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HACKING

THE CASE OF EDWARD AUSTIN SINGH

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Here is a fairly old but not publicised enough article on a famous hacker. One single Sunday afternoon a programmer remained preoccupied at Guildford University in England. His name, Edward Austin Singh. His preoccupation included browsing through computer files on a military network in the United States, He was connected to another computer in Germany via the one in America, his satellite link crossed and recrossed the Atlantic, He was once again Hacking into an important system. That day at 7.10pm he was caught by a detective Superintendent and a detective inspector of Scotland Yard's serious crime squad whom walked in and passed across their police identification cards. Singh had no choice but to admit to all his computer crimes. He explained to them that he would break into systems by one particular scheme that worked very well. He wrote a capture program that grabbed people's passwords. They thought it was just the terminal asking for their passwords, but it stored them and Singh would collect them later. During his exploration, the more he hacked, the more hackers he came into contact with, always leaving messages or answering queries on various Bulletin Boards and chat systems. Singh penetrated these systems completely, in most cases he could gain super-user or system manager privileges and he got into everything connected up to the network. If Singh couldn't get into a system then all he would do was contact someone else through another Bulletin Board and they would help him. While he was browsing through various boards, he found valid credits cards with numbers on them, so thanks to hackers like Singh we were all able to start 'Phreaking'. He had broken into NASA and examined details of a project which was being planned, it included details of an unmanned mission to Mars! He also found his way into Nuclear power stations and he explored a space defence centre operated by a US government arms manufacturer. There was no system in the whole world which could keep him out! When he was bored, he would break into a system and put a back door into it and he would send messages to the Sysop telling him that he had been penetrated by hackers, then he would wait and see if the Sysop could keep him out. Usually they just changed the passwords and never found the back door. It is amazing to know that half of the people that run these systems have absolutely no idea what the hell is going on! Operations to catch Singh were going on for at least six months by the United States Secret Service. But even Singh already knew that they were onto him before he was caught, because of a message left on a BBS by another hacker warning him that the US head office was aware of Hacking in his general area and they had isolated him and wanted his name. Many System owners became very unhappy when Singh admitted to, and showed how he broke into those Systems because some of them appeared to be absolutely

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vulnerable to infiltration.

When Singh was arrested he estimated that he had about 250 systems under his control, which were computer sites that he could enter anytime again at his own will.

Believe it or not, Singh's did not receive any punishment for all of his activities! he got let off with a strict warning!

Also, to his good fortune of being caught he obtained a job as a software security consultant. 'You have to be a hacker to catch a hacker' one has always said.

Singh's main goal, before he was caught was total world domination! He wanted everything under his very own control. It was the ULTIMATE game on the ULTIMATE scale. He got a thrill out of beating the systems, and having so much power.

Saying that Singh was obsessed was a gross understatement! (aren't we all obsessed in one way or another when dealing with computers?) The sheer scope of fraud, espionage and damage had never been greater. Singh was one of the best hackers in this generation, although his efforts breaking into a lot of systems were not all that hard to achieve. But it involved a lot of time, patience and instinct which Singh seemed to have as a second nature. Hacking is not only a past-time, but for many people it is an art-form.

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