

# AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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## PIRATES OF THE MP3IN

### Music lovers face consequences as the RIAA cracks down on illegal file sharing

By Amy Malone  
THE BATTALION

4. Stealing music threatens the livelihood of the thousands of working people—from recording engineers to record store clerks—who are employed in the music industry.

copying of copyrighted works.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act further stresses that anyone who has been given notice of infringement and not taken action are subject to resulting damages incurred by the infringer, copyright owner or service provider.

#### WHY PAY?

Downloading a song from a computer using Kazaa or iMesh is illegal. Believe it or not, it is not hard for the RIAA to track your tracks.

Cantrell said they are required by law to take down any notices that the RIAA sends them regarding illegal or abusive downloading practices.

The A&M campus receives four to five calls per week on excessive and illegal music downloading with residence halls as the subject of most of these.

"We keep track; if repeated, we turn those names over to Student Conflict Resolution Services ... No subpoenas yet. I expect there will be one day," Cantrell said.

There is currently not enough money in the University's budget to buy more restrictions on campus Internet. The University follows the guidelines of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

The act states that measures should be taken to prevent unauthorized access and

#### WHO IS AT RISK?

Congress was told earlier this month by the president of the RIAA, Cary H. Sherman, that lawsuits would only be filed against users who download and share large amounts of songs that are copyrighted.

According to The Heights, the student newspaper at Boston College, three undergraduates from BC were subpoenaed for sharing songs in June and July, including songs by Busta Rhymes, LFO, Lauryn Hill, Marvin Gaye, Michael Jackson and Snoop Dogg.

On Sept. 8, 261 lawsuits were filed by the recording industry against Internet music sharers, as well. For each violation transgressors may be held liable for anywhere from \$750 and \$150,000 under copyright law.

Amanda Collins of the RIAA said that the only way students can be positive that they are in compliance with the law is to follow the directives of the Joint Committee, which acts as a "clearing house" for the music and movie industries and scrutinize the [www.musicunited.org](http://www.musicunited.org) Web site for further understanding.

Whether this should even be an issue is a hot topic among college students today. Most do not feel lukewarm about the rights to music.

Local singer/songwriter and junior communications major Richard O'Toole believes music should transcend money and legal issues.

"Music is a gift to this world and should be shared at no cost," he said.

Online file sharing is an undoubtedly a good way for starting musicians to get their name out there, O'Toole said. But other students do consider this stealing and cannot find justification for it.

David Gardiner, a junior psychology major, said he agrees that artists work extremely hard at what they do, but is turned off to paying for music because of artists' lifestyles.

"Watching shows like MTV's 'Cribs' and 'Diary,' I just can't say that I feel bad about downloading music," Gardiner said.

Whether a malicious act or just an impatient one from waiting by the radio, this Generation Now wants its music in a hurry.

Cantrell thinks it is important to supply knowledge on this subject.

"We are trying to provide education to the students to try to encourage them that they shouldn't violate the law," she said.

So the next time there is a hankerin' to hear the good old beer drinkin' boys of Texas country such as Robert Earl Keen and Roger Creager check the copyright and break down and pay the whole \$0.99, just in case.

Visit [www.musicunited.org](http://www.musicunited.org) for more information on the legal uses of music.

#### WHAT IS LEGAL?

There are now online stores available such as iTunes and BuyMusic for purchasing songs. On the BuyMusic Web site visitors may have access to John's Mayer's "Heavier Things" album for \$12.79; however, they cannot buy single tracks from this particular CD.

Most individual songs, such as Brooks and Dunn's "Red Dirt Road," are available for \$0.99.

What started off as an Apple computer-based program, iTunes has now opened up to Windows users via iPod, a device that downloads music from an entire music library into a "lighter than 2 CDs" device, which has a "battery that lasts all day." The starting price is \$299.

