

A View From The Lighthouse

Entertainers, not parents

This past week, a jury was forced to decide on a case involving Lionel Tate, a 13-year old boy that was accused of murdering a six-year old girl last year.

The question in the trial wasn't centered around whether or not Tate committed the crime, but rather, why he did it.

The defense in the case argued that Tate was simply imitating wrestling moves that he had seen on professional wrestling TV shows and that he had no intention of hurting the first grade girl.

Tate's attorney, Jim Lewis, argued that Tate wasn't mature enough to understand the consequences of his actions. Those actions left his victim with a fractured skull, lacerated liver, a broken rib, internal hemorrhaging and multiple cuts and bruises.

Lewis tried to put the blame for the situation on professional wrestling, saying that Tate believed that he could be like these wrestlers and no one would get hurt.

The jury decided against the defense, finding Tate guilty of first-degree murder.

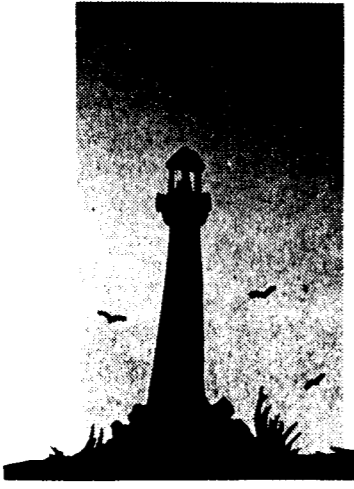
This case brings up an issue that has remained quiet for some time, but is again surfacing. Should the entertainment business be held responsible for crimes that imitate entertainers?

The answer is no. Entertainers aren't parents. They are individuals that perform in a safe environment, taking necessary precautions so accidents don't happen. They are trained professionals.

This includes wrestlers, stunt devils, magicians that perform dangerous tricks, athletes, etc.

This isn't denying that entertainers have a profound effect on their audience and even possibly the actions of their audience. But that doesn't make them responsible for acts that happen outside of their "safe" environment.

There's no question that entertainment is getting more violent with time. Ten years ago, professional wrestling at its worst involved a chair shot to someone's back. Today, it takes as much as ten chair shots to the head to win a match.



Musical lyrics often times share messages of violence and hate. If Eminem was convicted of murder, he would have to pay the consequences. If someone would then imitate Eminem's actions, would Eminem have to pay the consequences for that too?

Are we going to start suing computer manufacturers for people's vision going bad? People make decisions in life where there are consequences. If children aren't old enough to understand those consequences, it's the parents' job to prevent their children from being put in that situation.

In Tate's case? "No watching or playing wrestling in the house."

Rules are made by parents to prevent tragedies like this from happening.

Unfortunately, the saddest thing of all in Tate's murder trial, outside of the girls' death, was that there was a grown man, standing next to Tate, arguing that the blame for this murder shouldn't be Tate's, or his parents'. He was claiming that guilt was in the hands of men that Tate has only seen on television.

Instead of teaching the 12-year old that what he did was wrong, the defense was condoning his actions saying that it is alright for people to act on their urges that they get from watching television.

A lesson could have been learned here. Instead, a young boy will have life in prison, never accepting that what he did was wrong. He will sit in his cell blaming men he has never met before for crimes they didn't even commit.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trying to be friends to all

To all Behrend Students,

The members of the WorldWide Organization of Thugs would like to apologize for their actions concerning the chalking of certain Penn State buildings. Only after this act was committed did we realize how unsightly it was and how demeaning it was to our school. We are not criminals, we are not gang members, and we are not "dirty." We are just a bunch of friends who came up with what we thought was a funny mock organization, much like other non-commissioned organizations on our campus. We are just a bunch of college guys with nothing better to do.

We were just trying to have fun, but it did evolve. Not into the group that Mr. Matola described in his grammatically correct yet ignorance-filled article, but into something

better. Members of our organization have donated to charity, helped conduct hall programs, and promoted that thing which Mr. Matola may never know: true camaraderie.

We do admit to the chalking, and we have gone out and removed the majority of what was recently done. Now two of our members face reprimands, and we hope that those people in charge of discipline go easy on them. We hope that you, too, support them in their fight to keep on-campus housing. Although punishable, we feel that strict discipline is not fitting in this case. After all, it was only sidewalk chalk that washes off with water. We meant no harm by this act, realize our faults, and promise to never conduct ourselves in this manner again.

With sincerest apologies, WorldWide Organization of Thugs

really inflict this much mental pain on you? Does the fact that we have long hair, smoke tobacco, and do not promote anal retentiveness really bother you enough to waste one of the few editorials you will ever have? Jesus said, "Let ye who hath not sin cast the first stone." We feel this a fitting statement for this situation. Believe this when we say: We care immensely about what the Ayatollah thinks of us. Three weeks is too long to wait for his next scribbling.

