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Shawn Anderson, a sophomore horticulture major, flame sterilizes an inoculating loop before transferring soft rot bacteria from one agar plate to another.

Protesters resort to hacking

Anti-globalist 'hacktivists' target WTO, big business onlin GENEVA (AP) — The techni- and held "virtual sit-ins" designed to

cians at the World Trade Organization (WTO) got a bit suspicious when "journalists" in an online press conference went by screen names like "NO-TO-WTO."

Still, WTO Director-General Mike Moore gamely answered all questions thrown at him — until he was knocked off-line by anti-globalization protesters with excellent computer skills.

This week, similarly motivated "hacktivists" grabbed headlines, an-nouncing they had collected credit card and other personal data on some 1,400 business and political leaders by breaking into the database of last month's World Economic Forum.

Increasingly, social activists have turned to hacking to make their point, breaking into computer systems and wreaking havoc on organizations

The Internet has turned out to be a remarkable tool for nonviolent protest on a scale activists could only

The term "hacktivist" was first applied to supporters of the Zapatista rebels in Mexico's southern state of Chiapas, who have sabotaged Mexican government Websites since 1998 the expense of the environment and favorite targets of hacktivists.

overload servers.

More recently, the tactic has been used in Serbia, Pakistan and India and by both Palestinians and Israelis in the Middle East. In one case,

This poses operational security problems, (and) goes beyond what we've seen before."

- Kent Anderson Control Risks Group vice president of computer services

Palestinian sympathizers broke into a Website operated by a pro-Israel lobbying group in the United States, stealing credit card information and email addresses.

The theft of private data is a relatively new tactic, however, that goes beyond defacing Websites and electronic bombardment of servers.

Anti-globalist protesters contend the WTO's trade treaties benefit big corporations and rich countries at Donald's, Starbucks and the beaffected by System West.

workers. They consider the W Economic Forum, which ho high-profile annual meeting Swiss resort of Davos, to epi the elitist dealmaking they o

Protesters who showed person were largely stymied Duag heavy police presence a month's Davos meeting. 0 however, they effectively mounted physical barriers.

The Net "is another frontie people to engage in these types o tivities," said Joel Scambray, a se rity analyst at Foundstonelic.

The attacks against forum org. Despite the nizers showed just how far hard ending No tivists could reach: They obtained ists say they travel itineraries — including fli The invest numbers — of politicians around the world, and publish d by Dan Bu

them on the Web. This poses operational sec problems, (and) goes beyond we've seen before," said Kent derson, vice president of comp security with the London-based Sity Fund's (P

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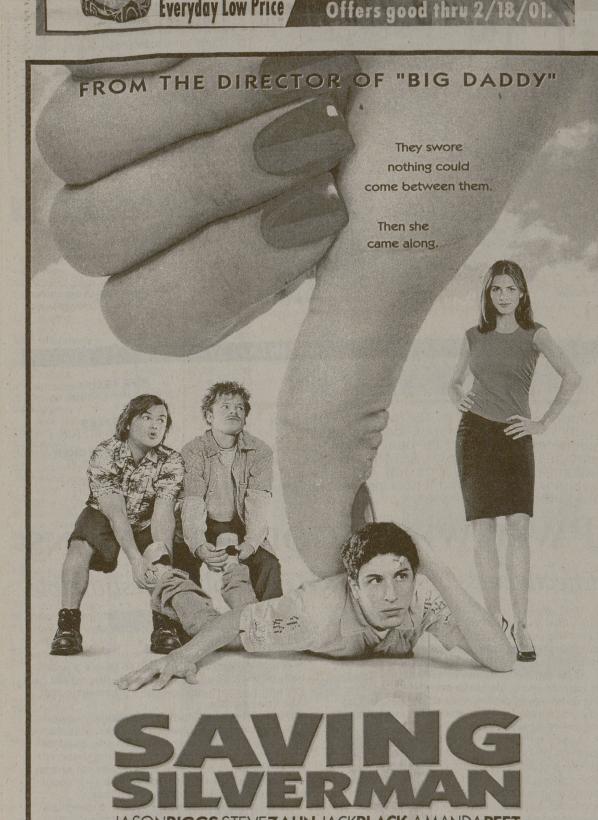
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