

## Subscriber Alert from H-Net

Peter Knupfer, H-Net

Dear H-Net subscribers:

A very serious situation has arisen in which many (perhaps thousands) of our subscribers are being deleted from our lists due to filtering technologies and policies being implemented by major Internet Service Providers, as well as some universities. It will take a combined effort by our subscribers and H-Net's management to resolve the situation. Please read the following message and help us where you can:

Many of you know already that major internet service providers have installed very strong antispam filters at their mail gateways and are implementing stringent policies to block spam. In most cases, all it takes is a small percentage of recipients to mark or complain about a particular IP address of origin for the ISP to block the relay of messages from the offending IP range.

This issue has affected H-Net, even though our subscribers by definition voluntarily join our lists. AOL in particular (including its subsidiary netscape.net and cs.com) has begun to block mail from our node; we estimate that perhaps 6,000 of our subscribers have AOL addresses. The bounces from undelivered mail eventually trigger deletion from our subscription lists; hundreds of subscribers are being dropped from our rolls everyday.

We have tried to work with AOL to have them recognize H-Net traffic as legitimate but with no success so far; we will keep trying to do so. But AOL's policies for regaining entry to its domain are technically impossible for us to comply with and, in some cases, raise serious issues concerning free speech.

There are several options you pursue to help assure the unfettered flow of information from H-Net:

- consider resubscribing to your lists from an email address and node outside of AOL or of the ISP that may be blocking H-Net traffic.
- if you normally do not save list postings, then consider setting your H-Net list subscriptions to NOMAIL to suspend email postings to you, then follow the list discussion via its web-based logs, and when you wish to participate feel free to post -- the ISPs are only blocking incoming, not

outgoing mail to the list. All of our lists display their logs on the web; just bookmark the list's home page and link to the logs from there. You can also set up RSS news feeds from your favorite lists and follow them in any RSS-compatible browser (Internet Explorer 7 and Firefox do this). Visit <http://www.h-net.org/about/rss.php> for information.

– contact your service provider to protest the interference with your mail and to demand that access be restored. Service providers do listen to their customers.

– please do not report mail from h-net.msu.edu as spam or junk mail. Instead, contact our help desk at [help@mail.h-net.msu.edu](mailto:help@mail.h-net.msu.edu) or use our subscriber center to signoff lists you no longer wish to receive. If you have technical difficulties, we'll be glad to help you. Feel free to write me directly if these methods are for some reason not effective.

– Please circulate this message to colleagues who may already have been affected by ISP spam blocking and would otherwise not receive it.

If you are successful in getting your ISP to relent, please write directly to me at the address below; such intelligence would be useful in our ongoing campaign to bring down these barriers.

We regret that the rage for security has gotten to the point where teachers, students, scholars, and professionals must face such hurdles to effective and free communications.

Thank you for your continued support of H-Net.

Sincerely,

Peter

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Reference:

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<<https://arthist.net/archive/28939>>.