

Police reveal best excuses for student speeding

Michele Brinkmann
BATTALION

aura Weigel was not paying attention to how fast she was driving. She looked in her rearview mirror and saw the lights begin to flash. A police officer asked Weigel if she had an excuse for exceeding the speed limit. She told the officer she had a midterm exam she had to take.

The officer wrote her the ticket; he had heard one before. Weigel, a sophomore economics major, said she was speeding because she was late for class.

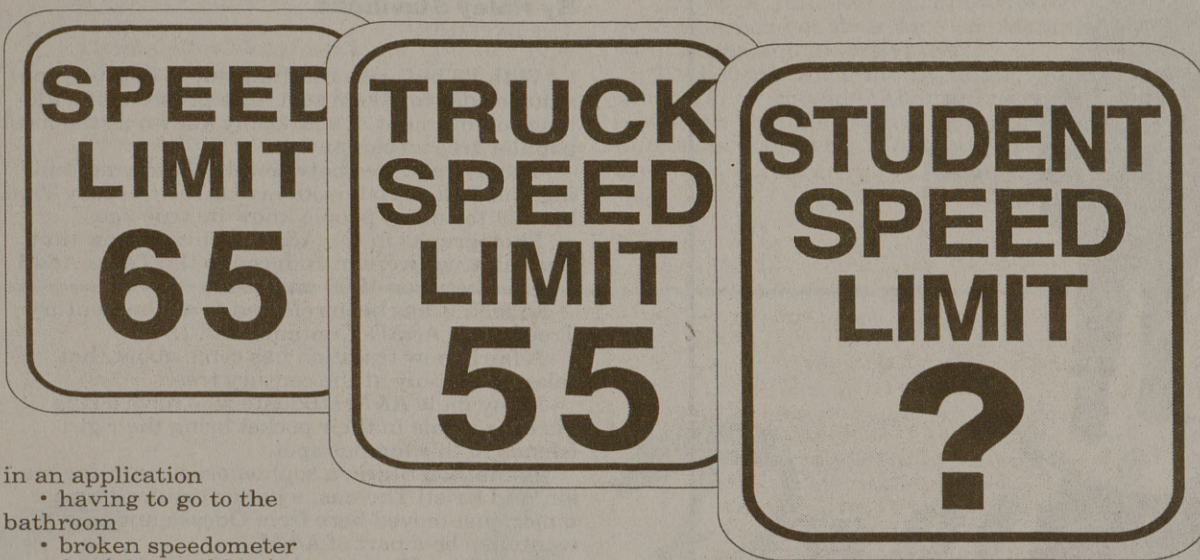
Weigel said she exceeds the speed limit by such a large amount that she has never been able to get out of a defensive driving class. She has had seven tickets and got out of the class, Weigel said. "The speed limit was 55 and I was going much faster. I told the officer I had cruise control set on 65 so there was no way I could be going as fast as he clocked me, which was a joke because I don't have cruise control. It was just a joke because he let me go."

Weigel has even had officers threaten to take her to jail. One time I was doing 108 mph and was weaving through traffic on the highway," she said. "I was pulled over and the officer threatened to throw me in jail, but he ended up writing me up for going 55 instead of 108. Officers lie as much as you do."

Weigel said none of her excuses worked, even if they were true. Many college students have used these excuses for speeding tickets.

At least that is what University, College Station police officers say. These were some of the most common excuses officers said they hear on a daily basis:

• being late for a test, a class, work, or turning



in an application

- having to go to the bathroom
- broken speedometer
- feminine problems

University Police Officer Jay Wendell said one of his favorites was, "You're just a campus police officer, you can't stop me."

Wendell said UPD commonly hears University-related excuses.

UPD Officer Thomas Armstrong said the best excuse he has heard was, "I was speeding because I was trying to stay away from y'all."

Contrary to what most students believe, UPD officers can pull over cars off campus.

Bryan Police Officer Dennis Crain said he has been on the Bryan police force for six years and has heard his share of excuses.

"One young lady told me that the new tires on her car made it run faster," Crain said. "That was one of the funniest I have heard."

Crain said most people try to get out of speeding

tickets. "About 75 percent give excuses," he said. "However, most do not work."

Crain said people do occasionally admit they have no reason for speeding but it is a rare occasion.

Crain said he remembers one occasion in which he let a woman go without giving her a ticket.

"One woman went to pieces," Crain said. "She was bawling, it was just a tragic day for her. So I got soft hearted and told her to go on down the road."

Most officers, however, said they do not fall for the "crying" trick.

BPD Officer Kenneth Meadors said people give excuses about 90 percent of the time they are pulled over, but said he lets them go about 5 percent of the time.

The funniest excuse Meadors said he has heard was from a soldier.

"This soldier said he was on call and was in a hurry because he was about to be air-dropped over a city in South America," Meadors said. "He got a ticket."

Heather Hunt, a junior elementary education major, said she considers herself lucky because she has never been issued a ticket in the six times she has been pulled over in College Station.

"Most of the officers think I am drunk when they pull me over," Hunt said. "They make me get out of the car and take sobriety tests. After they realize I am not drunk they always let me go."

