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Oh, my God (omg)

'There are two men from the Secret Service that want to talk with you. Apparently you made some death threats against President Bush.' 'Are you serious!?!? omg. Am I in a lot of trouble?'

The first quotation is a text message sent by Sacramento mother Kirstie Wilson to her daughter, Julia. The second is Julia's text reply to her mother. Julia is a 14 year old student at McClatchy High School, in Sacramento, America.

Horrified by the war in Iraq, Julia uploaded a picture of George Bush to her MySpace.com webpage. She wrote 'Kill Bush' across the top of the picture and drew a dagger stabbing the President's outstretched hand. Julia took her picture down, after learning in her school history class that such threats constitute a federal offence. But, by then, she'd already attracted the attention of the US Secret Service. Julia *'was taken out of biology class last week and questioned for about 15 minutes by two Secret Service agents'* (Age, 15/10/06). According to Julia, the agents yelled at her and said she could be sent to juvenile detention for threatening the life of the President. They then told her they would be deleting her file. *'Secret Service spokesmen said they would not comment'* (ibid).

Meanwhile, the posting on the internet of scenes of teenage violence has attracted media attention in Victoria. A mobile phone video of two girls fighting in the schoolyard of Copperfield College was recently uploaded to the YouTube video site. *'In the clip, labelled 'catfight', one girl pins another to the ground and viciously beats her on the head'* (Age, 15/10/06).

Adolescent psychologist Michael Carr-Gregg said the craze could encourage copycat behaviour. *'He urged all schools to ban the use of camera phones'* (ibid).

Oh, my God. Perhaps we should ban the internet, as well. And while we're about it, why not ban all things technological? Or perhaps we should follow the leadership of Copperfield College principal, Tony Simpson, who does not believe we should ban new technology. He says we should instead teach children about *'ethical and responsible use of the internet, mobile phones and cameras'* (ibid).

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