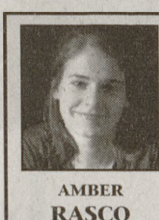


New York's whiniest

New York police protest of Springsteen song unfounded, infringes on singer's free speech

Bruce Springsteen sparked protest from the New York Police Department (NYPD) with his musical tribute to Amadou Diallo, who was killed by New York police. Officers fired 41 bullets at Diallo as he reached for his wallet to provide identification.



AMBER RASCO

Springsteen rants about the Diallo tragedy in his song "American Skin." Springsteen's bittersweet song speaks on behalf of its victim and is quick to blame the NYPD, forcing it to face the error of its ways. In defense of its reputation, the New York City Policeman Benevolent Association and its president, Pat Lynch, have called for a boycott of Springsteen's current concerts at Madison Square Garden. Lynch said, "I consider it an outrage that he would be trying to fatten his wallet by reopening the wounds of this tragic case."

Music must be valued as a great form of expressionistic art, not shunned and disgraced.

Lynch should cast his arrogance aside for a moment — Springsteen enjoys making music, and his success is immense. Springsteen's motive is not to make a profit, but to criticize recent police actions.

The NYPD deserves all the negative media attention it has received. Referring to Springsteen as a "dirtbag," Bob Lucente, president of the New York chapter of the Fraternal Order of Police, defines what it means to be shallow. Lucente should take a long, hard look in the mirror and take the dirt out of his own eye before pointing out Springsteen's faults.

Boycotting Springsteen's concert is an immature way for the police force to refuse to deal with the consequences of its actions. Such a protest is insensitive and selfish, and it demonstrates a refusal to honor Diallo's untimely fate.

Face the music boys — severe misconduct results in severe consequence. Ridicule is the price paid for such outlandish wrongdoing.

The New York police argue that Springsteen's testimony serves no common good. However, such a convicting song should be prompted and learned from. The song brings to surface some unpleasant memories;

the memory of such a tragedy should not die with Diallo. America is quick to forgive when remorse is shown. Had the NYPD given an apology rather than belittle a musician for stating his opinion, no conflict would be at hand. The NYPD's reaction to Springsteen's song is childish and an embarrassment to the department.

Boycotting this musical virtuoso sends another negative message to the American public. The police seem to be saying that singing about Diallo's death is off-limits. Bruce Springsteen should not be punished for utilizing his constitutional right to freedom of speech, but rather be applauded for the audacity and genius behind his song.

Free speech does not please everyone; someone or something often suffers. Limiting Springsteen's freedom of expression makes a mockery of democracy and liberty. Springsteen's popularity stems from his repertoire of songs about the highs and lows, glories and tragedies of the American dream. His music pleads for justice and harmony and acts as an instrument for change.

Springsteen's talent and heart address issues and make profound political statements that need to be heard by the NYPD. Music must be valued and upheld as a great form of expressionistic art, not shunned and disgraced.

Throughout history, people have used music to protest certain institutions and injustices. Buffalo Springfield's "For What It's Worth" and Bob Dylan's ballads defined a generation seeking peace, not war. As Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young's recent tour came to a close, America remembered four Kent State University students who were killed by the Ohio National Guard as they protested the Vietnam War. As the group sings "Ohio,"

people remember and mourn for the fallen victims of authoritative abuse and injustice. Music represents people. To boycott a great American artist is to ignore both his constitutional rights and the voices of the American people. Music has glued the nation together in times of brokenness and has implemented change as musicians like Springsteen speak for

citizens. Therefore, music's voice should not be hushed. It should be recognized as the American pulse.

Amber Rasco is a junior journalism major.



JEFF SMITH/THE BATTALION

Control

and will realize the mistake and return to their original state. It is too late.

It starts out happy with a catchy, but is an excellent album. The songs are reminiscent of the 1960s, but they all end in a whiny or too annoying way.

There are only eight tracks on the CD makes the album not worth the money. A Thousand Leaves, 1998, is a better buy. It has a variety of hard and emotional sounds.

It is going in a different direction and is not afraid to be different. They should be afraid of Ghost & Friends. (Grade: C-)

—Dewey Babin



Kid Rock

American Badass

courtesy of Atlantic Records

Kid Rock is an American badass. His new album is a sad state of affairs. This new album of songs from Kid Rock's albums remixed for a new one extra new song.

Does this say about him? He is trying to please a new audience and has jumped on the Kid Rock bandwagon.

Album isn't as good as his previous work. It is a total disgrace. What a disgrace is the ego Kid Rock has not learned from his previous bands? He has about as much popularity as a VH1 "Where's the Party?"

Album's theme is hackneyed and trailer trash, just like his previous Kid Rock albums. It is like he doesn't have any sense to write about.

One of Kid Rock who don't know how to write about his previous albums will define this release and his summer tour. (Grade: C-)

—Kyle White

Splitting Microsoft helps users, other companies

On June 7, 2000, Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson made one of the greatest decisions for American consumers. Jackson ordered that Microsoft be split up into two companies and he also ordered both companies to comply with a list of restrictions on their business practices. The breakup decision should have been made a long time ago, as the effects from this ruling will only be advantageous for consumers. Eventually this decision will create more balanced competition in the software industry. Consumers will benefit from the breakup because it will weaken Microsoft's monopoly power, lowering software prices and giving consumers more choices in software applications.



