The Facebook addiction spreads

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A new pestilence is sweeping across the land with unremitting virulence. You may have thought you were safe from it. You may have even thought you would be able to control the disease-that you were immune from it. No such luck. It has spread to this campus. It has spread to your homes and offices. It has even spread to your home computer. The name of the disease: The Facebook.

Don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about. Don't act like you haven't already spent hours adding friends and joining random groups, including the group entitled "I'm addicted to Joining Random Facebook Groups." If you actually haven't encountered this epidemic. Whose side effects may cause grade reduction and sleep deprivation, I will explain.

Facebook is possibly the greatest and most entertaining timewaster disguising itself as a unifying college community since study groups. Registration is simple; you must simply have a university e-mail address to join. You can then create your profile, much like a typical forum Internet site, and start viewing profiles along common interests, joining groups and adding friends. After that, you can begin to indulge in the witty and highly intellectual discourse about cartoons and living in a van down by the river. You can convince yourself that you're doing something productive and noteworthy, especially when you join or form an organization group, or even meet new people from the many other colleges hosted on Facebook. But let's face it. Facebook is entertaining and addictive, pure and simple. Most of the groups center around various movies, TV shows and hobbies. Even more include what we would call MSU in-jokes, hooking people with Waffle House, the wave guy, hatred of online homework and various fan clubs for random unknown individuals.

You do get more than entertainment from Facebook, though. As I was browsing last night. Presumably doing research for this article. A certain sense of satisfaction crept up on me. I was seeing people online that I had noticed throughout campus, and even had classes with a few of them. I saw how people I knew were connected to other people, and even other people I knew. I was starting to get a sample of just how interconnected this university is.
Not only does everyone know everyone, I began to realize that people were actually talking and finding common interests outside of their own group of friends. How often does that really happen walking across campus? We see people every day, and we talk to people on the cell phone between classes, but where can we find the free discourse of Facebook anywhere else outside of organizations?

Facebook is a place for unlimited communication—where anyone can talk to anyone without barrier. And we can do it all on our own time, without leaving our own territory or comfort zone. And where can you find a place that you only talk about one common interest. People do not have a sign on their foreheads listing that they're interested in '80s movies and skeeball. Neither can you simply ask, "Hey, I was looking for someone who likes Bob Marley and, hey, you look like just the type..." Yeah. That would work. That's where Thefacebook comes in. Not only can you join the Bob Marley group, you can also click the link to Bob Marley in your interests. The site will perform an instant search through profiles to find all the people who groove to Marley.

And I've only been talking about people from MSU. On this site, we can have the same type of discourse with college students all over America. Our relatively small community of MSU can expand to encompass like-minded "scholars" from far and wide. We can discuss sushi with a guy from Maine. Isn't that fun?

As with any form of entertainment, especially on the Internet, we must use moderation and not have to join the group "Facebook Made Me Fail My Exams!!" We must remember that with great power, or a great forum site, comes great responsibility. Your Bush group can wait until after physics homework. Just keep repeating that to yourself, and you may believe it.