



ASK DEANNA!
*Real People,
Real Advice*

Ask Deanna! Is an advice column known for its fearless approach to reality-based subjects!

Dear Deanna!

My niece is involved with a man old enough to be her father and I feel he's taking advantage of her. My sister, who is her mother, is willing to go along with this if it makes her daughter happy. I think it's statutory rape and is sickening because my niece is young and inexperienced. I'm at the point where I may call and report this to the authorities because it's not right. Is it worth the risk of losing my sister and my niece or should I leave it alone?

Worried Aunt

Long Island City, NY

Dear Aunt:

It takes a village to raise a child and if your niece is underage then you should report it to the authorities. However, you should respect your sister and talk with her before making your move. Also, many people are going to be hurt by your decision and you must also ensure you have all the facts about the interaction between your niece and this man. If your research indicates you niece is truly being taken advantage of, the authorities need to put him under the jail.

Dear Deanna!

I'm a senior citizen female and I'm very active in all areas of my life with no plans to slow down. I've worked hard enough in my lifetime and now I want to enjoy myself and do as I please. My adult children have an issue with my lifestyle and feel I should be at home watching television, knitting or being a grandmother. I refuse to be something I'm not, and if I want to be intimate, socialize or spend my money, it's my business.

Geraldine

Ft. Worth, TX

Dear Geraldine:

If you have pep in your step and can get moving then your children can eat your dust and let you continue living your life. You've paid your dues and you're entitled to more than babysitting and planting flowers if your foot isn't on a banana peel. However, you still need to practice caution and good judgment in all areas. You may be mature and wise and financially stable, but sexual diseases and HIV doesn't discriminate.

Dear Deanna!

I recently won a child support judgment against my children's mother and now she's having issues with paying the money. The children were placed in my care because she's not responsible, placed their lives in danger and was not working. I still love her as the mother of my children but their care and welfare is almost like a business transaction and must be fulfilled. Our mutual friends and family think I'm wrong to keep taking her to court, but I think I'm right.

Ray

Cleveland, OH

Dear Ray:

You should've been a better judge of character before you had babies with this woman. That's neither here nor there because the children are here and must be taken care of. If the shoe were on the other foot, you would be in court on a regular basis. Dead beat moms are the same as dead beat dads and must still pay child support, whether they like it or not, and keep it moving

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'Uncut' cut off BET lineup

By Lorinda M. Bullock
Special to Sentinel-Voice
WASHINGTON (NNPA)

- For the past five years, Black Entertainment Television's "Uncut" provided sexually explicit videos by mainstream rap artists such as Nelly and Ludacris, as well as unknowns looking for national exposure.

Now, "Uncut" has been cut. The show that grabbed headlines after airing Nelly's notorious "Tip Drill" — a video that showed Nelly swiping a credit card down the crack of a woman's rear — ended its raunchy and controversial run earlier this month.

Michael Lewellen, a spokesman for BET, said, "It was finally time to take a look at that and in looking at how other shows that were on in that time slot during the week on nights when "Uncut" was not on we just simply decided to try something different with that time slot."

Even so, Lewellen acknowledges that the program "was a lightning rod of opposition."

The controversial show aired during the wee hours of the morning, and played not just videos straight from the strip club, but videos from independent artists seeking a broader audience and videos that were often too violent to be put into regular rotation such as 50 Cent's "Many Men."

For critics, it was Nelly's "Tip Drill" that tipped the scales.

Students of the all-female, historically Black, Spelman College in Atlanta protested when Nelly was scheduled to come to the campus to promote a bone marrow drive for his now-deceased sister, Jacqueline Donahue.

The students argued if the rapper visited the school, he should make himself available to answer questions about the video. Nelly declined.

Cori Murray, entertainment editor at *Essence* magazine, said Spelman students energized a movement to dump "Uncut."

"It was on but no one was talking about it. But here it is the Spelman girls were like, 'No, we want to talk about it' and it was finally like somebody was saying something. For us, when we (*Essence*) looked at those women and what they did, we even got encouraged to



Rapper Nelly and R&B singer Ashanti pose for pictures.

support them by taking on our own campaign," Murray said.

In 2005, *Essence* launched its "Take Back the Music Campaign," featuring educational panels and a songwriting contest promoting positive messages.

At the *Essence* Music Festival over the July 4 weekend in Houston, singer/songwriter Jill Scott said on one panel that some videos and music are "dirty, inappropriate, inadequate, unhealthy, and polluted." She added, "We can demand more."

Media watchdogs such as Lisa Fager, co-founder of Industry Ears, a Washington, D.C.-based media think tank, are happy to see "Uncut" off the air, but said the problem does not end there.

"Here we've got HIV/AIDS growing at an epidemic rate for our 15 to 24-year-old girls and their ideas of sex and sexuality are coming from TV, the music and the culture. And (they're) thinking it's okay to be mistreated and have violent sex and they're not understanding their sexuality. So you get HIV and AIDS at 15, you're getting pregnant at 15, all these things are happening and we're not correlating it with what we're presenting to our children," Fager said.

Rap artist Kamikaze ex-

pressed mixed feelings about the demise of BET's "Uncut" because there are always new forms of media emerging for artists to use, such as myspace.com.

But Kamikaze admitted to reaping some benefits of having his 2003 video "You Ain't Hard" featured on the late night show.

"With me being an independent artist, my video wasn't going to make it to 106 and Park at that stage, but it allowed me a platform to be seen and it got me more listeners and it got me more fans...than I would have just going the regular route and just pounding the pavement."

Kamikaze, who makes up the other half of the group Crooked Lettaz with rapper David Banner, who has enjoyed major solo success with songs like "Play" and "Like a Pimp," said his video did not have sexual themes, but was a "crunk record."

"It was one of those riot starting, fight starting songs. It wasn't one of those songs that had a lot of skin in it... I personally don't feel like I need that," Kamikaze said.

Although it was cut, "Uncut" has an after life.

Website betuncut.net has surfaced on the Internet playing the videos from the now defunct show.

Lewellen said BET is not affiliated and is seeking le-

gal action against the site for possibly breaking copyright infringement laws.

Lewellen says that "Uncut" wasn't for everyone, stating it was for a "mature audience."

He noted the program came on in an ultra-late timeslot when programming for adults can be seen.

That is as far as BET can exert its control over what people watch. It carried all the appropriate labeling and advisories and warnings. We certainly can understand some of the reaction that people perhaps had to the content, but again you cannot watch something that is a mature audience program then expect to see G-rated material.

Kamikaze said the cancellation of television shows is inevitable, but he is especially irritated with the critics of hip-hop music and the videos.

"If consumers stop buying the music, then the rappers will stop doing it. Clive Davis, Lyor Cohen, Kevin Liles, L.A. Reid—all the people that run these big labels — if they start looking at their bottom line and they start seeing the Young Jeezys and the Ice Cubes and the Lil Jons and all the people that everybody has so much problems with... then they'll go to something that's selling. As soon as we go out and start supporting the Commons and the Talib Kwelis and the Mos Defs... and the people who are positive and trying to do positive music and do other things, as soon as we start supporting those people and buying their records and making them double platinum and triple platinum like we do with the other people, then the climate of the industry will change."



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