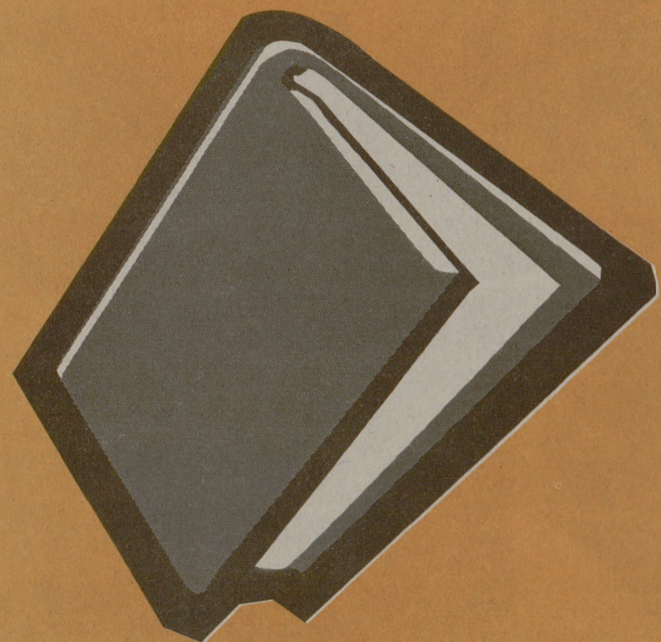


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**JACOB'S LADDER**  
*Holidays bring issues of theft, home safety*

How safe are student's possessions? Are students more likely to be vandalized when away from home?

A question that a lot of students ask themselves, whether classes are breaking for the winter or beginning in the spring, is, "Do these khakis make my butt look big?" But a more appropriate question milling their minds is, "Will all of my beloved appliances (aka: Playstation and CDs) be where I left them when I get back?" Security is a common concern among students and non students alike.

A recurring phenomenon in conversation are the accounts of how a student was "cleaned out," so to speak, while away during the holidays.

The typical response is reciting the Aggie Code of Honor, doing a secret handshake and finding it hard to believe that someone could lose all of their worldly possessions. But the concept is not too unbelievable if one considers the security systems afforded by student income — namely, anything cheaper than a Monica Lewinsky brand chastity belt.

Many students hope to prevent thieves from stealing their things by cleverly hiding them under mountains of empty bottles, dirty clothes, course syllabuses and Twinkie wrappers. This often proves ineffective, as most vandals carry shovels and blasting equipment.

A new development in personal security on a budget is the placement of small post-it notes that contain burglary-discouraging messages on all possessions. Some field-tested examples are "Do not touch! Contains Gonorrhea!" and "Beware! Carries a terrible curse."

There exists a particular risk when students leave their homes for summer or winter breaks, but the risk and worry can be overcome by calling on an old, forgotten friend — common sense.

It has been recommended not to tell many people about plans to vacate for a month. In fact, LAPD Chief Doug Bates recently suggested, "If a stranger asks you if you're going to be gone for a few weeks, the best bet is to look both ways, say 'no,' and then stop, drop, and roll!"

But it can be hard to remain inconspicuous while cramming so many possessions into Daddy's Jeep. A solution to this problem was introduced by Steve McQueen in the 1963 movie *The Great Escape*, when he escaped a WWII prison camp — the tunnel. By digging a tunnel from the home to the car, one can safely and confidently transport all belongings at his or her own pace.

Some items may require a more subtle form of movement, as McQueen displayed by discreetly emptying pocketful after pocketful of tunneled dirt during his bout with imprisonment. If confronted about television-shaped bulges in the hip pocket, one should revert to handy excuses such as, "Why yes, I am happy to see you," and, "I told you these khakis make my butt look big!"

Yet another security concern among students is the party. The swindling of property in the midst of a party is a serious problem that has been traced to exist since the time of ancient Druids.

Druids would top off a night of worshipping the moon and bowling by throwing an extravagant party, during which there were, according to runes, numerous occasions of plunder and misplacement.

Fortunately, when plunder occurs today, students no longer have to resort to human sacrifice

to get their stuff back. Methods to human sacrifice include: bolting all possessions to the floor, performing random checks on all in attendance, handcuffing all guests as they pass through the door, etc. In case it is recommended on major host purchases many lockboxes.

But beware! Many methods are out there to trick unsuspecting guests by disguising themselves as a landlord, writing what appears to be an "eviction notice," changing door locks and then immediately relocking them.

Also, criminals often take advantage of windows unlocked, thus providing easy access and opportunity to cover one's estate. It is recommended to retrieve stolen property as soon as possible. The Hollywood police are usually prepared with other criminal scenarios.

As a matter of fact, discussion contact the police at all times. Spin City too busy issuing DUIs to investigate Northgate.

There are a lot of ways to alleviate any anxiety one may feel about the security of their possessions, but if there are still doubts concerning security, help out personally. Simply a self-addressed, stamped envelope containing a letter to be mailed when the home is vacated and a key to the mailbox.

Megastudent  
c/o The Battalion

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