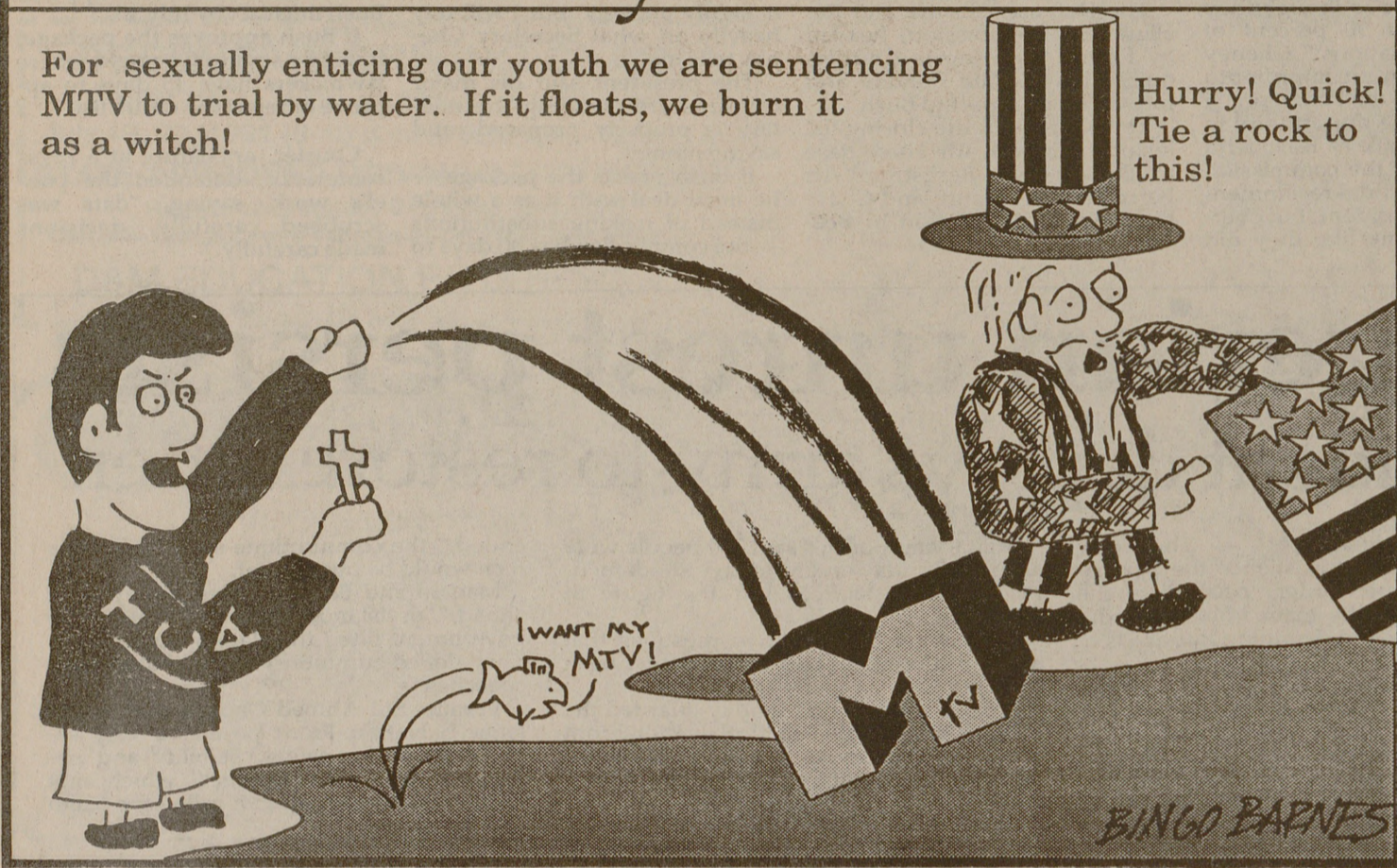


## Modern Day Witch Hunts

For sexually enticing our youth we are sentencing MTV to trial by water. If it floats, we burn it as a witch!



## EDITORIALS

Editorials expressed in The Battalion are those of the editorial board and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

### TCA robs A&M viewers of diverse programming

Last week's decision by Tyler-based TCA Cable to drop MTV from its service in the Bryan-College Station area is a slap in the face to diversity and freedom and an affront to the university atmosphere striving to ensure these principles.

While some viewers may find the content of certain videos "borderline pornographic," others enjoy the way MTV has been a major advocate of information on issues such as the environment, AIDS and censorship. Not all viewers appreciate MTV's commitment to diversity, but then again not all viewers appreciate ethnically oriented, family-oriented, news-oriented or youth-oriented channels on the service. TCA, however, does not intend to drop BET, USA, CNN or Nickelodeon.

The racy or violent material accompanying some of MTV's programming falls in the same category with daytime soap operas and prime-time dramas. Yet TCA has chosen to unplug MTV and leave the networks alone.

When a handful of viewers' complaints dictate the options for an open-minded, scholarly atmosphere, the result must be termed censorship. The rights and freedoms of college students to choose to watch diverse media has been denied by a small segment of sensitive viewers.

On the other hand, if TCA's real reason for dropping MTV is financial, it should not deny the public this information. In a community where seeking truth and knowledge is important, it is an insult to be misled about the situation.

Although it is too late for TCA to keep MTV as part of its service, we feel the company should reinstate diverse programming and protect the viewing rights of open-minded individuals. Moreover, we ask TCA to be honest with its subscribers about the reasons behind its censorship of media.

