

Ban MTV

'Sweet' Lou Whitaker and the '87 Tigers

Mike Butala
editorial columnist



Last time I tuned into MTV I was blessed with the joy of experiencing the latest and greatest tune, compliments of the newest five-man boy band. Honestly, music has impacted my life in many ways; however, within the past few years, music has been rotten. Recently, bands, such as 'N Sync, Backstreet Boys, Three Doors Down, Fuel, Stained and Lifeshave have blessed MTV with their propagandic, meaningless blather. The thought of even turning on MTV enchants my dreams with wicked nightmares and a cold sweat.

I remember the days of old when MTV showed ... music videos. And when I say music videos I'm not talking about random people staging ferocious arguments pertaining to their sexuality, living habits or attitude. When was the last time you turned on MTV and saw a music video being played? If you happen to tune in to the 10 minutes they show music videos a day, you will most likely realize that modern music lacks quality. This includes any band that does not play their own music, pours ANYTHING out for their "homies," or has the word "nookie" anywhere in their lyrics.

If I see one more pseudo-punk band, like Mest. Sum 41 or any band of that genre trying to make a dishonest buck by selling their souls to corporate big shots for a single, while clearing a few million dollars for playing three different power chords, I'm going to throw up. The lack of talent on MTV is so incredibly evident.

Now, I'm not saying MTV isn't trying its hardest to sell crap music. I mean, give young, talented stars a chance to be self-conceited, money-hungry maggots. It does. But whatever happened to rewarding talent?

Obviously, if you hear the same song 100 times it's going to be stuck in your head and you'll be humming it all day long. This is not a good thing. It is just a modern way of hypnotizing the American public into a state of financial turmoil. Tossing down \$20 for a CD is ridiculous to begin with, but it's even more ridiculous when after having the CD for a week you realize you've invested \$20 into a cleverly disguised piece of dog feces.

To some people, MTV tells them what music society deems "cool." They rely on this in order to mix with other brainwashed victims in a society hosted by Carson Daly and Dave Holmes.

My suggestion can be summed up in the poetic words of Sid Vicious: "Shoot your T.V." Although it exposes people to new types of music, it lacks originality and adds no quality to anyone's CD collection. My answer? The best way music can be experienced is through your friends. So next time you buy a CD, why don't you ask someone who knows you what you would like instead of a spokesperson getting paid to sell you music.

Butala's column appears every three weeks.

The Hot Debate of The Week

To drink or not to drink? That is the question

Is lowering the alcohol limit for 18-21 year olds a smart move or a recipe for disaster?

As an individual state in the grand U.S. of A., Pennsylvania is entitled to certain responsibilities and laws that are customized within our boundaries.

Selling alcohol in state stores is one of them; controlling our highway system (PennDOT) is another. And yet, the federal government has threatened to take away state funding from our construction if we do not change our law on driving under the influence.

The current law defines it as "crime to operate a vehicle with a blood alcohol content (referred to as BAC) of .10. The federal government is pressuring us to lower the BAC to .08, or we risk losing our funds for construction projects. This proves that no matter what the state does, the federal government will always have the last say. As a state law, Pennsylvania should have the last say in lowering the BAC levels for drivers.

Since 1997, alcohol-related deaths in Pennsylvania have decreased by about three percent with the same BAC laws. Tougher laws are still being pushed through legislation to prevent those who are tempted to drive home under the influence.

Yet those who are asking for more justice against drunk drivers (by lowering BAC levels) are aiming their scorn at the wrong concept. Those advocates for lowering the BAC levels should be asking for NO alcohol in the bodies of drivers everywhere; it's been proven that only one drink can affect your driving. "Zero tolerance" means zero deaths by alcohol-related crashes; simply put, alcohol is the root of the problem and eliminating it is a far more effective way of keeping drunk drivers off our roads. And anyway, aren't our roads already bad enough?

-R. Weindorf

You may have heard of the accident involving a drunk freshman and a vehicle that occurred already this semester. Drunk driving is a situation that hits home for just about everyone. Luckily, in the case of the freshman, no one was killed and no innocent bystanders were injured but many were affected.

