



Associated Collegiate Press /  
National Scholastic Press Association  
All American  
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1987 1988 1989  
1990 1991 1992  
Regional Pacemaker  
1988  
Journalism Association  
of Community Colleges  
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General Excellence  
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General Excellence  
Fall 2004  
General Excellence  
Fall 2005

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The *MONITOR* is funded by the district, by the Associated Students of Ohlone College, and through advertising revenue.

The *MONITOR* is a member of the Associated Collegiate Press, Journalism Association of Community Colleges, Community College Journalism Association, California Newspaper Publishers Association, College Media Advisers and Society of Newspaper Design.



OPINION

# Spy cameras: will we give up privacy for security?

By **KYLE STEPHENS**  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Unless you've been under a rock the past week (which is actually a pretty good hiding spot from prying eyes), you should be aware of a recent incident involving a school spying on one of their own students, in his own home.

The parents of Blake Robbins, a Pennsylvania Lower Merion School District student, are suing the district for invasion of privacy among other things, for the school disciplining him for "improper

behavior in his home." Apart from questions of how far does a school's jurisdiction extend, how this accusation was evidenced is more scary: each student in the district gets a laptop, all equipped with webcams.

Unbeknownst to students and their parents, not even in some fine-print disclaimer, this webcam can be remotely activated and used to observe those using the laptop. This was intended as a security measure (the laptop manufacturer offered it as an option when they sold the machines to the district),

but it doesn't seem to imbue much security in terms of keeping things from being stolen if no one knows about it.

Nothing has been conclusively proven yet, though so far Robbins alleges what was seen as taking a pill in lieu of dealing drugs was him merely having some candy.

Whatever he ultimately did or did not do, the implications of trust, on both the student and administrative side, are very worrisome.

School districts do have a right to protect their property, but not to overstep legal requirements of

search, probable cause, among other things. In any court, this evidence would be inadmissible for lack of a warrant – a blanket search for missing computers is that and that alone, and even then using the cameras, without prior informing of their existence and possible use is sketchy.

Students should also be able to trust their administrators, and to use educational materials (laptops etc.) without walking on eggshells, afraid that any wrong move will result in disciplinary action – tear a page in a textbook and have to

pay for a new one? These are just broader examples of what can go wrong with the mistrusting mindset, let alone what it can mean if your teacher can make sure you're doing your homework, or whatever else you may be doing.

The sending and receiving "Telescreen" of George Orwell's 1984 seems all too real now. While we often hope for the written word to spring to life, we must also be wary of what dangers advances in technology can bring – stop and wonder who is watching you.

# The music industry copes with the end of an era

By **TINA KARIMI**  
Staff writer

Many of us dimly remember Napster, the Stone Age version of Limewire, essentially being sued for providing people with free music. Free music! Over the Internet! "What's next," musicians and executives muttered, "leaking CDs?" Perhaps if music labels had tried to embrace a new way of marketing music back then, the industry wouldn't be in shambles today.

Now, there are numerous ways of listening to music for free, illegal downloads are commonplace. Music for the most part is on the computer, not the racks of record stores, and if you're a well-known

artist, it's practically a given that your album will leak. Every step of the way, major music labels have not adapted to these changes, hurting their own profits, the artists and music in general.

Artists and labels have criticized the Internet. Labels complain that it bleeds away their money. But the criticisms of the artists are more intriguing. Aside from artists' sentimental recollections of speeding down the road on a Tuesday afternoon to pick up a new CD, artists point out that while the Internet makes it easier for new artists to get discovered, these musicians sometimes find it more difficult to establish themselves.

Of course, the Internet may

provide the advantage of allowing new artists to get their music out to a large audience and attract many more people to their live shows. Live shows and the sale of merchandise are two of the biggest ways in which musical acts make a profit (or rather, for new or independent acts, or bands signed to smaller labels, make a living). Bands can build an audience for their live shows right away by using new media.

The rise of music websites makes it possible for artists to publish music on their own that could potentially reach millions of listeners, but it also makes it easier for music fans to download songs for free, thus, if a new band is not making money in another arena (ticket or

merchandise sales), it will not be able to stay afloat. Even major, established record labels will sign fewer artists and take fewer chances. The result? Music becomes over-saturated, with artists trying to somehow distinguish themselves within the bubble of radio-friendly music in order to garner enough attention to stay relevant or to be signed to a major label to acquire more resources.

But many of the industry's woes are a direct result of trying to pander to the radio and sell CDs in a time when both are quickly becoming obsolete. Podcasts and Internet radio are gaining prevalence. Music is bought, sold and stolen online. Everything the music industry had

stood on is rapidly falling apart. The industry is starting to see the writing on the wall and acknowledges the Internet as the primary vendor of music.

It is likely a new industry will arise—one that is more concerned with nurturing artists' careers than trying to pander to trends. There will be so much variety available on the Internet that trying to make it to the Top 40 will no longer be viable. Music vendors will be forced to find artists who sound different, and will deliver more than a one-hit wonder. This will lead to a paradigm shift in the music industry. Power will be based not with corporate music, but with listeners. There

*Continued on Page 3*

CAMPUS COMMENT >>>

# Do you think Tiger should return to golfing?



**Aaron Loverro**  
MARINE BIOLOGY  
"He should focus on his family right now 'cause he messed up a lot."



**Casey Parks**  
UNDECIDED  
"Not until he reestablishes himself as an acceptable role model."



**Alex Duran**  
SOCIOLOGY  
"He should do community service first."



**Megan Brown**  
ART HISTORY  
"Yes, He's a great golfer and womanizing has nothing to do with golf."



**Leroy Gilchrist**  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
"Yes he should because what he did is just being blown out of proportion."