

Radio edit ...

FCC oversteps rights by fining radio station for playing Eminem

Last week, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) fined the Colorado radio station KKM-FM \$7,000 for playing a radio-edited version of Eminem's controversial song, "The Real Slim Shady." The FCC apparently has decided it has the authority to tell people what they can listen to on the radio. It does not have that authority — the FCC serves as a "watchdog" and regulates the use of profanity on the radio; however, it should not control content. The FCC has stepped over its bounds and the constitutional rights of American citizens. The First Amendment protects the freedom of speech. Even with Supreme Court rulings on the limits of the free speech clause, censorship, because of "objectionable lyrics," is not acceptable.



BRIENNE PORTER

"We have our first piece of evidence that the new (FCC) Chairman Michael Powell may consider anti-indecency enforcement as part of his mandate," said Harry Jessell, editor in chief of

The First Amendment is supposed to protect the citizens from this type of censorship.

Broadcasting & Cable. Yet, whose definition of indecency is being used? Not all people consider the lyrics in Eminem's songs to be offensive or indecent.

"We have a policy prohibiting the playing of indecent material," said Brenda Goodrich, general manager of the radio station cited by the FCC. The penalization of radio stations has opened the door for the continued FCC regulation of song material. With that ability, the FCC can take away citizens' rights of free speech and listeners' right to listen to the music they want to hear.

The FCC did not cite any specific lyrics that discuss "impermissible sexual or excretory functions," as defined under the agency's indecency rules. But the

FCC did say that the song has "unmistakable offensive sexual references."

Offensive to whom? Many people do find Eminem and his rap style offensive, but there is a minority who see nothing wrong with his songs. This ruling implies that those people who enjoy his music do not have the right to listen to him on the radio.

Hundreds of radio stations have played the same version of this song since it became popular in the spring of 2000. This means that all of those radio stations eventually could be fined by the FCC.

If a listener finds a song offensive, he can turn off the radio or find another radio station. It is not the job of the government to protect the public from potentially offensive content. Eminem writes about what he has lived and what he knows. If people do not like it, they should not listen to it. There is also a startling amount of truth in what he says for some people. Others just like the music.

It is not the FCC's right to intrude on free speech. The First Amendment is supposed to protect the citizens from this type of censorship. It is "Big Brother" telling the public what they have to listen to, and the public cannot let this slide without a protest. Whether one is a fan does not matter.

This is not about a song — it is about the rights of citizens to have a choice in the music they listen to on the radio. The FCC already regulates profanity, but it cannot be allowed to cross the line and regulate content. Once that happens, there will be no freedom of music and no choice in what is on the air waves.

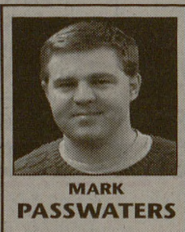
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RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

Ventura's stint as governor pitiful, as expected

When Jesse Ventura was elected governor of Minnesota in 1998, he said he would not be the average politician. Credit must be given where it is due — Ventura is not an average politician. Where average politicians have the intelligence and skill to hide the fact that they are self-serving frauds, Ventura is vocal about it. In the process, he has shown his reform platform to be as fake as the job that made him famous.



MARK PASSWATERS

The Minnesota Legislature and Ventura are currently grappling with each other over a new budget. Neither has been able to put its foe in a

submission hold, so Ventura has decided to do what he did in the WWF: Grab a microphone, and talk trash about his opponent. Last week on his radio show, Ventura claimed that he would allow the state government to shut down. This would cause the electricity to be shut off, undelivered paychecks, unguarded jails and total chaos.

It also is totally false. But Ventura was not willing to let something like the truth derail his crusade for whatever it was he was crusading for. When confronted by the local media about his attempts to create a public panic with a bunch of lies, Ventura was indignant.

"Like, you've got room to talk," he said. "You people do this all the time."

The man almost would have a point, if not for a small problem. The comparison to what Ventura said would be Dan Rather on the air insisting that the world was made of snow, and it was all President George W. Bush's fault. No reporter would do that. It would be tantamount to putting a "kick me" sign on one's own back.

Maybe that is why Ventura is so cranky, because people have been kicking away at his expense. Unfortunately for "The Body," the abuse is warranted.

