

Increases in Advertisement: A Silent Poison

BY DAVID BARKMEIER

Noise. Noise is everywhere, and it's getting worse. There's just one problem: it's a silent poison. Advertisement has always been present in society, with the earliest evidence dating to Egypt around 3000 B.C. Don't get me wrong, I don't think the problem is ads themselves. They inform, inspire, entertain, and yes, sell. It's the amount of ads and where they are that's the issue. They are everywhere now more than ever, even getting into once-ad free spaces. This phenomenon is called "ad creeping," and most people don't even realize that it is happening. One example of this would be streaming services like Amazon Prime and Netflix. Once notorious for being ad-free, these sites crumbled to the pressure of the money in commercials. I was left feeling betrayed, believing that my subscription would mean no ads, a better alternative to regular cable TV. More of this "ad creeping" can be seen in broadcasted sports. There was a lot of uproar when advertisements made their way into the world of soccer through the A-League, the highest pro league in Australia and New Zealand, in the 2019-2020 season. Soccer is not commercial-friendly, as the only break is at halftime. However, they appeared after a foul, goal, or injury. This completely ruins the flow and momentum of the game. The backlash resulting from this was so strong that the idea was scrapped a couple years later. College Football,

Illustration by David Barkmeier



unfortunately, hasn't been able to escape it. Football has always had quite a lot of ads, but with the implementation of thirty second floaters (quick ad breaks during time outs, injuries, etc.) in 2023, these games are almost too hard to watch now. I've had to turn off the game at times because there were just too many commercials. I can't use this same strategy on the road, though. The most dangerous and reckless form of advertisement is with the implementation of the "Ad Cars." If you've seen one, you know what I'm talking about. They drive around with no destination in mind, only to influence those on the road. These trucks have a screen on each side, constantly switching through bright, colorful, and distracting ads. These things are an accident waiting to happen, not for the trucks, but for other people. I've seen my fair share of them. Every time it seemed impossible for me to not look at it, immediately pulling my eyes from the road, and therefore, safety. This just shows how far companies are willing to go to influence you and me. As I said before, it's a silent poison, numbing us from how many there really are. It's up to us to wake up and fight it before it's too late.

Mufasa: A Masterpiece of Mediocrity

BY WILL MCTAGGART

"The Lion King" is a classic movie that many, including myself, used to watch as a child, but recently a prequel has been created called "Mufasa: The Lion King." Since I enjoyed the first movie, I decided to go visit my local theater to go see it on the best screen with the best audio and best seats for my best experience. Even with all these things, my movie experience felt very mediocre. This movie at face value isn't necessarily bad, but it doesn't have the same magic that the first one has. "Mufasa: The Lion King" felt rushed and slow at the same time. The story at the beginning of the movie felt fast and didn't give me a lot of time to understand what was happening or going on and once I did find my footing in the story, I got lost again. Throughout the movie I was trying to correlate this with the original and it was hard to stay engaged with the movie because of that. My biggest complaint is about the pacing of the movie. The story of Mufasa was being told by a narrator in the aftermath of the first movie. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but it is when after a big chunk of the story was over there was random dialogue from the characters that interrupted the story. Kind of like the movie "The Princess Bride," but more irritating. While the original "Lion King" is known for its songs like "Hakuna Matata," the new one does not have any songs that stick out and will be remembered for years on, which is a shame. None of the songs are remarkable. The songs didn't really flow well with the story even though the entire purpose was to make sense of the story. This aspect of the movie made me feel upset, since the first movie's songs were very prominent. This movie didn't have any live acting, and it was all animation. I think it's a specific animation where they make the actors wear black suits with motion detecting spheres on them and then later animate their movements into the realistic animation that we see with live action remakes of movies. The visual effects in this movie are extremely well done and it looks very realistic. While this is the movie's strongest aspect it felt kind of expected.

While it looks and feels immersive with the large screen and loud spatial audio in the theater, it was not enough to give this movie any redemption for everything else it lacks. The dialogue and voice acting in this movie doesn't redeem the missed opportunities that this movie was predicted to have. The dialogue is just very mediocre and not very special. It feels very standard and uninspired. The voice acting also has the same problem of feeling uninspired. It wasn't anything that'll knock your socks off. It just felt very lackluster. Overall, this movie seemed like a good idea, but really just not a great addition to an already great franchise. This movie doesn't bring anything special or anything fun like movies previously have. In my opinion, a trip to the theater for "Mufasa" isn't justified.



Image courtesy of Disney

A Kink in The Knights' Armour: The Arts Department

BY JOHN KELLY

Mount Michael has long been praised for its glowing academic performance, but how does it compare to the other schools in Omaha in the arts? And why exactly is a good arts department such an integral part of an intensive college preparatory high school? In terms of arts courses, Mount Michael has by far the smallest roster of only eight active arts courses, including classes such as Pottery, Choir, and Intro to Theatre, being doubled by the next smallest of 16 at Brownell. Some other private schools like Duchesne and Creighton Prep have well over twenty unique and active classes and even more art-related programs. Many private schools make some form of art class mandatory. Duchesne, for example, requires all freshman to take the Art I class and requires another art class to graduate. Many students at Duchesne absolutely love this policy, as they get to learn subjects completely different from the typical high school curriculum. These classes teach them unique concepts and, in some cases, open job offerings and opportunities. Duchesne junior Ardriana Olvera stated, "Classes like photography and interior design really expanded my perspective on the variety of career paths I could have in my future." Olvera is not an isolated case, as many other Duchesne students were able to realize their artistic potential through the unique classes offered. Senior Jensen Shomshor partakes in Rockband as a drummer and String Ensemble as a flutist. "Our final [Rockband] project consisted of us collaborating with peers, creating an original piece, and having the opportunity to record the song in a music studio. The Duchesne music department offers a 'World Drumming Class' (offering) unique drumming for beginner-level players and gives girls with no prior music background an opportunity to create music and participate in our concerts. Overall, our music department offers a unique variety of classes, challenging Duchesne girls to think critically and invites the entire school to be involved in music."

This is not a problem of boys not caring about art classes either, as the only other all-boys school in Omaha, Creighton Prep, has one of the most expansive arts programs in the city. One student, Leo Kelly '27, stated, "I really like how in-depth the course gets. The teachers provided a lot of experience that I didn't get from other classes, like displaying my emotions in detail through art." Public Schools also have developed more in-depth programs, like at Gretna East program. Students like Caitlin Rischling '27 have taken many arts classes, including Drawing Fundamentals, Advanced Drawing Techniques, and Art Fundamentals. Rischling said, "They have helped me become a better artist and they have helped me learn more techniques in my art." It seems as if students at The Mount would prefer other classes not offered, like Michael Freilich '27 who said, "I really wish we had a class like Studio Art, or Digital Design." And although it may seem as if people simply have a lack of interest in these dwindling courses, consider that other schools still easily maintain a much higher number of arts classes, in some cases with less people, likely due to the initial push of requiring a basic class in the arts. Making a small change like requiring arts classes to graduate, improving existing classes, or creating an honors class in the arts program could be the necessary change to get more students to add a new class to their schedule.

To read the complete article, visit mountonline.org

The Mount

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