

Wikileaks Karaoke (3:15)

Let Her Eat Cake (3:18)

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We live in a time where technology has become inundated within our culture. Whether we are watching the latest television show on Netflix, shopping for the newest products, or notifying our acquaintances of our lives on social media, the ways in which the Internet has affected society is drastic. During this time of innovation, there are also issues of security, surveillance and privacy. After researching technology and its effects on culture, I was disheartened to find out much of the Internet is utilized for capitalist gain, and not for the transmission of vital information.

While coming to the understanding of the economic importance of the Internet, I began to critique its censorship and problematic surveillance of the users. For the piece, *Let Her Eat Cake*, the woman is struggling to read pages from the controversial PATRIOT Act, while being force fed birthday cake by two men in suits. This performance signifies how it can be difficult to have a voice and speak openly about societal issues, while being pushed to purchase, consume, and be a part of the economic system.

Wikileaks Karaoke also deals with the many issues with the use of Internet within US American society, and how censorship can be extremely detrimental. The US soldier Edward Snowden released National Security documents that described the atrocities of the Iraq War. He posted these documents on Julian Assange's infamous website Wikileaks. He wanted the United States public to fully understand what our government was hiding from us. At this point, I could see the Internet being used in a way that was beneficial—showing the truth about a bloody war, and giving consistent evidence of what the US government was attempting to do. Unfortunately, both men were put in prison for releasing documents that showed the face of the Iraq War. For *Wikileaks Karaoke* I found a copy of the original documents and saved them to my computer, where in turn, I edited parts of the documents into a karaoke program, and turned them into lyrics that went along to the melody of "God Bless the USA". This piece invites the viewer to "sing along". This juxtaposition version of this song has the most intense aspects from the documents, and attempts to make the viewer confront their personal understanding of the United States' political scheme.

Both of these pieces intend to serve as a medium through which to discuss the societal dilemmas of technology, consumerism, and censorship. They are readily available on Youtube as a means of starting discussion, and interestingly enough have been banned in countries such as Russia and Japan for their content.