Since he has become Gov. Ventura, he has done more than annoy us with his radio show. He has written two books, gone on national tours to promote those books, given two interviews to Playboy in which he insulted

everyone from God to Ghandi and was a color commentator for Vince McMahon's Xtreme Football League.

His commentary went something like this: "Wow, that was a great hit by, you know, that guy whatshisname, No. 37. He just popped that guy. It reminded me, you know, of that hit I put on Hogan back in Wrestlemania ..."

Some people run for public office claiming they will restore honor and dignity to the position if elected. Ventura may as well claim that he will take the position to Mardi Gras on the constituent's tab. He certainly cannot expect to have anyone's respect.

Ventura has always said he was different, and he is completely correct. When someone has the courage to

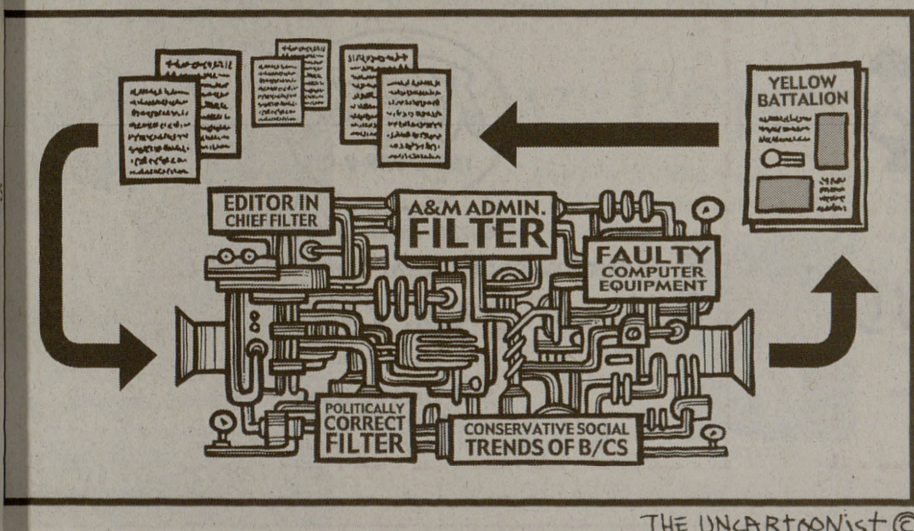
call him on the carpet, he blames someone else. Other politicians have done the same thing, but few have done it out in the open with a big smile on their face.

Ventura ran on a platform of reform and has proven to be even worse than what he claimed to be reforming. He found the lure of a quick buck to be more enticing than making history as someone who proved politics does not have to corrupt everyone involved in it.

Ventura wants to run for re-election next year. If he does, the people of the state may as well hand over their wallets. After all, why make "The Body" sweat?

Mark Passwaters is a senior electrical engineering major.

CARTOON OF THE DAY



THE UN-CARTOONIST ©

News in Brief

Criticism of emergency certification is unfair

In response to J.J. Trevino's June 18 column.

As a state certified and experienced teacher, and former emergency certified teacher, I am sad to see J.J. Trevino write such a biased article about teachers.

I lacked student teaching before I entered a classroom, and some other alternative and emergency certified teachers lacked more. However, many of them were 20-year, business professionals eager to share their real world knowledge with today's youth.

Yes, a handful of emergency and

alternatively certified teachers are questionable. Find me a profession devoid of undesirables. I understand that lack of certification causes alarm, but all of my certification coursework taught me nothing about teaching. I learned because I wanted to be a good teacher.

Statistics will show that 70 percent of teachers leave teaching within three years. No wonder we have such a shortage.

Have you ever met a teacher happy with their pay, content with the feedback from supervisors, ecstatic about the curriculum changes, thrilled about the parents' phone calls they are going to receive blaming the teacher for their child's failing grade, energized by the overpopu-

lated and undermanned school, motivated at the technology in the classroom or eager to put in extra hours on schooldays and weekends to meet the requirements for paperwork, grades and student activities?

Before you criticize those individuals eager to become teachers despite all the danger and thankless days, I suggest you go substitute one week at a local high school. See what kind of students we deal with, and ask yourself again why there is such a shortage. Maybe then you will understand that there is no reason schools should not allow those who want to teach to do so.

Aleisha Force
Battalion subscriber