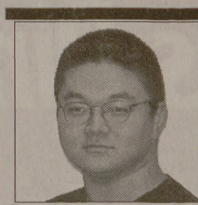


Don't quit your day job ...

Celebrities should not branch out into areas they lack talent, save themselves embarrassment

Baseball buffs everywhere know the San Diego Padres will face an uphill battle in defending their National League championship this upcoming baseball season. Free agency and budget cuts have decimated the team's roster during the off-season, with ace pitcher Kevin Brown being the most noteworthy departure.



DAVID LEE

So what does team management do to compensate for the lost talent? Naturally, they sign a big name, someone who can come in and and shore up fan confidence.

However, 37-year-old country music superstar Garth Brooks is not the savior Padres' fans have been praying for during the off-season.

Prior to spring training this year he has never played an inning of major league baseball in his life.

What in the world could possibly justify his place on the Padres' spring training roster?

Other than a cheap ploy to get the public's attention, nothing. The bottom line is unless Brooks can hit over .250 or can hurl a wicked split-finger pitch, he has no business being on a major league baseball diamond as a player.

Unfortunately, he is following in the footsteps of many celebrities before him who have attempted to branch out and become multi-faceted entertainers.

The problem is the majority of these celebrities have little or no legitimate talent for their new career, relying instead on fame gained from their other career to force their way into a second field.

Unless these celebrities have actual talent to justify branching out, they should stop insulting the public and stick to what they are good at.

The Padres' signing of Brooks is an obvious public relations ploy. Realistically, he has absolutely no chance of making the major league roster.

Rolling Stone magazine prominently displayed an anonymous Padres batting coach's comment that, "The only way [Brooks] could have gotten an extra-base hit was if the ball

bounced off his helmet."

The odds of Brooks replacing future Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn in the starting lineup do not look very likely after this stunning vote of confidence.

Yes, it is heart-warming to a certain extent that Brooks gets to live out his childhood dream of playing major league baseball.

Celebrities often claim this as the primary motivation for attempting another career i.e. Michael Jordan in baseball, Pamela Lee in motion pictures and Shaquille O'Neal in rap music.

Anyone remember the rave reviews for Barb Wire? Know anyone who owns a Shaq rap record? It is painfully obvious that these celebrities use their fame in their primary profession as leverage in getting an opportunity to try out a new career and realize their dream.

In Brooks case, he used his fame as a country music performer to garner a spot on the Padres' spring training roster.

Any notion of them having actual talent in their new career is overshadowed by momentum built from their other career.

Besides, it is commonplace for these celebrities to give up after they realize their dream of success will not come true.

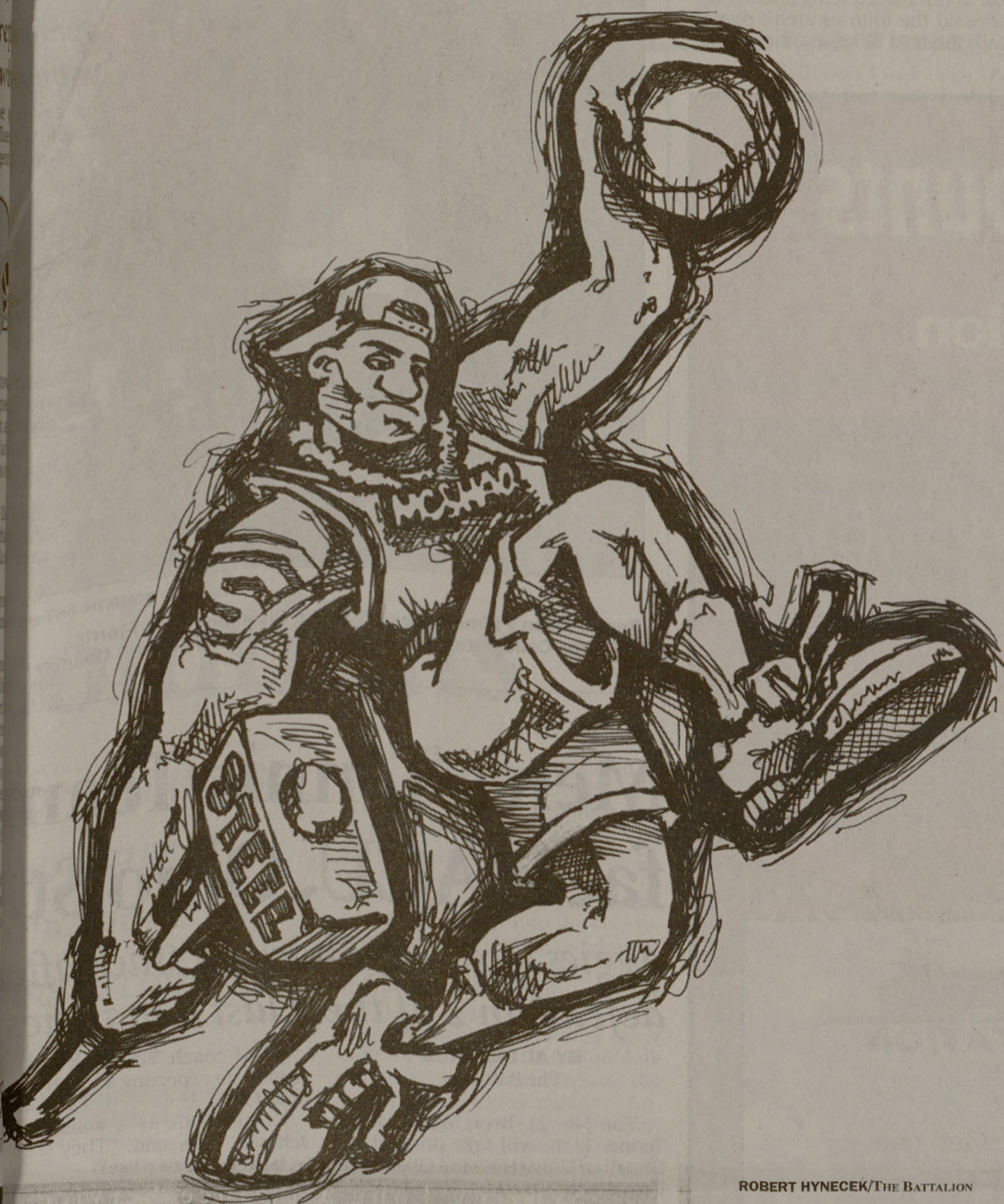
Jordan eventually went back to winning championships in the NBA, Lee went back to the pages of Playboy and O'Neal went back to maintaining his pathetic free-throw percentage. Brooks will obviously go back to his music career.

