



SEARCHLIGHTS AND SUNGLASSES

LEARNING LAYER

Security vs. freedom

A free society needs a free flow of information. At the same time, governments now have powerful surveillance tools. Do they make us safer? Do they make the job of being a journalist harder? What about the rights of student journalists? Consider these activities:

Flashlight: What exactly are the rights of student journalists? Research the [Legal Guides](#) produced by the Student Press Law Center (under the Press Freedom and Censorship category). What are the reasons school authorities try to censor student journalists? Are they “security” issues? How can students exercise their rights?

Spotlight: View the [TED talk](#), "Heather Brooke: My Battle to Expose Government Corruption." She urges us to seek facts through Freedom of Information requests. Did the British government try to block Brooke's story? Did it cite security reasons? Why is the “democratization of information” important to society?

Searchlight: During the recent [Boston Marathon bombings](#), facial recognition software helped the FBI locate suspects. What are the pros and cons of the use of that technology? Should the government be able to use it in ways citizens can't? [What happens when citizens use event footage to try to solve crimes on their own and get the wrong results?](#) What does that teach us?