

No love for LeBron

BRANDON BOYD
opinion editor

I once thought of LeBron James in a positive light. When I say "positive light", I am really understating just how positive that light was. During the summer of 2009, I shelled out \$175 for a piece of aesthetically-pleasing cardboard with a sticker of LeBron James' autograph attached to it.

In my eyes, LeBron James could do no wrong.

When he didn't shake hands after losing to the Orlando Magic in the 2009 NBA Playoffs, I understood. He's a competitive person, I told myself. When he played miserably during various aspects of the past NBA Playoffs, specifically the Boston Celtics series, I understood. His wrist was bothering him, I concluded.

My understanding concerning LeBron changed July 9, 2010, as "The Decision" destroyed the image of "The King."

I questioned his sportsmanship and his heart.

I questioned whether he ever really wanted to be in Cleveland.

I questioned why he had to go on ESPN for an awkward interview that sent a message to fans of the Cleveland Cavaliers.

That message was two middle fingers.

After that moment, I no longer respected LeBron James.

Apparently, I was not the only one.

The Q Score Company recently surveyed people on their most hated athletes. The results were released a few days ago, and LeBron James came in sixth. Before him came a cheater (Tiger Woods), an accused but not convicted rapist (Kobe Bryant), two loudmouths that

fans either love or hate (Trell Owens and Chad Ochocinco, respectively), and a dog fighter (Michael Vick).

Basically, by going on ESPN, LeBron James took a huge dump on his reputation.

I'll get to the point of all of this in a second, but I'd first like to employ the words of Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban concerning the whole situation.

"LeBron has every right to go wherever and do whatever, whatever team he wants to," Cuban told the *Dallas Morning News*. "Going to the Heat was his choice..."

"Where I think LeBron made a mistake was in how he did it. I don't even have a problem that he had the TV show," he said. "But it turned out to be the largest public humiliation in the history of sports. He humiliated the organization, he humiliated the state of Ohio, the city of Cleveland. All of a sudden he became a bad guy, he lost a billion dollars in brand equity, give or take a couple bucks here or there...the way he did it I thought was just a huge mistake."

It's not often that I'm on the same wavelengths as a billionaire, but now is one of those times.

Because this is a situation I could talk about for hours, I'm going to put it like this: when an athlete does something like LeBron did, he's going to take a lot of heat for it, as the Q Score Company proved.

Athletes don't have to be kind to each and every fan, but their image depends on us. We buy their jerseys, their merchandise, and tickets to see them.

Because of LeBron's actions, I no longer have an athlete to look up to. According to The Q Score Company, neither do a lot of other people.

That's nothing short of a LeShame.

Kanye West passes the entertainment test

MARISSA LANICH
staff writer

"Let's have a toast for the douchebags; let's have a toast for the assholes. Let's have a toast for the scumbags - every one of them that I know." - Kanye West, "Runway"

Certainly then, we should all have a toast for Kanye himself, who happens to be all of the above.



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West has shown throughout his years of fame that he is an egotistical jerk, proven most recently by his display at the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards. The now infamous incident began with West storming the stage during an acceptance speech by Taylor

Swift. After ripping her microphone from hand and telling the audience that she did not deserve her award, it was clear that West had ruined 19-year-old Swift's VMA moment.

Last Sunday at this year's Video Music Awards, one year after the West/Swift controversy, both separately took the stage to perform. It seemed as if Swift took the stage with her song "Innocent," with the intent to show that she has forgiven West.

However, as West closed the show with "Runway," which encourages the toasts to those undesirable individuals that we all know, it remains unclear what the singer's message really was.

Sure, this could have been his apology - a self-deprecating apology, admitting to himself that we have "put up with his shit for far too long." However, this could have also been a celebration of his ego-mania, encouraging us to toast to his bad behavior.

Personally, I am still undecided as to what West's intentions were with "Runway," or if I even like the singer after his many displays of excessive

arrogance throughout his career.

Let's be honest, though. If people like West were not around to accuse our president of racism on national television or inappropriately rant during a young pop star's big moment, who would cause the controversy that we all secretly (or not so secretly) enjoy? Who would we laugh at?

More importantly though, there is no denying that West is talented. With four platinum albums and numerous hit singles from each, it is clear that his music is extremely popular, and he continues to consistently entertain us throughout the years.

We can say that we would prefer a world without Kanye, specifically his big mouth and his huge ego, but honestly, I think we would miss him...at least I know I would.

That being said, I agree that a toast is in order. Let's have a toast for Kanye West, douchebag or not, for being candid, for having a sense of humor, and for always entertaining us.

Don't take away my Facebook

BRANDON BOYD
opinion editor

What would a week without Facebook be like?

Students at Harrisburg University of Science and Technology found out, as they could not access Facebook, Twitter, and other social media websites while on campus.

At the end of the week, some students will be writing essays about their experience.

Comedian Jimmy Fallon joked during his late-night Monday monologue that he knew the title of those essays: "We All Have Smart Phones. Dumbass."

For the part of the 800 students at Harrisburg University of Science and Technology who actually followed through with their week-long abstinence from social media, I have only one thing to say:

You brave, brave souls.

You can take away my food. You can take away my freedom. But taking away my Facebook? Now that's going too far.

As a society, we have become addicted to Facebook, Twitter, and the like.

The Internet has become our drug dealer, and Facebook our cocaine.

My name is Brandon Boyd,

and I'm a Facebook-holic.

While the students at Harrisburg University of Science and Technology seem to have mostly been supportive of the decision made, I can't help but think that here at Behrend we would be a bit more hesitant to give up our social media for the week.

We would likely fret over the lack of Facebook in our lives. Fret might be a mild word.

A riot might be a more accurate depiction of the results of such an action.