Granted, every now and then, a celebrity possess the necessary talent and has success in multiple careers. However, for every Barbra Streisand, there are dozens of Jenny McCarthys.

For every Arnold Schwarzenegger, there are hundreds of Hulk Hogans. For every Jerry Seinfeld, there are thousands of Jeff Foxworths.

Hopefully, Brooks will realize this before returning to Padres' spring training. Besides, it is not like he can never set foot on a major league baseball field ever again and be the center of attention. Two words: national anthem.

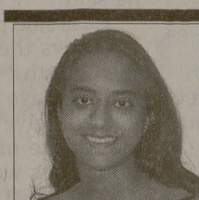
David Lee is a sophomore general studies major.



ROBERT HYNCEK/THE BATTALION

Preacher's words of love mask message, doctrine of intolerance

Intolerance. It is alive and well in America and it is tearing the country apart. Whether religious, cultural or racial, intolerance continually rears its ugly head and keeps neighbors from understanding each other and helping each other.



MANISHA PAREKH

would be to ignore the threat that his breed of intolerance poses to everyone. It would be the same as accepting his hate, his bigotry and his intolerance as your own.

For Short, and those like him, is dangerous. He masks a message of hate and persecution in the gauze of religious salvation. He takes a doctrine of love and healing and turns into one of divisiveness and discrimination.

On the surface, he may claim to preach love and repentance, but when his facade is viewed in the light of his actual words, the house of cards begin to fall to the ground, revealing a man who hates everything that is not like him.

Short preaches about what is right and what is wrong. On his Website, he has written, "Our problem is not that we judge too much but that we blindly follow the crowd while making far too few judgments on what (and who) is right and wrong."

Apparently, anyone who is not like Short is wrong and is going to hell. On the Outreach Judaism Website, David Myers posted a letter highlighting Short's fall 1996 visit to A&M.

"[He] told one student that, because she is Jewish, she is going to 'burn in hell.' He told another Jewish students that 'Hitler did not go far enough,'" Myers wrote.

This does not sound like a doctrine of love. It sounds like a doctrine of hate and intolerance — the same kind that led to the deaths of over 6 million Jews during the Holocaust.

What would happen if a follower of Short took his words to heart? Who would pay the price for Short's intolerance? Everyone, because the hate does not stop there.

Based upon an article Short posted on his Website, Short also does not support multiculturalism because it leads to immorality.

Furthermore, Short warns Christians, via his Website, not to take certain classes from non-Christians.

"Be warned," Short wrote, "Be careful from whom you learn. Do not sit in the seat of a scoffer or you will be damaged!!!"

"I am not saying that you should check out your engineering professor's religion before you take his class ... But there are certainly many classes in which [it] does [play a big part]: Philosophy, psychology, history, humanities, literature, logic, natural sciences, sociology, and, of course, Bible as literature courses to name a few ... Avoid these classes if you can."

Basically, anyone who learns from a

non-Christian endangers himself or herself. Were this philosophy taken to the highest level, many of the most brilliant minds at the University and the world would never be heard of by Christians.

This country would not have the exchange of free ideas upon which it was built. Tolerance would be a meaningless word. The mere fact that a person is of a different religion makes him or her dangerous.