The Battalion Editorial Board

## MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. There is no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

### Responsible decisions require discussion

**EDITOR:**  
"Why should a bunch of MBA students argue so fervently about MTV," I thought to myself on entering my 10 a.m. finance class. "Are they shocked about Madonna's 'Truth or Dare,' or are they lashing out against rap music's growing popularity?"

To my astonishment, I realized the conversation was about the cable company's decision to "do away with" MTV.

Where is freedom and choice? What about maturity and responsibility? What kind of attitudes are gaining control?

The decision of TCA Cable to ban MTV, without even surveying its thousands of customers, because of pressure by a single group is a reflection of a trend we are witnessing currently in this country. This trend fails to recognize the importance of choice in forming a responsible population.

If there is no choice, people merely follow, there is no more room for thinking. But only through thinking, considering others' opinions, reaching responsible agreements that are beneficial to all involved, does a person become aware, responsible and mature.

I suppose the people who demanded the withdrawal of MTV from TCA Cable's offerings never considered the implications of their action. If they do not want their children to watch it, it is their responsibility as parents to educate their children on how to make responsible decisions. They should talk openly with their children to find out why the young people want to watch MTV, what do they gain by watching MTV. As parents, they should also explain to their children the drawbacks of watching MTV. Through this discussion, the family should reach a conclusion acceptable and beneficial to all. This process of communication should guide all family discussions and decisions.

By demanding no more MTV, the parents are in fact accepting their failure to educate their children. They are accepting their failure to understand their children and they are proclaiming their unwillingness to even try to understand their children.

Christina Maimarides  
graduate student

### TCA made a sound business decision

**EDITOR:**  
Facts are very important to an argument. First and foremost we must clear up the censorship question. The fact is TCA is a business, and if they choose to remove a program, they have every right. MTV has a high cost to the owners to provide this programming to one group of viewers. On the other hand members of the other group have the power to express their feelings by canceling their subscriptions.

I was surprised to see that so many students wanted their MTV. I used to watch it back in my teen years and enjoyed it very much. Obviously we grow and things change, such as MTV's choice of music. I tend to watch it less and less as years go by, and this has also happened to almost everyone I know. With studying and extracurricular activities, how can anyone spend time watching MTV enough to miss it?

The cost to TCA is too great to provide this channel to college students who come and go. The "moral majority" truthfully is too important in communities to continue MTV programming. How many people really sit and watch it?

Both sides have valid arguments, but a business must survive.

Timothy E. Raines '92

**EDITOR:**

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to TCA Cable for their conscientious decision to remove MTV.

We would like to express to those of you who would shout censorship that MTV, not TCA made the decision not to become a paid subscriber channel. Call them with your complaints.

We feel the decision made by TCA is a logical step that supports the family and Christian values that are so predominate in the Bryan-College Station area.

Pete A. Fazzino  
Cynthia L. Fazzino

## Does MTV really matter? No!

As I sat watching the few remaining glimpses of MTV, I couldn't help wondering how many people were doing the exact same thing. By the comments proffered by many members of this community, I could imagine that many were tuning in to get their last drops from the music video fountain.

I have a message for all of you MTV junkies, parents of MTV junkies, free speech defenders and other interested students: GET A LIFE! Let me put things into perspective for everyone. Ever since TCA Cable Inc. publicly announced MTV was going to be withdrawn from the air locally, Aggieland has gone bonkers.

Angered by the MTV contract failure, hundreds of students, teenagers, parents and faculty members have bombarded the city council members, the radio stations, the newspapers, the television station and the administrative offices of both municipalities with phone calls instructing TCA what it can do with its ideas about decency and responding to customer requests.

And get this: there was actually a group of students and local residents that picketed at the TCA offices on Saturday. Yes, some 40-plus members of Aggies Against Censorship spent some serious study time to make signs with slogans like "Honk If You Want

Trey Jacobson  
Columnist

Your MTV," only to walk in a circular path in front of an empty office building.

Other students avoided the fun at the TCA offices and wrote letters to the editor of this and other papers. Many more students decorated the rear windshield of their cars with shoe polish announcing their desire for the ten-year old video channel.

This one-time business decision has been called unethical, censorship, a violation of equal rights and an infringement on free speech. Regardless of how apocalyptic it may or may not be, everyone has gone way overboard on this issue.

No better is this demonstrated than through our local media. Although you wouldn't know it by reading the headlines of The Battalion or The Eagle, there have been other major world events occurring that do not revolve around music videos, morals, censorship and pornography. A quick glimpse of the local newsstands would have shown how unbelievably skewed this issue is within the confines of Brazos County. While every major

newspaper in the state carried news about the vacancy on the Supreme Court or the revolution in Yugoslavia, the TCA-MTV rift got top billing in Bryan-College Station.

And as important as these other events are to national and world history, I cannot find a single windshield emblazoned with "I want my favorite black female judge on the Supreme Court" or "Stop Censorship in Belgrade." The point being belabored here: this entire issue has been blown way out of perspective. We are talking about the elimination of a television broadcast channel, not your mother.

And the ironic thing is that no decision is final here. TCA claims that they are still trying to reach an accord with MTV as I write. Perhaps MTV will return to grace your television set once again. Then again, maybe it won't. If it doesn't, then you can see it after you graduate and get a job in another city. Heck, that can't be much more than four years for most of you. Surely you'll still love "Yo! MTV Raps" even as a full-time employee with the XYZ Corporation. Perhaps your boss will let you take off early so you can catch "Downtown" Julie Brown on "Club MTV" circa 1995. Regardless of the outcome in B-CS, one should ask oneself, does it really matter? The answer should be obvious and embarrassing: no.

Trey Jacobson is a graduate student in public administration.