We, the members of WWT, wish to apologize, and also to express our deep love for our school and its student body. We wish not to hate, but to befriend all.

With sincerest apologies,
WorldWide Organization of Thugs

The scariest reality of them all

Detours and Small Potatoes Katie Galley



Usually in my column I like to reflect upon all the things that are wrong with the world. And as my coveted "last column" rapidly approaches I was sure that I would be utilizing my allotted space to preach about the hazards of...well, I'm not sure, but I thought for sure my columns would get more and more sarcastic as the weeks went by.

However this week, and for the past couple weeks for that matter, there has been some serious stuff going on in my world and I can't help but to give all the new (and returning) people here one final serious life lesson: life is for real.

It seems simple and idiotic to say that on paper, of course life is for real. But lately I have been looking around my extended world, that includes my friends, my family, my future, my goals and my dreams and I have come to one scary conclusion: the future is now, there is no hiding or running from it.

College has been the best years of my life, and not just because of the parties and camaraderie that I have found here at Behrend, but because of the real and tangible things that I have found and felt and put my hands and my heart on. And it is here that I have finally figured out that I truly am an adult, ready for adult decisions.

We may always be someone's baby; I know my parents will feel that way about me until we no longer exist. But now more than ever, I know that every single person here at Behrend is an adult, whether you are 17 and just arriving or whether you are like me, 22 and

soon to graduate. We are all in the same situation here. We may be able to go to parties every weekend and pretend to have no responsibilities, but the truth is that we do, and the sooner we all accept that, the better off we will be. Not to say that you can't have fun while it lasts, just don't forget about the important things in life.

The same goes for something that I often like to talk about, procrastination. Last year I won a writing award for an editorial I wrote about how procrastination is a great thing. About how it gives you time to experience the simple things in life, like sitting around watching television with your roommate and other inane things. But over one year later, I realize that procrastination can be a self-destructing behavior. Especially when you apply the habit to your personal life and impose it upon the people that you love.

Adulthood may still seem like something that is a long time away; I felt the same way when I came here, already two years into my college education. The truth is though that it's sitting right in front of you. And no amount of pretending that it's not there and no amount of time away from it can prevent it from happening.

Which all goes back to the procrastination thing. Don't put off what you feel now. Because in the end, it may be too late to obtain something back in the same shape you left it. People are always learning, always growing, and always changing. Hearts and feelings change too, don't forget that. And putting off what you could have right now because the timing simply doesn't seem convenient and doesn't seem to fit into the "great scheme of things at this moment" can blow up in your face when you are ready to accept feelings that you may or may not have. There is never a perfect time for something to happen, there is always going to be some outside factor that can be taken as "a sign" that something is not meant to be.

There are those of you out there that will read this and automatically understand what I am saying to everyone in the editorial. Some of you may look at it and simply think, "there she goes, talking in codes again," but for some of you, it

may not sink in right now, but when you come to a pivotal crossroads in your life. You will someday have the choice to pretend that something in your life doesn't exist, and I hope when that time comes you will remember that somewhere you read that the future is now, and life is for real.

Since this editorial is already full of clichés, I might as well add, always remember to be yourself and be true to yourself. Only you know what you want out of life, but you can't go around thinking that there is no one else to take into consideration when choosing to ignore or pretend about your feelings, there is always someone out there.

I'm not asking that forever life altering decision, such as "where do I go for my internship," that you think about every person you have ever known and ask yourself how where you go affects them, because nine times out of ten, they probably couldn't give a poo. The person I met in the library the other day doesn't care where I go for my internship, but there are some people out there that do care, and even though I want to achieve my goals and dreams, there are some people I have met along the way that I won't and can't forget. Those are the people about whom I ask you to remain true to your feelings and not procrastinate about how you feel.

If you want something now, then just go for it. Listen to what your heart is telling you, it's not often wrong. The future is the inevitable, so go ahead and do what you feel is right for right now.

Don't let the future scare you, embrace it and let your heart lead you because if college has been this fun, the future can only prove to be one heck of a great ride! Until three weeks from now, keep this in mind; why put off for tomorrow, what you can have today. Have a great Valentine's Day!

Galley's column appears every three weeks.

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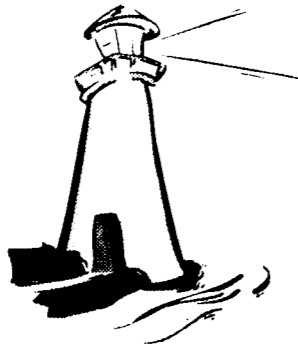
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