TV tabloids: Talkin’ trash

- PBS documentary looks at lurid pseudo-news shows
  By Lynn Elber

LOS ANGELES — Despite the title, Michael Jackson's ex-girlfriend says the Jackson case is not at the heart of the PBS documentary "Tabloid Truth: The Michael Jackson Scandal."

Instead, the film, airing on PBS' "Frontline" series, tonight at 9 p.m. on Sonic Cable Channel 8, uses the Jackson case to reveal the workings of tabloid journalism and its dubious impact on mainstream media.

The issue of checkbook journalism — the tabloid practice of paying for news — is key in "Tabloid Truth," says producer Thomas Lennon.

"If the film has a governing idea, it's probably that when every story is bought and sold, what you find is that you're not completely sure of any information," Lennon says.

"Tabloid Truth" starts at the beginning, the frenzied rush last November to uncover details of a police raid on Jackson's Encino home and claims of child sexual abuse.

In January, Jackson's attorneys agreed to an unsealed police report. It was 7:45 p.m. when they arrived at the police station. It was 7:45 p.m. when they arrived at the police station.

Turn on the television set any weekday evening and you'll turn on the reality program "Tabloid Truth," says producer Thomas Lennon. "Turn on the television set any weekday evening and you'll find a new tabloid show, each one more lurid than the last."

"Tabloid Truth," a PBS documentary airing tonight on Sonic Cable Channel 8 at 9 p.m., illustrates how legitimate news programs can be affected by the practice of paying for news — is key in "Tabloid Truth," says producer Thomas Lennon.

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Before a person is a rapper, he's a human being," according to Ardarius McDonald, a 22-year-old broadcast journalism senior and a member of the two-member rap group Human Bein'.

McDonald was referring to the rapper Tupac Shakur, who was arrested and then released on bail on charges of forcibly sodomizing and sexually abusing a woman in New York in November. Not even a month before, Shakur was also arrested for allegedly shooting two off-duty police officers after a traffic argument in Atlanta.

Rapper Snoop Doggy Dog was indicted in November as well. He was brought in on murder charges in the death of Phillip Woldemariam, and released on $1 million bail.

Largely due to their arrests, many have taken to associating a form of rap music — often referred to as "gangsta rap" — with youth violence. But McDonald disagrees.

"First of all," McDonald said, "you won't find a category of music titled 'gangsta rap' because it doesn't exist. You don't break down rap into different groups. Only outsiders do that. Outsiders are those people interfering in the creative process, particularly those in it for money."

"Second, the music by Tupac Shakur and Snoop Doggy Dog is a form of hip-hop," he said. "And all hip-hop is an expression, and fear comes from expressing the truth."

"A lot of negativity toward hip-hop is the truth in it," McDonald said. "It is too true and too powerful."

For artists such as Shakur and Snoop Doggy Dog, the neighborhoods where they grew up were rough and heavily infected with gangs. Much of the music they perform reflects this.

"In regard to hip-hop, the ignorant (people) are those who don't have the experience (living in rough neighborhoods)," McDonald said. "You can read and look at movies, but the only way to overcome that ignorance is through experience. Experience is not listening to music; it's living life."

"I grew up here," Snoop Doggy Dog says. "I was raised on this."

In Jack's opinion, the music is talking about slave conditions with hope of making people see that it is "not the same anymore."
Members of the Cal Poly-based rap group Human Bein' say rap attracts youth because they relate to its messages of 'pain, suffering, confusion or rebellion.' They are set to perform Thursday during U.U. Hour / Daily file photo

**AGENDA:** That harsh sound you're hearing is reality, say rap fans

**On 'gangsta rap':**

"You don't break down rap into different groups. Only outsiders do that. Outsiders are those people inter­fering with the creative process, particularly those in it for the money."

— Ardarius McDonald Human Bein'

Unlike those trend-setting radio stations, Jack's show on KCPR attempts to show a con­nectedness of all African-American music.

"The other stations try to play out hip-hop as a phase," he said. "They make the amount of money they want to make from it and then they try to downplay it."

"Parents are also trying to label hip-hop as a fad with hopes of it dying out," he continued. "The reason they are trying to say it is a fad is because they fear that by white youths embracing black music, they will not hold their parent's prejudices."

According to Jack, "It seems like someone is trying to get rid of the whole vibe. They view it as an empire trying to take over an entire town."

Jack said all he and others who play hip-hop are attempting to do is shed a little light on an unknown topic.

The majority of his listeners are black college students and high school students, he said.

"The music is speaking to the youth," Jack said. "They are able to relate to it on their own level of understanding, whether it be pain, suffering, confusion or rebellion."

From page 2

In McDonald's opinion, none of the violence comes from hip-hop. "Violence doesn't come from a tape," he said. "It's bred in you and it manifests itself."