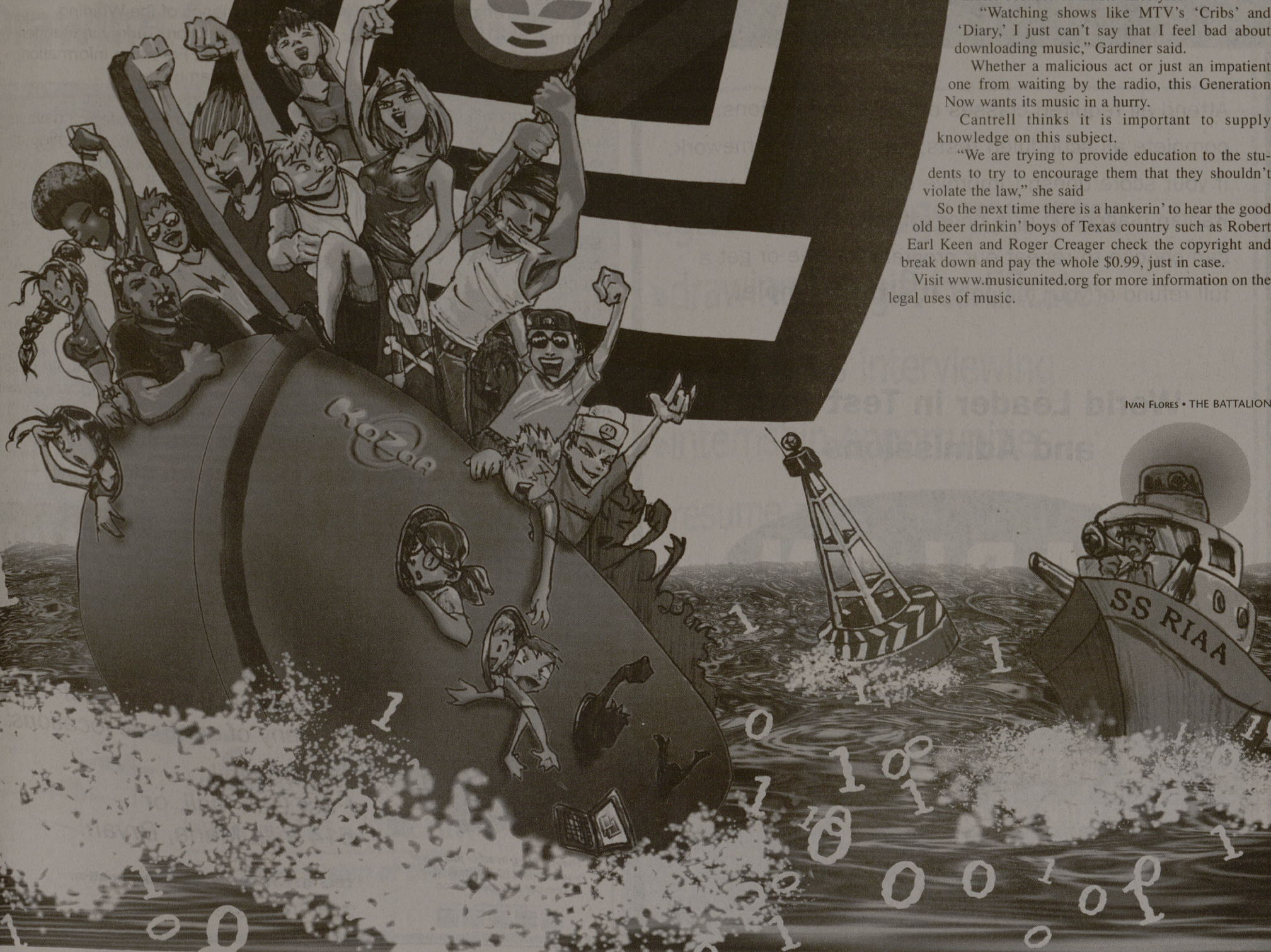
Recognizing that consumers will find other avenues for downloading songs, record companies have decided to make a compromise with these online stores.

The Recording Industry Association of America's definition of copyright is "the protection of the original expression of an idea, whether it is expressed in the form of music, a painting or written material."

People are violating copyrights when files are made public by uploading, sent through an e-mail or chat service, or reproduced and distributed as mixed CDs without permission from the owner.

The Web site [www.musicunited.org](http://www.musicunited.org) gives four reasons why one should not steal music:

1. Stealing music is against the law.
2. Stealing music betrays the songwriters and recording artists who create it.
3. Stealing music stifles the careers of new artists and up-and-coming bands.



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