

# But I saw it on the TV!



**Chew on This**  
**Rob Wynne**  
The service editor

Welcome back to Behrend, and welcome to a new year – at least it's new, that's the only optimistic thing I've heard about it thus far. Being an optimistic person, many times I fret when I see negative acts that really, overall, don't benefit anybody, and seem to affect everybody. And certainly this new year, thanks to the media, will end up as a pretty negative one. Now read the following disclaimer very carefully:

*Yes, I know that I, Rob Wynne, am a member of a newspaper – which would be included in the definition of "the media." I may say things in this editorial that criticize the overall institution of "the media," but as a history major, I am more interested in finding truths and putting pieces of past events together, rather than focusing on the means of presenting and predicting the future. I do not believe in jumping the gun and making quick, hasty decisions based upon half-baked hearsay just to get a good story in on time. I am, though, still a proud member of "the media."*

Now that I have that out of the way, there are a few events that I wish to constructively criticize. These are events and/or happenings that have made me worry about the way the media has such a tremendous influence on the way society thinks. If you thought 2000 was bad, 2001 is going to be even worse... Gotcha! Hey, what do I know? Oh yeah, that's right, I write for the media! I have an all-knowing soul that can predict the future once I sit in front of my magic computer terminal.

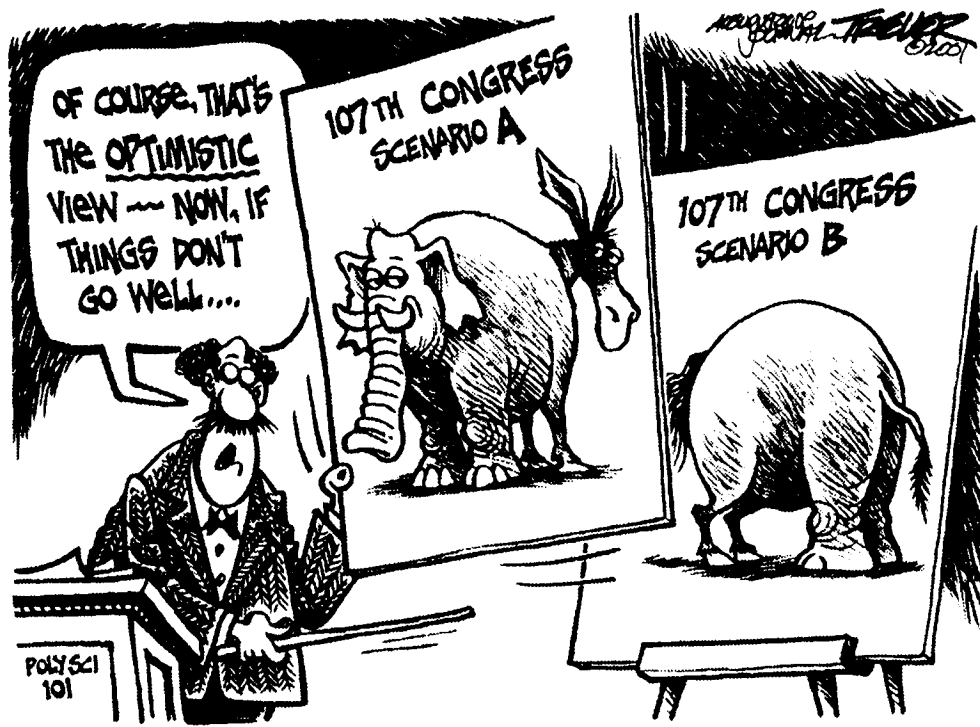
Point #1 – ECONOMY. I love how the cover story of last week's *Time* magazine explains to people how to cope with an upcoming recession. Where did this whole recession idea start from? And since the article grabbed my attention, I started noticing more and more on the "downfalls of the 'New Economy'" as well as recession, debts, and stock market plunges on the TV. Gee, what better way to ring in the new year than to let everyone know that their worth is going to plummet faster than all of the dot-com corporations' stock. It's as if the media is saying "Ha, we'll scare 'em all now..."

And even if it is the truth, does the media not know that they can make the best of an ugly picture? If anyone can to help keep the faith of the general public, it is the media. I don't know, I guess the point here is that I believe the economy is only as good as the media says it is. Instead of saying "recession," why can't phrases like "small bump in the road," or "a quick stop on the economy train" be used? Don't they sound a lot more reassuring?

Point #2 – THIS WHOLE "NAPSTER" THING. The media isn't really the one to blame for this, directly anyway, but isn't this whole Napster thing getting a little old now? I ran a wire article this week about how there will always be free music on the web, and where Napster leaves off, another will follow – FREE. I really am going to have to say that the bands who stepped forward to boldly "try and stop the big and evil Napster" really have rotted some brain cells over the years (I won't mention any names, Metallica). I'm not sure that they realized that when a band as popular as themselves, combined with computers, copyrights, the internet, and MP3's are all put into one news article, many sparks can fly. People absolutely love that kind of news – the news that says "someone beat the system and you can do it too!" I'm willing to bet Napster use went up as a result of all this hype, not down! But you just had to cry "mamma" because you're losing out on what comparably would be a few cents out of your giant gold piggy-bank. Too bad. Why couldn't lawyers quietly settle with the college-age founder of Napster early on and put an end to it all? All they would have had to do is wave a few bucks in front of his face.