So if this is true, why did the popular Los Angeles radio sta­tion KIIS-FM stop playing music by Snoop Doggy Dogg?

"We stopped playing Snoop Doggy Dogg because they were, missed out," said programming assistant Anita Dominguez. She said that there have been nega­tive reactions about the music from both parents and children.

"But overall, she said, "it's really extremely intolerant of rap music."

"The parental guidance stick­er system presently being used works just fine."

"The music is speaking to the youth," Jack said. "They are able to relate to it on their own level of understanding, whether it be pain, suffering, confusion or rebellion."
Sports bring people together
By Tory Petersen

A typical winter Sunday afternoon in San Francisco often consists of 55,000 people crammed into an old concrete stadium to sit on hard plastic seats that went out at $45 a pop. But don't tell those who paid this outrageous fee that watching a bunch of 250-pound brutes running at full-speed toward each other is meaningless after all, it's football.

Sport is an interesting phenomenon, especially the bond fans feel toward a team to which they have no logical connection. Some say sports is merely entertainment. Others say it is simply an outlet for the everyday frustration and anxiety the real world inflicts upon us. But there must be more to sports than entertainment and escape. Sports thrive on unity. It is not often in our society that men, women, blacks, whites, republikans, democrats, friends and strangers come together for a common cause.

This time must be different. Today, it must hold him accountable. They must remember who they are, and who they stand strong before Baker.

Chair Jack Wilson has said, based on past discussions, that he thinks the Senate will probably recommend a group of angry students and faculty, and considering the impact of their decisions.

The resolution will mean nothing if members sit and maintain the attentiveness of parents with giggles, and pass a second resolution and considering the impact of their decisions. Baker promised a group of angry students and faculty, and considering the impact of their decisions.

Despite loud grumbles, many people become suddenly submissive when Baker enters the scene. It happens every year at the Fall Conference Address. Baker tells us how wonderful things are at Cal Poly and ask us to sign petitions. The complaints launched the year before are suddenly forgotten. Nobody bothers to challenge his notion of utopia.

If Baker were to accept our argument, our appeal would be more to sports than entertainment and escape. It seems completely illogical to support players we don’t respect. A true fan must not only want to see a team win, but they must also prove to Baker that he has an obligation to us.

A capacity crowd came to wish its team farewell because the Giants seemed certain to depart San Francisco for the tropical city of St. Petersburg. The enormous crowd was eerily silent throughout the game. For many, it was the last chance to see these players they had grown up with. It was the last opportunity to share their love for a team, its players are always independent.

The Giants eventually lost the last game, but left the field to a bittersweet standing ovation. For all who were there, it was over — the game, the season, the 35-year history of baseball in San Francisco. The ovation was a final goodbye.

For all around me, people seemed distraught. A young boy looked up curiously toward his father. He had never seen his authority figure reduced to tears. A photographer sat on the field. His lifeless body was hunched over as he stared at the grass between his legs. He seemed oblivious to other photographers who began snapping pictures of him — in an attempt to capture the emotions in the park that day.

In “Field of Dreams,” James Earl Jones’ character speaks about passing on the dreams of our childhood. Sports thrive on unity. It is not often in our society that men, women, blacks, whites, republikans, democrats, friends and strangers come together for a common cause. So I was lucky enough to witness the day San Francisco — and the Bay Area — almost lost the Giants. It was September 27, 1992 at Candlestick Park. It was a day when primitive fans forgot about the rigors of daily life and mourned together.

The resolution will mean nothing if members sit and maintain the attentiveness of parents with giggles, and pass a second resolution and considering the impact of their decisions. The word we will use is demand. From that point onward, they prefer sleeping in arms over any cradle or bed. They must also prove to Baker that he has an obligation to us.

The Senate must not be persuaded by a slick sales talk. They must also prove to Baker that he has an obligation to us. They must also prove to Baker that he has an obligation to us. They must also prove to Baker that he has an obligation to us.

But their responsibilities do not end there. They must also prove to Baker that he has an obligation not only to hear them, but to actually listen to them. They must prove to Baker that he has an obligation not only to hear them, but to actually listen to them.

Whatever the Senate members decide — to go with the tape and demand an official record, or pass a second resolution that would essentially delay their having to make a decision — they must stand by their convictions.

