

Enter the Torlal

by Ryan O Connor

Does the government have the right to limit what music hits your eardrums?

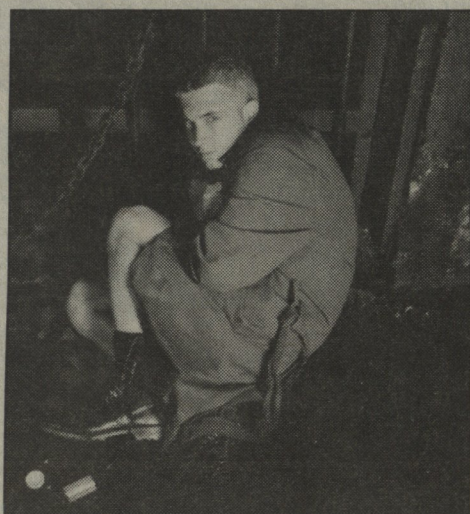
This debate was reignited last week when Ontario's Attorney General Jim Flaherty requested the Canadian government deny entry to the country for the American rapper Eminem.

Eminem, whose real name is Marshall Mathers III, is no stranger to controversy. His lyrics, which feature unbridled attacks against practically everyone under the sun, have angered many would-be censors.

Critics claim that Eminem's music incites his fans to commit violence against women and homosexuals, two of the rapper's favorite topics to spout-off against. In order to nip this problem in the

bud, many censors want to see his music banned from store shelves. Others, as we saw in Toronto, want to charge him under Canada's hate crimes legislation.

Is Eminem really the problem in society that many lead us to believe he is? Should he be censored?



No.

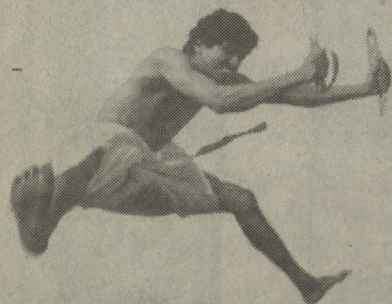
It is easy to find snippets of anger-laced lyrics in Eminem's music, but what the critics do not address is the fact that he unequivocally states in interviews, as well as in songs such as "Stan" that he is not serious about his subject matter, and that he does not support violence against any group. In other words, he says what he does to create controversy, which in turn leads to increased album sales. That is why his latest album broke sales records around the globe.

On the issue of inciting violence, any fan devoted enough to take his message seriously is familiar with the fact that he does not support violence against his mother, father, wife, homosexuals, or boy bands. To him it is just a joke.

It may not be a funny joke, but who is the judge of that?

Critics of the man say that it does not matter whether he is serious or not. Some gullible fans, they insist, will not understand the true message, and will act violently in the name of Eminem's work. Of course, we all know that Charles Manson interpreted "Helter Skelter" as an incitement to kill. The problem, therefore, is in the individual willing to harm others, not the music.

What would happen if the government did block Canadians from listening to Eminem? The music would simply go underground, where no regulatory body could touch the material. As we can currently see with the internet, which is ungovernable, music is



CHOICE CUTS!

HEAR IT!

Slowcoaster from Cape Breton has a home-made CD-R demo called *Jody's Garden*, which is a really, really, really good album. You can only get it at their live show, so it's a good thing they're playing at Baba's this week.

BROWSE IT!

www.cblocals.com is not only a resource for Cape Breton's underground music scene, but it is the web site with the highest traffic east of Montreal. It's sloppy, but it's useful. Like The Buzz.

READ IT!

Fall On Your Knees by Anne-Marie MacDonald is a right good novel. None of the staff is sure why, but it's set in Cape Breton and the Editor-in-Chief's girlfriend seemed to like it. Also, MacDonald starred in a movie with Stephan once.

RENT IT!

Margaret's Museum is a suspense/mystery that has Cuba Gooding Jr. as a lawyer who writes a book. Despite the name, there were no Counting, Black, or Russell Crowes injured in the making of the movie. (We get lazy sometimes)

SIP IT!

Tea is one of the world's finest drinks. It can be served in either cold or hot form: Taken with the bag in or the bag out. And it always brings with it a nice tea-inspired buzz. The Editor-In-Chief's roommate quite enjoys it.



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