Malware: An Evolving Hold on an Uneducated Society

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Ledin, J. (2011). The growing harm of not teaching malware. *Communications of the ACM, 54*(2), 32-34.

In “The Growing Harm of not Teaching Malware” by Ledin, the author emphasizes the idea that education on malware is essential to understanding it and ultimately preventing it. Ledin describes how it has evolved from being a mischievous endeavor to a fully-fledged criminal or war like act. He states that there is little to no curriculum in the educational systems so computer science undergrads have as much knowledge on the subject as an average everyday computer user. An analogy that he describes concerning the principles of teaching malware is very interesting. It describes by comparing to a time when autopsies were once forbidden, preventing the gain of further knowledge in the medical field. Ledin then concludes with describing how far malware has come and can continue to grow unless we do something about it. His writing, I find, is inspiring and I concur with his suggestions to gain the upper hand against the intensifying threat.

Benford, G. (2011). Catch me if you can. *Communications of the ACM, 54*(3), 112-111.

Benford describes in his article “Catch Me if You Can” the unforeseen future of the computer virus after his initial creation in 1969. During his time working with the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANet) he locates flaws in an email system and sends code to exploit it. With the intent to prove a weakness his programming bug executed flawlessly and lead him to understand that it is only a matter of time until society realizes loopholes exist. Benford continues by describing the progression of specific malware in history and reflects on the possible future within our technology driven world. Events like the Stuxnet virus that were aimed to disrupt controller software within a nuclear power plant in Iran gives a dismal glimpse of things to come. As our technology improves, so does the threat that malware poses on it. It is like an invisible evil lurking behind the good that invention brings. In conclusion, Benford notions that the best defense against malware is a well thought out plan utilizing present day viral issues. Benford is an astrophysicist and science-fiction author best known for his novel series “*Galactic Center Saga.*”

Spafford, E. H. (2010). Privacy and security: Remembrances of things pest. *Communications of the ACM, 53*(8), 35-37.

Spafford in “Privacy and security: Remembrances of things pest” opens the mind to what has happended with the development of malware since Gregory Benford's first notion of the computer virus. Not only does he describe the behaviours and types of malicious code, but the financial strain that it has caused and continues to cause on the economy. Spafford later presents in point form what has contributed to viral development, offers ideas and theories for a counteraction, and concludes with

some motivational writing to begin hunting for more permanent solutions before present day situations becomes dire. A great point Spafford makes earlier on in his article gives malware a positive light which is not something it is normally associated with. Code that would infect a piece of software to prevent other viral brethren from affecting it makes me believe that there is a possibility of using infectious code for the greater good where standard practices have failed.