Rev. Kathleen Ellis of the Unitarian Fellowship said Short's message is harmful. "Tom short preaches intolerance and hatred instead of the basic Christian message of love," she said. "God teaches perfect love. The two great commandments are to love God and to love our neighbors. I believe that God expects us to love one another, not to condemn anyone. God will be our ultimate judge."

"He's very intolerant towards Jews and hateful to those who don't follow his beliefs," Ellis said. "That is very harmful. God taught us to love one another. We all live together and we may believe different things, but we need to respect each other."

Short defends himself by writing that he is tolerant; he is message is merely misunderstood. "Disagree with a politically correct position and you are a 'hate-monger,'" he wrote.

No, one is called a hatemonger when he regularly preaches in support of anti-semitism, bigotry and intolerance. One is called a hatemonger when he quoted as saying "Hitler did not go far enough."

Is this God's message to man? Hate and intolerance? Chances are, most theologians would not agree.

By masking hate in a thin cloud of religion, Short has found a way to divide students, breed racism and anti-semitism and keep the University from healing old wounds and embracing diversity.

The only way to counter this strong message of hate is with an equally strong message of love and acceptance. Students, regardless of religious feelings and backgrounds, must come together and voice the opinion that this type of hatred and divisiveness has no place on the A&M campus. Students must realize that even the sweetest words can mask the cruellest of intentions.

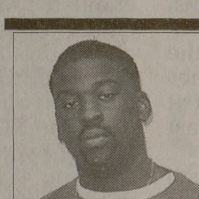
To borrow a sentence from Short, "With a multitude of lies and deception flooding our culture, we who have the truth must know it, live it and share it with others."

The truth is Short's message of intolerance is intolerable.

Manisha Parekh is a junior psychology and journalism major.

American legal troubles symptoms of lawyers' greed, deceptions

Order in the Court." The once-revered legal system in this country has been reduced to having about as much prestige and valor as Porky's movie. From frivolous lawsuits to sleazy lawyers to absurd decisions, it is apparent that Lady Justice is not only blind but also deaf, dumb and stupid.



DEMOND REID

concerts was too loud. Suing a rock band for playing their music too loud is about as stupid as suing McDonalds for serving coffee too hot. By its nature rock music is supposed to be loud.

Even if the professor thought that Smashing Pumpkins was some sort of sadistic agricultural troop and not a rock band, the assortment of Buick-sized speakers and bazillion watt amplifiers should have been some sort of indication that they were not just going to be whistling Dixie.

If the allowing of frivolous lawsuits was not enough to take the shine off the gold ring that is the judicial system, sleazy lawyers certainly have put a huge finger print on it. No longer do lawyers work to serve the interest of justice.

Now they only work to fatten the pockets of their Armani suits, keep up the payments on their solid gold Lexuses and wall paper their summer man-

sions with twenty-dollar bills. Consequently, with the hefty billing hours lawyers pile up, justice is now for sale. The legal system could not be any more pimped if Sappally was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

At one time being a lawyer was one of the most honorable professions a person could pursue. Now being a lawyer is about as honorable as being the "whore of the month" at Happy Harry's House of Half Dollar Hookers.

Granted there are still lawyers out there who thrive to thwart injustice and fight for the rights of the little man. But those types of lawyers number fewer than Vanilla Ice fans.

The lawyers in question are the sleazy defense lawyers who would defend Hitler if he paid a high enough retainer.

Moreover, the unscrupulous lawyers are the ones who would defend a person whom they know in their heart of

hearts is guilty as sin. These are the lawyers who defend purely evil individuals by painting hypothetical scenarios more vivid than an LSD flashback and more implausible than a Stephen King novel plot.

Besides the 12 marble brains who sat in the jury box, no one else believed that the entire LAPD conspired to frame O.J. Simpson. They are just not that smart or that organized. The LAPD could not devise a plan to handle crowd control at a Clippers game, let alone devise a conspiracy plot that would make Oliver Stone jealous.

The so called "rules of evidence" used to protect the rights of people certainly failed the people in this case. How much more proof did they need to convict that man? The prosecution had the blood, the shoe print and the glove. It took less evidence to prove evolution.

If the David Copperfield-like magic tricks lawyers pulled off weren't bad

enough, the judges in this system leave a lot to be desired.

For example, in Pennsylvania two hundred forty pounds of cocaine was disallowed as evidence in a drug case because the trooper who found it stopped the suspects' car for failure to display a front license plate.

Then the case was thrown out because, legally, Pennsylvania only requires a rear plate. What type of asinine decision was that? That judgment is almost as bad as calling the Holyfield-Lewis fight a draw.

American faith in the legal system is disappearing faster than a plate of double stuff Oreos in front of Ricki Lake. The only way to bring back that faith is if the justice system concentrated more on bringing justice than following the system.

Demond Reid is a sophomore journalism major.