*Computer crimes -> cyberterrorism, hacking*

Defined broadly, the term "computer crime" could reasonably include a wide variety of criminal offenses, activities, or issues. The potential scope is even larger when using the frequent companion or substitute term "computer-related crime." Given the pervasiveness of computers in everyday life, even in the lives of those who have never operated a computer, there is almost always some nontrivial nexus between crime and computers.

By the FBI's definition, cyberterrorism is well beyond the scope of this paper. With increasing frequency this term is being used by the mass media. Absent any evidence of activity, we'll leave it in the "eye of the beholder" to determine whether cyberterrorism is currently being deterred, is a phantom menace…or somewhere in between.

A key distinction between electronic civil disobedience and politicized hacking is anonymity. The motive for remaining secret is simple: the majority of politically motivated hacks are clearly illegal. Most institutions recognize that breaking into an opponent's computer and adding, changing or deleting (HTML) code, even if it is juvenile graffiti, violates some other’s rights. Attitudes and opinions begin to diverge markedly around this point however. One person’s activist is another’s terrorist.

"A lot of groups are claiming that they're hacking into sites for a higher moral purpose, but they're hiding beyond anonymity or pseudonymity. Taking responsibility is not something we see happening."

At the heart of this discussion is the question of motive. Opinions differ just as much within the hacker community as outside over the efficacy of certain actions. The spate of (zombie) DDoS attacks against prominent e-commerce sites that occurred in February 2000 sparked a debate between two prominent hacker collectives. The Electrohippies Collective claims the Internet as a public space liable to be used by groups and individuals as a means of protest. As activists, they admit no practical difference between how cyberspace and the street are used by society.

Recent actions on the Internet against e-commerce sites represent a fundamental disagreement about the purposes of the Internet, and the increasing emphasis on the use of the ‘Net as a vehicle for profitable trade rather than of knowledge and discussion.

The cDc, says, the targeted sites were selected for their name recognition and prestige value, not for their commercial attributes or activities.

You may make yourself feel good and get a lot of attention, but when you crack a Web site, you are violating another person's rights. …what does that mean? CRIME!