Innocent bystanders are often killed in these situations; just check out the Mothers Against Drunk Driving Web site. In fact, approximately 500,000 persons per year are injured in alcohol-related crashes. All of these accidents most likely could have been avoided. All that is necessary to save those injuries is to remove the alcohol. So, where do we find a solution? Banning alcohol doesn't work... that's been proven. Besides, why punish people who can drink responsibly? One way to decrease the amount of alcohol-related crashes is to decrease the blood alcohol concentration that is legal to drive with.

Consider this, states that have lowered BAC limits for minors have already experienced decreases in fatalities among this age group. Lowering BAC levels has already worked. Seems pretty obvious to try it for the over-21 crowd.

A study of alcohol-related crashes investigated alcohol's affect on reaction time, tracking ability, divided attention performance, information process capability, visual functions, perceptions, psychomotor performance. Impairment in most of them began at .02 percent. At a BAC of .05 percent there was significant impairment in them all. Yet, the legal limit to drive in some states still remains at .10 percent.

Anything that we can do to protect innocent bystanders, as well as the drunken drivers themselves, will bring more safety to our highways.

-A. Long

How many times have you gone out drinking and limited yourself to alcohol to the current DUI percentage 0.1%? Not too many times, huh? Last year, President Clinton signed a bill so more states in America will be forced to lower their legal drinking and driving limit to 0.08% or will lose 2% of their highway funding from the government. So, basically, they are saying, "If you're gonna drive drunk, we're gonna give you crappy roads to drive on so there's a big chance for you to get in a wreck". Well, I'm not buying.

By lowering the legal limit, a 100-pound woman will have to spend the night in the slammer after drinking two glasses of wine in two hours. That just seems unethical. If anything, they should raise the drinking limit. Alcohol abuse today is rising by leaps and bounds and Americans start drinking younger and younger. Most people believe this is a bad thing, which it is. It's bad because Americans' tolerance for alcohol is getting higher and higher. Driving at an alcohol level of 0.10% is not a difficult task at all. Sure, impairment begins with the first drink, but if they're so concerned about that, why not just make it zero tolerance or reinstate Prohibition. The majority of alcohol-related accidents are from drivers with BAC levels clearly higher than 0.10%. Those are the guys you have to watch out for.

So in conclusion, don't penalize Norm the social drinker. He just likes to toss a few down at the local tavern and enjoy the company of his friends. He's not a threat to the roads. Leave the legal limit where it is and just look out for the careless drunks behind the wheels.

-M. Butala

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WHY AREN'T YOU IN CLASS???

CHILL OUT, MOM. I'LL DOWNLOAD THE PROFESSOR'S LECTURE LATER...

THERE'S SO MUCH SLEEP TO BE GAINED FROM TECHNOLOGY!

BEELER '01
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Come and knock on our door...

Press 'I' to graduate

Katie Galley



In a time not so long ago, I was a resident at Behrend, living in Almy Hall. Life didn't get much better than living in a dorm. There were always people around, even at four in the morning. People (usually meaning girls) were having the same problems (usually with boys) that I was. And there was never a lack of fun. But then I did something that changed all that fun; I decided to live off campus.

I moved in with some friends that I had made while on the newspaper. I didn't really want to at first, but after some gentle coercion, they persuaded me into thinking that living off campus would be the best thing since the BUDPOT. So the summer flew by and I didn't really think about how

different it would be to live somewhere other than the place that I had lived for the past two and a half years, but then reality hit.

It hit me when I started getting my tuition bills in the mail and they were significantly less than they were when I lived on campus. Not that paying less is bad, it was one of the main reasons that I decided to give Residence Life the old heave-ho, but then the fact that I wasn't moving in with the world's best roommate starting creeping its way into my brain.

There would be no more late-night talks about life, no more late-night sessions where all we did was bash boys. Room 403 had a bit of a man-hating theme last semester. No more sitting across the room from my roomie and typing on the IM to each other, it was all coming to end. It was, to sound totally trite, the end of an era!

I started regretting the fact that I was moving off campus. I wanted to change my mind, and call it all off and go back to the nice cozy room that was in every way, mine. I couldn't stand the thought of another, random girl sleeping on my side of

the room, and my roommate wasn't too thrilled about it either.