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DOCUMENTARY: Jackson saga provides fodder for PBS show on tabloid journalists, their out-of-control feeding frenzy

From page 1
disclosed, reportedly multimillion-dollar
settlement of a civil suit brought by the
boy, now 14, because the documentary had been proposed to
PBS before the Jackson case broke. The
idea of using a major story to examine the growing influence of tabloid reporting was
born out of another high-profile case, the
The advantage that tabloids had be­cause they could pay news sources was a
revelation, Lennon says.
"It was one of those 'Ah!' moments when you see the world has changed," she says. "The media environment has under­gone a sea change."
Lennon suggested to "Frontline" execu­tive producer David Fanning that they
wait for the next big media frenzy and jump on it.
"But let's not film what everyone else
the people who are chasing the story."
The Jackson story broke within days,
discounting all the elements for the full
orgy of press coverage to occur: it's celebrity, it's sex, it's children, it's crime, it's everything," Lennon says.
The filmmakers documented how tabloid reporters sprang ahead of the traditional press on the story, using paid sources, on an existing network of inform­ants and skills honed by years of dig­ging for celebrity dirt.
"We wanted to show the chase at work," Lennon says. "How efficient it is, how brutally it is.
It's in ensuing days when information becomes less trustworthy, Lennon says, as people attracted by the scent of cash offer their stories. Practitioners of such reporting are un­apologetic:
"Anybody who doesn't pay money, it's like cavalry running into machine-gun fire. It's amanuensis," Stewart White, a
top writer for the British weekly News of the World, says in the film.
The tabloids can pull mainstream news organizations along on their wild ride.
A clip in "Tabloid Truth" shows the Jackson story leading an edition of the
"NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw". That same night, Lennon says, there were developments concerning U.S. troops deployed in Somalia.

REPORTERS: Local newscasters wax philosophical on influence of national tabloid journalism on traditional media

From page 1
"NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw"
while, on the same night, there were
developments concerning U.S. troops
deployed in Somalia.

To many news executives, it seems ob­vious that mainstream news is affected by the television tabloids. Many stories born in the tabloids now eventually make it to
mainstream news programs.
Two on-air reporters at the network's
Central Coast affiliate, KSBY-TV (NBC) and KCOY-TV (CBS), contend that
neither station has given the Michael
Jackson story — or any other tabloid story — the attention given by so many
other programs.
"How can you give 12 minutes to Michael Jackson when you give two to the
Board of Supervisors making a serious
decision on state water?" said KSBY
reporter Ann E. 'Tompeter, a Cal Poly journalism graduate. "This is what really
affects the people who live in our
community."
Kane and 'Tompeter say they con­centrate heavily on how news affects the Central Coast community, and say they
try to steer away from the tabloid television image.
"We do a lot of issue coverage," 'Tompeter said. "Our audience wants to look at real issues in our community."
'Tompeter said she must sometimes
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MUSTANG DAILY: Punishment unknown

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Wallace said he talked to 30 of the marching band's 50 members. The letter sent to the band members, he said, involved asks them to schedule an appointment with Wallace by Friday, he said.

"We discussed all the possibilities we have at our disposal," Wallace said. "I think it's only fair that they hear it from me before they read about (it)."

Zingg said the students involved in the newsletter's publication may face a range of disciplinary actions outlined in the university's student discipline guidelines. According to a University catalog, those actions could include expulsion, suspicion, probation or a lesser sanction.

"I think sexual harassment is a serious issue and it needs to be addressed in a direct and effective manner," Zingg said.

FIRE: Floor furnace makes students homeless

From page 1
It took about 30 minutes to put out the fire, he said, and about 50 percent of the house had been gutted by the fire, which was apparently started by a floor furnace.

According to official reports, the inhabitants weren't alerted until after the fire had reached a large enough size to explode the downstairs windows and set off the second-floor fire alarm. The ground floor alarm's battery had been removed.

"It's kind of a bummer," Zeul-

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Figures show SNAP successful

Officials are enthusiastic, and so far, no major glitches

By Pamela Slaughter

Daily Staff Writer

The Student Neighborhood Assistance Patrol has been successful in doing what it set out to do, according to figures released in January by the San Luis Obispo Police Department.

"It's fulfilling its goals and we're very enthusiastic about how it's going," said Police Chief Jim Gardiner.

SNAP founder Bart Topham, in an interview earlier this month that he would like to eventually get a radio installed in the patrol car along with a flashlight and holder.

But for the most part, the equipment SNAP is using is sufficient. Gardiner said it was a little difficult to get off the ground, but SNAP is doing well. Gardiner explained that a SNAP car did not work well at the program started.

The police department and SNAP members have gotten positive reactions from the community and the student population, Topham said.

"Nine out of 10 percent of the people are ecstatic to see us," said Casey Nelson, SNAP mem-

\[\text{SNAP member Bryan Forbes cites a Cal Poly student for holding a noisy party on Friday night. Since its inception, the student intervention program has caused no major problems / Daily photo by Scott Robinson}\]
"It wasn't nerves," said Janu­sen, of West Alls, Wis. "I felt fine. Everybody knows I'm the best, but I wasn't today.

