

Vandalism in audio/video lab is 'worst ever'

Christy Earnhardt
Staff Reporter

Vandalism in the audio/video room in the Fine Arts Building during this semester has cost the communications department hundreds of dollars.

"My guess is that more than \$750 worth of equipment has been destroyed or stolen," Professor Don Grady said.

The vandalism includes: compact discs shredded by a razor blade, stolen compact discs, stolen compact disc interface box, stolen tone arm heads, rewired equipment and broken microphones.

"I borrowed two microphones from the Learning Resource Center to use for an advance audio productions class and someone broke the heads off both microphones," Grady said.

"This was deliberate physical damage on someone's part...it was not an accident," he said.

As a result, the LRC is more hesitant to loan equipment to the communications department.

"I want to help the department as much as I can, but equipment is just too expensive to throw away like that," Chris Fulkerson, associate director of Learning Resources Center said.

The police however have not been notified. "This has probably not been reported because suspicious things have been occurring very gradually, not all at once," Grady said.

Although the audio/video room has experienced wear and tear over the last six years "this is the worst I've seen it in terms of willful destruction of property," Grady said.

There is no supervision in the audio/video room from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. After 5 p.m., student workers supervise the room until 11 p.m.

"No supervision may be part of the problem," Grady said.

Changes by the department will be made this summer to increase

security, said George Padgett, chair of the communications department. "Perhaps more student workers will be added so the room will not be left unsupervised," he said.

Before, the department used a "key system" to regulate who entered the room, Professor Gerald Gibson said.

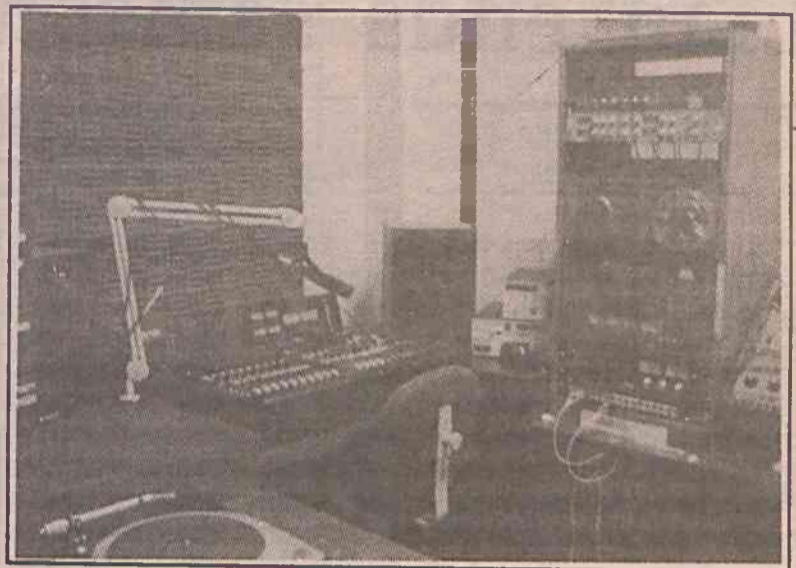
To use the room a student had to present their identification card to the Fine Arts secretary who had a key.

The system ended because "it was driving us crazy," Brenda Cooper, secretary to the director of cultural programs, said.

"It seemed like it should be the communications responsibility...not ours," she said.

Besides money, a great loss is "our patience," said Gibson. The destruction of equipment "has created a lot of frustration" he said.

"I don't feel compelled to go out and buy anymore compact discs. This has taken away my enthusiasm," Gibson said.



Stacy Mogo/The Pendulum
Damage to the audio/video lab has cost the communications department \$750.

"How am I supposed to be enthusiastic about teaching when I'm spending so much time fixing things...it drains you," he said.

Although the decision to purchase new equipment has not been made, the broken equipment will be

replaced or repaired over the summer, Padgett said.

"I don't know why people would destroy or steal the stuff. It doesn't make sense because they are only hurting themselves in the end," senior Joe Kilty said.

Drug suspect fleeing police hops ride with unsuspecting students

Mary Kelli Bridges
Staff Reporter

A man fleeing from police last Thursday jumped into a car with three Elon College students, police said Friday.

Donald Emmanuel Watlington, 25, had been caught selling six rocks of crack cocaine to undercover Gibsonville police Maj. Gary Felts at 6:15 p.m., police officials said.

Watlington ran from the parking lot of The Pantry, a convenience store on the corner of Williamson and Haggard avenues, as Felts prepared to arrest him, Elon College Police Chief Dan Ingle said.

He ran in the direction of Williamson Avenue and tried unsuccessfully to climb into a car.

Watlington then ran to the Jordan Center parking lot, where he offered three Elon College students \$10 for a ride home, Ingle said.

He was in the car when officers arrived to arrest him. The students were not harmed.

"(The) officers had to draw (their) guns because he was a fleeing felon and they had information that he was armed," Ingle said.

No gun was found, however. Watlington was out on bond for second-degree kidnapping, Ingle said.

Watlington was taken to the Elon College Police Department, questioned and booked. He was then taken to the Alamance County Jail in the front seat of Detective Mike Woznick's car.

When they arrived, Watlington, who was wearing handcuffs, took off the seat belt, jumped out of the car and ran.

Graham and Burlington police officers and sheriff's deputies helped recapture Watlington.

Police found \$100 from the drug sale under the seat of student Sherri Annette Hill's brown Hyundai, Ingle said.

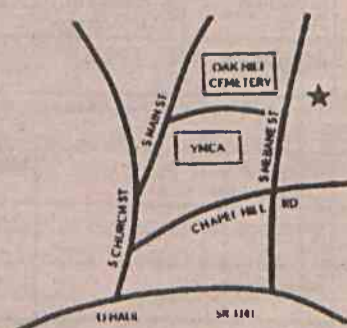
Watlington was charged with felonious possession of crack cocaine, possession with intent to sell and deliver, selling and delivering of crack cocaine, and resisting, obstructing, and delaying a police officer.

Watlington was being held on \$50,000 bond last Friday.

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