SUNNYE OWENS

with that? The breakup will certainly increase competition by leveling out the operating systems. If more software companies make their products for systems other than Windows, then Microsoft will have to lower its prices on its own software to compete by lowering their prices. "If Microsoft even sees itself as having more competition, it is that much more likely to lower its prices," said Silicon Valley antitrust lawyer Rich Gray. The decision for the division of Microsoft will be good not only for consumers but also for other software companies.



JEFF SMITH/THE BATTALION

Furthermore, the breakup of Microsoft is warranted because Microsoft waged an illegal campaign to preserve its monopoly on operating systems by intimidating others and binding Microsoft software programs to the operating systems.

With the decision, Microsoft will be prohibited from linking software programs to Windows. This will be an excellent advantage for people who want to use alternative software products while still using Windows.

Americans have seen a technological breakup like this before — the 1984 breakup of American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T). Many feared that the division would be bad for the telephone industry, but it turned out to be a beneficial decision for American consumers and the economy.

Judge Jackson made the right decision with the Microsoft breakup. As technology advances, America will see more of these types of monopolies and more people like Bill Gates. They must be stopped. In time, consumers will realize that Jackson was right. We should be grateful for the breakup; it will only be beneficial. Consumers will save money and other software companies will be able to prosper.

Sunnys Owens is a junior journalism major.

Texas GOP full of misguided ideas

George W. Bush, Texas' favorite son, was apparently too busy raising money to attend the Texas convention of the GOP. That's too bad, because it would have been interesting to hear Bush explain how he had no intention of paying any attention to the state party platform.

Let's start with the "official" view toward foreign relations as outlined in the *Houston Chronicle*: "End all forms of U.S. participation in the United Nations. Repeal the North American Free Trade Agreement and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and withdraw from the World Trade Organization." It's nice to see that the isolationist Taft Republicans still have enough clout to influence the party.

The UN is a classic kicking dog — but NAFTA? Does anyone think that Bush is going to disagree with his daddy on this one? Pull out of GATT and the WTO? Republican leadership will not even discuss such nonsense. The distance between the stated desires of the party faithful and the actions of the people they seem to love are so great that only a cosmologist could measure the distance.

What about economic issues? "Abol-

ish the income tax and the IRS." It's been a long time since elected Republicans have even joked about that. "Repeal minimum wage laws" is always a popular chant.

Here is a real howler that all economic students can ask their professors about: "Return the federal monetary system to the gold standard." What would happen if a Republican presidential can-

Have not these hayseeds noticed their own politicians do not even act on these platform planks?

didate announced that he would actually push to do such a thing if elected? Business leaders would probably have him shot.

Of course, the Republican convention came up with some other old standards, like "Prayer in school should be encouraged" and "Corporal punishment in Texas public schools is effective." These, combined with "The U.S. Department of

Education should be abolished" are apparently all the Republicans' solutions to our educational problems.

Interestingly, the party platform also says "Gov. George W. Bush's 1994 pledge to abolish the authority of the Texas Education Agency should be fulfilled." It's now 2000, and it is probably not very high on his agenda.

Of course the God-fearing and all-knowing Republican convention offered its wisdom on religion as well. In addition to prayer in schools, the party platform states that "homosexual behavior is contrary to the fundamental unchanging truths that have been ordained by God." I always love it when a political party tries to tell people what God has ordained. It reaffirms my faith in atheism.

Have not these hayseeds noticed their own politicians do not even act on these platform planks? Phil Gramm and Kay Bailey Hutchison would not be caught dead actually trying to enact most of this populist garbage. But that does not stop them from cheering the crowds and collecting the votes.

Steve Forsberg is a columnist for *The Daily Cougar at the U. of Houston.*

Mail Call

If University wants alcohol-free housing, RAs need pay raise

In response to Jessica Crutcher's June 21 column.

One would hope that, along with blanketing the campus with a substance-free title, the University plans to substantially increase the pay of the resident advisers (RAs) and graduate hall directors (GHDs).

Already the pay is too low for the amount of work being done. If A&M chooses not to increase their pay, it is ridiculous to think that these over-worked, under-paid students will actually enforce this no-alcohol rule.

In my opinion, there's really no need for on-campus residents to get up in arms about this matter.

We all know they will never give the RAs and GHDs a

raise in pay, so its highly doubtful that the hall staff will give the rule even a passing glance.

Tara Gray
Class of '99

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number.

The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 014 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:

The Battalion - Mail Call
013 Reed McDonald
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX
77843-1111

Campus Mail: 1111
Fax: (409) 845-2647
E-mail: battletters@hotmail.com

MARK

Best Seat in Town

HOLLYWOOD USA

Earl Rudder Frwy (979) 764-7575

Special: First Matinee is only \$3.50

Matinee: \$4.50 for all shows before 5:00

ROUND SOUND IN ALL AUDITORIUMS

SCHEDULE FOR FRI. & SAT. 6:23 - 9:55

10 4:00 5:10 7:05 7:55 9:55 10:35

(N) 7:55 10:15 12:50

(R) 10:10

HOUSE (PG-13) SHOWING ON 2 SCREENS

10 4:25 5:35 8:00 9:45 10:30 12:50

(PG) 4:15 9:20 12:00

15 7:25 10:00 12:30

DOON (PG-13)

20 7:10 9:40 12:10

25 7:35 9:55 12:20

ANCE TICKET SALES 'NO PASSES'

cinemark.com