Though, my housing contract had been cancelled and I was about to sign a lease on my first apartment. In order to not become completely bummed about leaving the dorms, I tried to focus on the things that made me choose the life of the commuter.

For example, I graduate at the end of this semester, and I remembered how traumatic it had been for me to leave the fort of safety known as high school. I thought that if I could slowly ease myself away from the full-time college life that it would be a lot easier on me come December. Another reason I decided to move was because in my mind it was easier to find an apartment in the summer than during the cold, harsh winter of Erie. The best reason that I had for moving was that it would allow me to use the pool and Nautilus on the grounds of my apartment complex. I wouldn't even have to walk as far as the ARC (excuse me, Junker Center) to get my workouts. It was looking better and better everyday. Before I knew it, it was time to move.

Living with two people that I knew extremely well, but never actually had to share a living space with was, um, different. It was not like living in a dorm either,

where everyone tiptoes around the first couple of weeks until they get acquainted and comfortable with each other. It actually felt kinda like the Real World, fighting over really dumb stuff, and just expecting everyone to act and feel the same as you do about things. But, sadly, it wasn't and it is still taking time into these first couple of weeks of class to get adjusted to everything and everyone. Not to mention that I now live in a co-ed apartment, instead of there just being boys across the hall. Totally different than I thought it would be. Let's just say that the differences between boys and girls (excuse me, men and women) do exist, and it takes some getting used to.

What's the point in all this? Nothing, just wanted to let everyone know for this next semester that I might have to vent and let off some steam, and what better way then through the Beacon? I know that there are people out there in the same situation, and let me ask you, if you have any advice for me (and my two new roomies,) we would be happy to hear it. We may need all the help that we can get! Until next time, the saga continues...

Galley's column appears every three weeks.

Mom told you to 'look both ways' for a reason

Chit chat for change Christine Kleck

editorial columnist



As you gingerly make your way out onto a busy street you are caught off guard by a speeding sports car that seems to have just come out of nowhere.

As you step out of the tub one morning on to your bathroom floor and

carefully make sure that your right foot touches the ground, your left suddenly seems to slip from beneath you.

Someone catches your eye from across the way and you move forward to begin a casual conversation. Within three feet of your desired conquest you must make a quick detour in your route because their significant other has decided to make a beeline for the object of your attention.

What do all of these situations have in common? They all have to do with taking chances. Whether the risk is tiny or monumental, almost every action, as taught in physics class, has an equal and opposite reaction, or a consequence.

While some people base the chances that they take on the conquest they hope

to achieve, just as many chance takers focus solely on the consequences of their actions.

Conquests, chances, and consequences are not just limited to the doing or the action. Simply not acting or reacting to any given situation can also present an individual with several chances, consequences and conquests.

Ending a particular situation has its consequences as well. Feelings of regret, neglect, and insecurity are just some of the consequences one can experience when ending a situation.

The elements within that chance must also be taken into consideration as well. While so many people say, "you never know unless you try," it is important to always understand the effects of taking or not taking chances that you are presented with.

A good rule of thumb (according to my

mother) is "If the consequence will kill you, or if the consequence outweighs that conquest, it just isn't worth it."

Alanis Morissette so adequately illustrates this idea in her song "Ironic." While the artist proclaims, "It's the good advice that you just didn't take," she also describes how a Mr. Play It Safe died in his first air plane ride. Morissette is simply trying to tell us that when we not only take chances, but also refuse chance, we are faced with a consequential and ironic "what if" feeling in the end.

So where does that bring me? Taking or not taking chances can lead to both good and bad outcomes, so who cares, right?

I guess the only advice that I can give you is to think, really think things through, before you take any chances.

Whether you are deciding to use a pen or pencil on your final exam, or whether you are contemplating that one last drink before you call it a night, always ask yourself what the consequences are of each choice you must make.

If the consequences outweigh the conquest by any means, really think twice about following through with a decision like that.

After all, not checking and then double-checking both ways before you pull out onto a busy street can have some pretty serious end results. Not thinking before you step out of the bathtub is a pretty risky chance. And any type of love-related relationship can have its positive and negative outcomes. It's up to you. Are these conquests really greater than their consequences?

Kleck's column appears every three weeks.