Oh well, I guess no one believes in easy solutions anymore. Get the media involved, that seems to be a fad here in the early 21st century – a fad that will contribute to the downfall of a reputation, a national election, and a national economy. Oh well, it's in print, so it must be the truth!

*Wynne's column appears every three weeks*



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# 'The Hot Debate of The Week'

## Oops, they did it again.

*Should you...?*

The life of a 16-year-old girl here in the early 21st century can indeed be a turbulent one. She is faced with many awkward social, emotional, and physical changes. She is learning how to drive, she is getting her first job, she is now seeing more guys (or girls), she is being told to be more responsible, and she is perhaps reaching the closing chapters of her physical development. And as all of these characteristics push her into the social category of "young adult," one characteristic may play a key role in making or breaking this young and delicate woman. Breast size.

Just because a woman was dealt the short stack doesn't mean that it can't be fixed. And yes, sixteen is an okay age to begin pondering implants if one desires. As a matter of fact, it is a key year in a young woman's development. Granted, all of the growing hasn't stopped yet, but admit it, most of it has. Girls are continually maturing at younger and younger ages, and if the age of sixteen is going to be viewed upon as one of young adulthood, then by all means a woman should decide if implants are for her or not.

Now, of course, not all girls are going to be pressed with this dilemma. But for some girls, a larger (not necessarily huge) top could mean having higher self-esteem, establishing that certain confidence that everyone needs in high school, and more social interactions. After all, it's just surgery...it's the most common plastic surgery in the UK and is becoming increasingly safer through FDA research.

*Every week, two editors from the staff will debate a topic that is hot. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to email suggestions for the hot topic. Send ideas to behrcoll2@aol.com*

We all know that real beauty is on the inside, but it shouldn't be surgically implanted. Young girls under the age of 18 should not be allowed to get breast implants, even if they have their parent's permission.

Role models like Britney Spears give girls the false impression that their bodies have to look a certain way to be considered beautiful, and some may take drastic steps to make themselves beautiful. And getting breast implants at a young age is something that is becoming increasingly popular.

What these girls fail to realize though is that their bodies are still developing, and getting implants can harm them. Besides being harmed physically, the girls can be harmed mentally. Are 16 year olds really capable of making the choice to get implants? Think back to the teen years and remember how the hormones were raging. Teens may think themselves beautiful one day and ugly the next. And the decision to get implants, while seeming like the perfect solution at the time, may end up being a terrible mistake later in life. Parents have a role to protect their children, and by letting teen girls get implants they are putting them at risk for a lifetime of regret.

In the end, the decision to augment should be left up to the individual. But it should be made at a time in life when they are at a maturity level that doesn't constitute screaming everytime N'Sync comes on the television screen.

# "Oh Ralphie, Aunt Clara always sends you the nicest gifts!"

Now that the holidays are over, and we are all back to the big sha-bang, it becomes a great time to reflect on those bad Christmas blunders, crazy relatives, and very bad gifts! I know everyone has his or her own version of the tin-foil wrapped fruitcake or rumcake, but the real surprise is when you find last year's fruitcake still wrapped in the freezer!

I can see how many people may be offended by my useless rambling of the holidays and the extraordinary events that happen therein, however most people were complaining last semester of how terrible and stressful it was to have to shop for gifts, cards, etc. In the true spirit of the holidays, gifts shouldn't even be a worry. In fact, I think most people have lost sight of what the holiday season really means. I know, I know, how many times do you hear this year after year, and how many people still exploit Christmas?

Getting down and dirty at the shopping malls or making brave purchases online should be easy right? Wrong. I mean, how many times did I go and couldn't find a thing, yet I still continued to go back



**Coffee Talk**  
**Kristin Rodgers**

thinking that two days later a certain store may have changed their entire holiday inventory—right.

So bringing into light the bad gift stories, I would love to hear the worst gift someone received, so if you have a great story send it my way. I'll begin by reiterating that over 50% of Americans say they feel a bit more stressed during the holidays, but why? They feel the need to find the perfect gifts, perfect holiday clothing, perfect fruitcake, and well, you get the picture. I'll admit I stressed about the holidays a bit myself, but it was only because every time I would scream, "I'm done shopping," it would turn out that I

forgot someone on my list. Needless to say one more trip back to Peach Street wasn't uncommon!