To quote one of my favorite movies, *Step Brothers*, "there would be blood everywhere!"

All joking aside, Facebook

has become a major part of many college students' lives at this point.

We use Facebook to keep in touch with friends we no longer see, to schedule events, to connect with new people, and to find out information about others we never knew (that's for the Facebook stalkers).

If Penn State Behrend were to ban Facebook for a week like Harrisburg University of Science and Technology, I can't say I would click the "like" button on their decision.

I can't imagine too many others doing so, either.

The Mind of Miseta

Mounds of junk e-mail cause trashy mood

ED MISETA
lecturer of economics

Suppose you go out on your front porch one morning and find approximately five to eight bags of the smelliest, foulest, most horrifying garbage you've ever had the unfortunate chance of encountering. There is actually a stench cloud rising from it. Flies have begun to construct a small village. It looks like the contents of the bathroom of one of those folks from *Hoarders*.

You hear the screech of tires, and look up to see a "friend" pulling away from your curb at a high rate of speed. You suddenly realize, as you look down at the trail of banana peels and moldy cheese, that she is the one who dumped this stuff on your porch! You're sure she meant well ... she's a good person, and probably just assumed you would want to pick through the remains of God-knows-whose old garbage (which, incidentally, was dropped on HER porch by yet another well-meaning friend). She, apparently, found a pearl or a diamond as she waded through the muck, and thought you'd find something of value in it, yourself.

You, however, are busy. You have a job, you go to school, and you study. For you, time is a very scarce resource. You have no need or desire for other people's garbage. You have plenty of your own. You also do not have the time to look for something valuable in this pile of crap. Additionally, you're pretty sure there's really nothing in here but rotten apples, stinky cat litter, and the remnants of a spooage-soaked Kleenex from the pre-



vious weekend. What makes the situation even worse is that you know you're expected to pass this mess onto another person after you've gleaned anything of value from it. Unfortunately, you just don't have the heart.

So, being the conscientious person that you are, you take those five to eight bags of trash to the dumpster, lug them over your shoulder, squirt some hand sanitizer on your hands, and continue on your way. You whistle a Lady Gaga song as you leave the dumpster, happy and secure in the knowledge that you have done YOUR part to eliminate excess garbage from the world.

By now you're thinking, "Ed, I'm more confused than when I had to do that compar-

ative advantage problem in Econ 2. What the hell is this all about? I have never had this happen to me." But you have, and so have I. When you forward all of your email to other people, you perpetuate the Internet garbage flow. This wastes bandwidth and storage space, which may mean nothing to you. But it also wastes time, which means a lot to me (high opportunity cost, ya know). Not everything you get is going to be as valuable to me, especially when I have to scroll down past 50 or 60 very strange screen names in order to get to the main text of the email. Maybe I'm a bit of a snob, but I feel just a LITTLE unclean knowing that I'm reading something that was recently perused by "Lick-

You69" and "Hot BBW4U."

Don't get me wrong...it's not that I don't enjoy receiving informative emails. But when I waste a lot of time to look at a lovely Flower of Friendship that someone felt compelled to send me, I get a tad annoyed. Then, I have to pass it on to ten people in the next five minutes, or someone will die. You really have to reconsider who you call a "friend" if they send you thinly-veiled threats against your life or happiness. I have enough success jeopardizing my OWN health and happiness. I really don't need this kind of help.

So do your part. Be a friend. Stop the perpetuation of email trash. Hit DELETE more often and FORWARD a lot less frequently. Your real "friends" will thank you.

Poor study on poverty

EVAN KOSER
senior layout editor

A recent study released by the US Census Bureau suggests that one in seven Americans are now living in poverty. The US government defines "poverty" as any household of four living with a yearly income of \$22,000 or less.

I feel that not only the numbers being reported, but the information as well are nothing but media exacerbation of the problem. I mean: one in seven Americans? Really?

This suggests that I could walk down the street and nearly any person I brush shoulders with should somehow be a poverty-stricken, "less fortunate" citizen. This implies that approximately 14 percent of the people I see at Walmart are essentially poor.

Let's get a few things straight: every person at Walmart has a car or a friend with one. I can also say with sincerity that it has been a long time since I haven't seen a person with a cell phone. I'm starting to even see children with the handheld devices. In fact, during my time in New York City and Austin, Texas, I even saw true poverty-stricken, homeless gentlemen. In one hand they held a crudely designed cardboard sign. And in the other? A cell phone to their ear. Who does a homeless man have to call, anyway?

Nielson Media Research reports that nearly every household in America is wired with television. In conjunction with our television sets, many Americans have access to the Internet. Let's see, that's cell phone service, television, and

the Internet. The report filed by the Census Bureau didn't express that one in seven Americans were going to bed hungry, so what is the problem?

We've been in an economic downturn for a few years now, so how is it news to anyone that the "poverty" rate has risen? No one is going to bed hungry, reportedly, and they're living with the Internet, television, and their precious cell phones.

When I think poverty, I imagine stomach-swollen children in far-off countries living every day assuming it could be the last. Poverty is choosing whether your kids eat or sleep in a bed that night in the motel. Forgoing a meal so your child could eat - now that's true poverty.

Believe me, I know - I've been there because it's how I spent my early childhood growing up. Congress now wants to extend unemployment benefits for yet a longer period of time.

I realize that we're in an economic recession, but there are jobs out there. People are hiring. Luckily, we live in a day and age where relocation, if necessary, isn't a large obstacle any more.

Americans aren't in poverty any more than Bill Gates is in poverty. Hell, go back nearly a century ago during the Great Depression. That's what true poverty was and every person who lived through it struggled with what it meant to be poor. They had no cell phone, no television, no Internet, no car. They had nothing but the clothes on their backs. Nowadays, it's hard to see anyone with less than one of the aforementioned commodities.

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