Mark McGoon, a sophomore elementary education major, said he has used one of those common excuses listed above and it worked.

"I got out of one ticket because I said I had new tires and the speedometer was off," McGoon said. "Once in a blue moon I can get out of a ticket."

McGoan said he has even made up medical emergencies from time to time.

"I know that sounds terrible," he said. "They didn't work, they wrote the tickets."

Wendell said that despite almost every person's attempt to offer an excuse, there really is no excuse for endangering lives.

Most police departments set standards for police officers to follow when deciding whether to let a person go or not, Wendell said.

An officer is not supposed to let anyone go without a valid excuse such as a medical emergency, he said.

Meadors said students should realize that most excuses, even the most original and humorous, do not work.

"People who admit they are speeding have a better chance of being let go than those who offer excuses," Meadors said.

Most officers agreed students should save their creative ideas for the classroom and not for their cars.

Prince's 'Black Album' finally sees the light of day

By Rob Clark
THE BATTALION

Prince
"The Black Album"
Warner Bros. Records
**** 1/2 (out of five)

Yes, it is finally here. The most mysterious album made in recent musical history is available for the first time for a limited time (from Nov. 22 to Jan. 27) on CD. And where there's mystery and weirdness in music, of course there's Prince.

"The Black Album" was created in 1987 by His Royal Badness. The album was widely regarded as a vicious X-rated tirade by Prince, and anticipation was high for its release.

But December release plans were scrapped at the last minute and the spiritual "Love and Sex" album was released instead.

But a few "Black Album" copies leaked out, and it became the biggest bootlegged album ever. Prices paid for vinyl copies of the album soared to \$11,000.

In a 1990 Rolling Stone interview, Prince explained his reasons behind pulling the album.

"I was very angry a lot of the time back then," he said, "and that was reflected in that album. I suddenly realized that we can die at any moment and we'd be judged by the last thing we left behind. I didn't want that an-

gry, bitter thing to be the last thing. I learned from that album, but I don't want to go back."

Luckily for us, Prince has finally changed his mind.

This anger is what makes the album so stunning. There is no sugary pop-flavored "Kiss" or "Raspberry Beret" on the album. Instead it is raw, hard as hell and, yes, very angry.

Simply put, it is Prince at his best. His career has been on a downward spiral since "Love and Sex" bombed with record buyers.

"The Black Album" shows the sheer brilliance of Prince before he muddled things up with movie bombs ("Graffiti Bridge") and changing his name to an unpronounceable symbol.

The album shows off the grittiest, grunkiest funk Prince has ever made. P-Funk has nothin' on Prince when it comes to "Le Grind," and "Dead On It."

The fact that the album is

coming out seven years later shows the difference in musical perceptions. "The Black Album" was considered too racy for radio play, and extremely controversial. By today's standards, it's really not that bad.

But the sexual audacity and surprising violence preceded the growth of gangsta rap, and dissed it before it even became popular.

Prince rips rap with a scathing dismissal on "Dead On It," saying "The only good rapper is one that's dead — on it... See the rappers problem usually stems from being tone deaf / Pack the house and try to sing / There won't be no one left."

And Prince busts any rappers' bravado with "My bed's a coffin / Dracula ain't got sh-t on me... I'm badder than the wicked witch."

This hard sound is even more amplified on "Bob George," a disturbing tale of a jealous boyfriend discovering his woman's affairs.

But Prince manages to poke fun at himself, when the boyfriend realizes the man she is cheating with happens to manage a musician named Prince.

"Who? Prince? That skinny motherf---er with the high voice? Please," Prince says.

The customary sexual themes of Prince's music come out on "Cindy C.," a begging for Cindy Crawford to "play with me."

It even reaches the point of "I'm sure you're intelligent / a wizard of math and all that sh-t but I'm entirely more interested in flying your kite tonight."

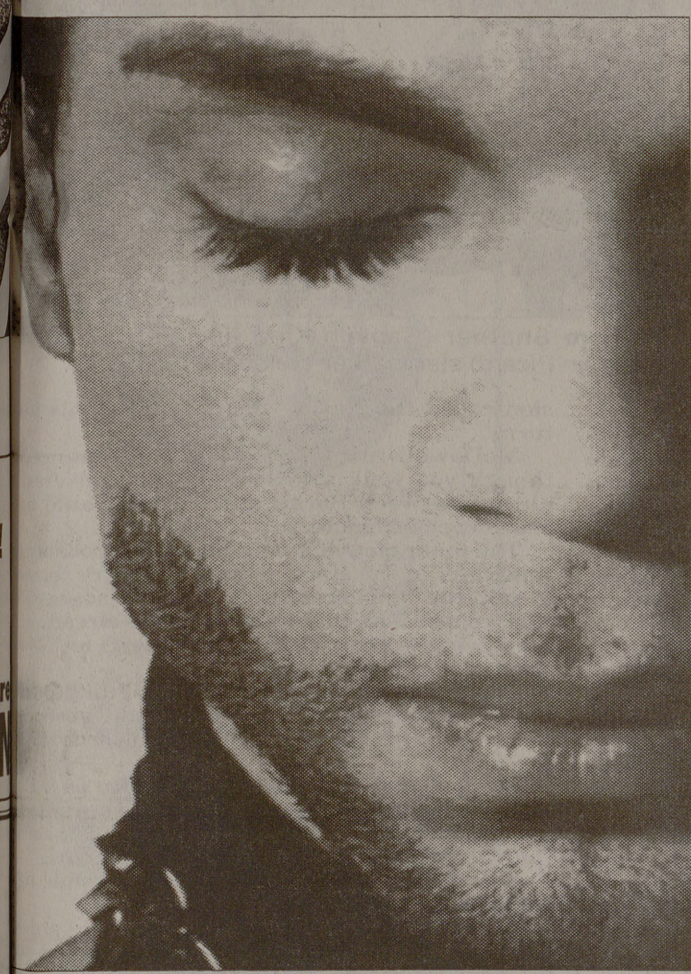
Well, no one ever said Prince was chivalrous.