Although I have no clue whether or not the recipients of my gifts really liked them or not, I'll still continue with this. If people stress out about the holidays, then obviously at some point in time the stress runs to their head and they forget who they are for a few months. The reason I say this is because a lot of times many people look for the perfect gift and obviously never find it. Oh no, it isn't that they haven't found anything to give, it is just that the gift is always something you've not seen even in the past 56 trips to the Wal-Mart, K-Mart, or Target. So the first response is always "what is it?" This question can never be asked too suddenly, and it must be asked carefully so as to not seem stupid. I'm sure the answers are always full of surprises, but when they reply that it is a leopard print seat-belt attachment to keep your shoulders comfortable, you must not laugh. You can't even smile, or someone

else will see you and know for sure that you think it is ridiculous. Here is where the story becomes even more twisted. It is the fact that you get this gift and you don't even own a car!

So you were stressing huh? Well, next time be sure and give a gift certificate or the monetary equivalent because bad gifts are the result of stress. It doesn't even necessarily mean that the gift is bad, but when it is wrapped deceptively, it also makes problems for the recipient. Next time, don't wrap 50 pair of socks in a huge clothing box when the only thing on their list was a pea coat—see how you may become irritated?

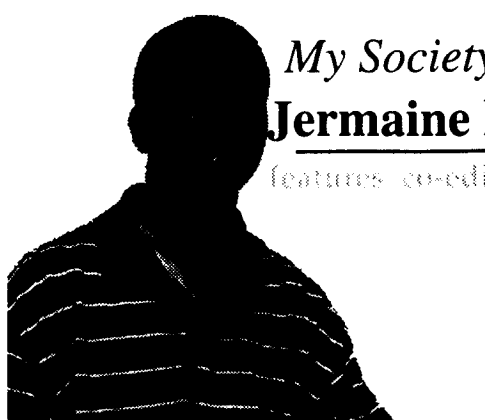
So this year when stress flows our way again remember that people sometimes give bad gifts (Aunt Clara) and get the kid the gift he really wants—he deserves it after having put on a pink bunny suit don't you think? I would want to shoot Aunt Clara too—here we come Red-Rider!

*Rodgers' column appears every three weeks.*

# Hip Hop, courtrooms, guns, and gangsters.

Storming entertainment news lately has been the controversy concerning Hip-Hop music mogul Sean "Puffy" Combs and a shooting at a NYC nightclub in December 1999. The legal battle, which should soon be coming to a close, has Puffy accused of weapons possession and bribery. Though he stands in hot water at the moment, Puffy has told MTV news that he has faith that he will be cleared of any wrongdoing.

Also tangled up in this case is Puffy's premiere artist "Shyne" who has the more serious charge of attempted murder. While the overall case is a twisted one, there is another bizarre detail that stuns yours truly. For Shyne's case, prosecutors are looking to present the rapper's lyrics from his self-entitled debut album against him in court. Have Hip Hop lyrics really gone so out of control that one could have criminal charges brought against him because of them? My friends and I have always joked about the latest and most popular rap lyrics while questioning their validity and appropriateness, but never did I actually think I would see the day when an artist could have his lyrics brought against him in court. Is this a wake up call for those artists, who enjoy the freedom of saying what ever they want over



**My Society**  
**Jermaine Hardy**  
features co-editor

a beat?

Are our artists obligated to be more socially conscious with their lyrics? While Bad Boy recording artist Shyne contends that the crime and guns glorified in such songs as "Bad Boys" are fictional, prosecutor Matthew Bogdanus contends that he wants to send a message to all artists: "don't shoot people. And if you do it, don't brag about it, whether you brag about it speaking, whether you brag about it writing, whether you brag about it singing. You don't acquire some extra protection because you're an artist," said Bogdanus to MTV News.

Other incidents involving artists from the same "Bad Boy" camp have seemed to many to be the result of some of the lyrics contained in their music.

The death of the late great Notorious B.I.G., for example, is suspected by many to be the result of a lyrical war between he and the also late great Tupac Shakur. As a long time fan of hip hop music I myself am beginning to see violence and criminal activity in the music industry rise with more violence and criminal activity in the music itself.

Every day I wonder more and more if there is any connection between what is said and what is done by some of our beloved rap artists.

While I can't hold claim to any evidence linking crime and violence rates to rap lyrics, I do hold claim to noting the escalation of both at devastating rates. Without a doubt there will be more gang rags flaunted by young rap fans following the trends and imitating their favorite rap artist. But whether there is a significant influence in the area of teen and young adult violence due to rap lyrics can only be said and not proved at this time. However I do see a

need for artists to take more responsibility with their roles as entertainers. We all know that sex and violence is what sells, but people can only buy what's in the market and alternatives to songs with negative imagery aren't in abundance in the record stores today.

With Hip Hop music in particular, artists have to realize that they are making music. The face of Hip Hop today is becoming more and more like a fashion show in which artists only want to look good and portray a gangster or hardcore image. This is not what music is about. When the Sugar Hill Gang came out with Rappers Delight, no one was concerned about whether or not these artists had an artillery of weapons or a gangster image. Today this element is gone. Of course, times have changed and our entertainment will inevitably do the same, but the rap industry cannot continue to flourish if artists don't focus on being more responsible with their images as well as their lyrics. We should focus on keeping "it" as opposed to keeping it real or gangster.

*Hardy's column appears every three weeks.*

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