough people show up, the Buzz reading features a rotating cast of semi-venerable poetry community. The atmosphere is similar to most other poetry readings, only instead of wine and cheese there is a coffee bar. Phrases were occasionally punctuated by milk being



NICOLE BARKER | PHOTOGRAPHER

Jes Painter performed original work of poetry during an open mic night at the Buzz.

steamed and creamer being asked for, but otherwise the sound of poetry dominated.

Before the performance began, conversations about radical politics were the mainstay, though most of these were hardly worth the trouble of eavesdropping on. When enough people had shown up to justify the whole experience, an enthusiastic emcee took the stage and introduced

the first act. A few minutes into the first performance was enough to remind me why I make fun of these things. Every line dripped with worn out imagery and bland, literal pronouncements of underdeveloped political thought. The poems were not so much poetry as a dull essay on world affairs by an over enthusiastic poli-sci major.

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