Rounding the album out is "Rockhard in a Funky Place," another overtly sexual song with an irresistible drum beat and sax break. No holds barred on this one as it is extremely explicit.

Prince is in the midst of the biggest slump of his career. Recent songs like "The Most Beautiful Girl in the World" prove he is still marketable, but lacking in the usual Princely quality.

He'll never top "Purple Rain" or "Sign O' the Times," but "The Black Album" gives us a look back at the man whose musical genius reshaped music as we know it.

Perhaps a look back will prompt a look forward, and Prince will find his way once again.



Prince



A&M students, faculty joining forces to increase community recycling

Margaret Claughton
BATTALION

Just off of Highway 6, fittingly surrounded by flowers and trees, is the Texas A&M Recycling Center.

This large warehouse, once used by Texas Instruments, is surrounded by large bins filled to the brim with newspapers, aluminum cans and old phone books waiting to be sorted. Busy workers dash in and out pushing heavy containers loaded with paper.

Inside, Joe Sanchez sits behind an old wooden desk surrounded by recycling posters and landscape paintings, frantically handling phone call after phone call.

"Yes sir, I've pooled my resources and I'm improvising to give you more containers," he politely pipes into the phone. Sanchez is the recycling coordinator for the recycling center, which handles all of A&M's recycling needs. He and his staff of student workers gather recyclable materials from buildings over campus as well as the A&M facilities located throughout the community.

"Out of the 300-plus buildings on campus we regularly pick up about 158 of them," he said. There are also a lot of different

A&M offices scattered around Bryan—College Station and we pick them up as well."

Last year, Sanchez and his crew picked up 431 tons of recyclable paper and cardboard from A&M.

The recycling center's newsletter said 7,327 trees were saved because of this effort.

But plain paper is not the only product the recycling center works with. Among the materials collected are aluminum cans, toner cartridges, colored paper, newsprint, computer paper and phone books.

In fact, phone books were the focus for a recent recycling drive.

On Nov. 15, named Texas Recycles Day by Gov. Ann Richards, the Texas A&M Recycling Center, along with city departments and other community organizations, sponsored a community-wide phone book recycling drive.

The result was more than 20 tons of phone books donated to be recycled, a significant improvement from the previous year's 3 tons.

Sanchez said this success is due to the teamwork exhibited by the community.

"From everybody on campus and in the community, the cooperation has been phenomenal," he said.

Sanchez said the center has formed a coalition of sorts with the cities of Bryan and College Station, Brazos Beautiful and Brazos Valley Solid Waste Management.

These organizations help promote community awareness and gather materials to be recycled.

Other organizations such as Bryan Iron and Metal and the Sunbright Paper Company help process the materials after they have been collected.

"We have major cooperation going on just to keep this facility going," Sanchez said.

Students and faculty from A&M have also done their share of contributing to the community's environmental health.

Dr. Roy Hartman, professor of engineering and technology, has helped further the A&M's recycling efforts by forming the Center for Recycling and Waste Management.

Faculty members and students work to create recycling awareness through seminars and other projects.

"We put on seminars with various speakers addressing topics like EPA regulations or environmental shopping such as how to buy environmentally-benign products," he said.

Research done by the Center for Recycling and Waste Manage-

ment has developed many things including a way to make frisbees from milk jugs.

One frisbee is made of three recycled milk jugs. The environmental frisbees were used as incentive gifts at the phone book drive.

Although the recycling center and its counterparts have contributed significantly to the environmental effort, both Hartman and Sanchez would like to see even more.

Hartman believes if more officials advocate the recycling process, it will become more effectively practiced.

"I'd like to have top management of the University really endorse recycling and the purchasing of recycled content goods," Hartman said.

Sanchez is working with city officials and other environmental chairs to increase the types of materials recycled.

Cardboard boxes are one resource Sanchez hates to see wasted.

"When students move, they use so many boxes," he said. "It breaks my heart to see them go into the landfill."

Efforts are also under way to develop effective recycling for dormitories on the A&M campus as well as recycling strategies for apartment complexes.



Tim Moog/The Battalion

The Texas A&M Recycling Center recently picked up 20 tons of phone books for recycling, up from 3 tons collected last year.