"It's a bit of a shock to me," he said. "I would have loved to have my medal hopes disintegrate in the 1-2 in the event.

Thomas Alsgaard, in his Olympic debut, upset fellow Nor­wegian and four-time medallist Bjorn Dahljre to take the gold. The 22-year-old Alsgaard finished 472 seconds ahead of silver medallist Dahljre, who won three golds and a silver in Alb­ertville. "I thought I had a chance to medal, but only of everything, worked 100 percent," the 22­-year-old Alsgaard said. "I never even dreamed of winning the gold medal."

In his last action, Germany 2-0 beat Norway to host tomorrow's second straight defeat, 2-1, 1-2 in the event.

Coaches almost start basket-brawl

By Jim O'Connell

There's no truth to the rumor college basketball benches are now being called corners. And no, the time assistant won't have to double as a cut man.

After two scary confrontations between coaches Sunday, one on each coast, some are beginning to wonder what's going on.

At Amherst, Mass., Temple coach John Chaney threatened UMass coach John Calipari during a postgame confrontation following the Owls' 56-55 loss. At Berkeley, Calif., Arizona coach Lute Olson and Cal coach Bob Schanam screamed obscenities at each other during the final minutes of their game.

On Monday, Temple president Peter J. Lacosta suspended Chaney for one game.

"There are coaches out there that look like they want to fight the officials on every call. I mean physically fight. And I don't un­derstand it," Kentucky coach Rick Pitino said Monday. "I say to the officials when they shake my hand, 'Don't pay any atten­tion to me, don't pay attention to him.'"

Chaney interrupted Calipari's postgame remarks and com­plained that his counterpart's postgame talk with the officials. "There are coaches nut there too,'" Calipari tried to tell Chaney. "There are coaches out there that look like they want to fight the officials on every call. I mean physically fight. And I don't un­derstand it," Kentucky coach Rick Pitino said Monday. "I say to the officials when they shake my hand, 'Don't pay any atten­tion to me, don't pay attention to him.'"

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By David Cory

For Associated Press

LILLEHAMMER, Norway — Fans risk frostbite. Biathletes’ rifles are freezing to their cheeks. It’s almost too cold to allow cross-country ski races.

Lillehammer may look charming, but it’s playing host to the most frigid Winter Games ever.

Temperatures overnight have been dropping to minus 10 degrees, and only barely edging above zero during the day in much of the Olympic region.

The International Olympic Committee’s research department confirmed what spectators could feel in their fingers and toes: This is the coldest Winter Games yet, colder on a sustained basis than the 1992 Olympics in Lake Placid.

Events have been canceled at other Winter Games because it was too warm, too windy or too stormy, but never because it was too cold. So far, that record is holding — barely.

Under international regulations, major cross-country races cannot start when the temperature is minus 4 during the day in much of the Olympic region.

“Ski racing in very cold weather can lead to injuries of the skin, ears and nose,” said Dr. Thomas Alsgaard, said he didn’t feel the cold until the shooters’ cheeks. Pulling them away can be painful.

Second victim of the year Monday morning was Norwegian marathons skier Jacob Pedersen, who lost his hands in a cold-water crash on the Lake Placid course.

“At 10 a.m., it was still below the limit, but officials canceled the race,” Pedersen said. “Conditions were so bad that no one could run cross-country.”

Skiing in the Olympic region includes both track and cross-country events. When the temperature is too low, the skiers compete indoors. But the biathletes already are constrained, and their events don’t start until Friday.

Fans, it’s said, are the coldest of spectators. This is the coldest Winter Olympics.

“The temperature has to be at least minus 2.5,” said Olympic director Paul Blomme. “But the Norwegian fans can get accustomed to the cold,” he said. “They are well prepared and well insulated.”

The treacherous Daytona International Speedway takes another life

By Mike Harris

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — The treacherous Daytona International Speedway claimed its second victim of the year Monday morning after the Winston Cup race was declared as a no-go when winds had anything to do with it.

The driver was rookie Dale Earnhardt, 47, who killed in a one-car crash during practice. He was killed in one of the biggest races during the day at 10:30 a.m., he was starting in the second game and 17 hits in the two away matches.

Eppright said! “This time we don’t want to do it again.”

The Mustangs rest after playing eight games in six days before traveling to San Bernardi­no Friday to enter the Cal State San Bernardino Tourn­ament.

Poly men’s tennis team upsets San Jose State and Sunday at 3-3 after defeat­ ing Division I opponents San Jose State, 5-2, and Santa Clara University, 7-0.

Head Coach Chris Eppright closed out the matches instead of our best match all year.”

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To order, call 805-562-8080 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time. Call 562-8080, ext. 319, if you are ordering for a friend or relative.

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