You too could be like Pauly Shore, or so he says

By LAURIE STALBERG
The Daily Pennsylvanian, U. of Pennsylvania

California breeds some very strange things, and MTV's Pauly Shore is one of them.

Shore, 22, is one of the newest youth-culture hippies to hit the American sound-bite market. With the success of "Totally Pauly," which is the most popular segment on MTV, Shore's career as a dude with attitude is starting to bud.

When it comes to being compared with youth culture icons before him such as Bill & Ted, Wayne and Garth, Pee-Wee Herman and Randy of the Redwoods, Shore balks. The difference between him and the rest, he says, "I'm real... They're just characters."

And he may be on to something.

His persona, he says, "is part of me, I guess." He's more than just "The Weasel." "I could talk intellectual," he said. But it just wouldn't be him. He doesn't practice Shakespearean soliloquies at night, either. And who would want him to?

Shore's comedy is all about "atti...(long pause)...tuuuuuude," and his unique approach to speech delivery. He lets one syllable of a word fall gently off his tongue, waits for it to settle and throws out the last one — essentially, he surfs vocab.

That vocab has made him one of the hottest comedians on the college stand-up market. All of his college shows sell out.

He's like an honorary member of everyone's closest bunch of friends, and his ability to relate to the common youth is what keeps him a hot act.

"I'm not Pee-Wee. I'm not Ernest," Shore said. "Sometimes people get pissed because they see me and think 'Why the fuck can't I do that because I'm just like them?'"

And what does the archetypal Valley Boy and quintessential surfer think of all his publicity?

"I love it. I love meeting people, traveling. I love making people happy. That's my drug. What I do is positive, not negative. It's great."

Not his only drug though. He occasionally smokes pot, but "not as much as I did in high school... Pot's OK, I mean, that's all you do in college, but what's not cool is kids doing cocaine, heroin, crack. If I have any advice for you guys, it's that."

COURTESY OF HOLLYWOOD PICTURES

In "Encino Man," Pauly plays a loser kid from California.

Pauly hangs out with the more clean-cut dude, sideburn-wearer Jason Priestly of Beverly Hills 90210. But unlike Jason's character, Shore's is real.

"That's why people like me," Shore said. "Five years ago I was them, sitting on a couch watching Adam Curry, thinking, 'Who's this guy with no personality? Fuck Adam Curry!' I'm just confident in myself. You just picture yourself doing it."

Pauly said his rise has not been a ride on a wave of show biz nepotism, as some might think, given his parentage. His dad, Sammy Shore, was a comedian, working as Elvis' opening act; his mom, Mitzi Shore, owns L.A.'s famed Comedy Store. (In fact, "She opened it so my dad would have somewhere to perform — he was an alcoholic, so he wouldn't let anyone else on stage.")

He wasn't handed "Totally Pauly" on a silver tanning reflector, but he was born into comedy. Instead of Bugs Bunny afternoons, he watched Richard Pryor live on stage.

But the turning point in his life came when he was a senior in high school. He realized that if he didn't pursue a career as a comedian, he would have to go to college. So he began performing.

"One day, my manager brought in a lady from MTV to see me perform," he said. "(They booked me at) Daytona Beach, but I had to pay my own way. It sucked, and they wouldn't give me a microphone. And then, they shined (fired) me."

After appearances on "Married with Children" and "21 Jump Street," he got a spot on "Comic Strip Live," and finally MTV realized the errors of its ways. After hosting a stand-up show called "Five Funny Guys," MTV realized he belonged on his own beach and gave him his ground-breaking show, "Totally Pauly." On Memorial Day, Pauly fans will get a special treat with "Encino Man."

According to Shore, "Encino Man" is about two loser kids from Encino, Calif. "And I'm one of them. The other one, Sean Austin, is stressed to be a loser, but I don't care," he said. "We find a caveman in his backyard, and (Sean's) all stoked because now people will think he's cool and he'll get chicks. All I want to do is teach the caveman how to do the 'Weasel.' It's really about friendship."

With all of his touring and movie making, it is easy to see why he doesn't have a girlfriend.

"I don't have a girlfriend cause no girl can understand the weasel thing, and let me do what I love," he said. If he could choose any "buff nugg" (hot chick), he said he'd choose ex-porn star Tracy Lords.

Why? "Because she's hot," he said. But does this California surf-stoner ever wonder what it would be like to date a women from say, Iowa?

"Of course," he said. "I want a girl from the farm. Most of the women out here (in L.A.) have penises."

That's our Pauly.

From Harvard to Hollywood, Damon shoots for the stars

By NICHOLAS TANGBORN
The Minnesota Daily, U. of Minnesota

Matt Damon is not your average university-going actor. One couldn't see him sitting in coffee shops, conversing cappuccino-style about William Shakespeare. When most drama students seem to be majoring more in attitude than acting, Damon's relaxed, easy-going manner places him in a distinctly different category.

"I had this class last quarter on British literature before 1800," he explains in careful, articulate phrasing. "It was interesting, and I realize that the stuff is important.

"But I'm not going to read Chaucer for *fun*. In my spare time, it's much more likely that I'll hang out with a Robert Ludlum novel and listen to cheesy top-40 radio."

But that doesn't mark Damon as just another college schmoe. It takes more than a nice profile and a 3.0 GPA to land three film roles by the time you're 21. After snagging a small role in "Mystic Pizza" ("I had, like, one line," he said. "You probably won't even remember me."), Damon went on to star in "Rising Son" with Brian Dennehy and Piper Laurie.

Currently, an English major with an emphasis in drama at Harvard U., Damon looks set to successfully move forward in the film world.

With idols like Robert Duvall ("I can't believe he's just a 'B' list actor. The guy should be headlining") and Robert DeNiro, Damon has set his sights high.

"I'd really like to work with Scorsese — yeah, that's a surprise [laughs]. And I'd love to work with (Francis Ford) Coppola, Sidney Lumet or Barry Levinson,'" he said.

Lofty goals, but that doesn't exactly help with finishing college.

"I'm planning on graduating somewhere between '92 and '94," Damon said with a laugh. "But if I get a few more roles... I could be on the eight-year plan."

Luckily for Damon, Harvard has been more than lenient about his extracurricular activities. "We're on a semester system, so if I get a role, I just take a semester off," he said. "And so far, I've had to do it three times. But at least Harvard has been really good about it."

In the soon-to-hit-the-streets film "School Ties," a high tension, "Dead Poets Society"-esque drama about anti-semitism at a posh boys school, Damon is cast in the mean-spirited antagonist role of Dillon.

COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT PICTURES

In laymans terms, Matt Damon, standing left, plays an antagonistic, rich little jerk.

Damon prepared for the role with a little research of his own. "The college experience itself was preparation for this," he said. "I mean it's not like Harvard is an anti-semitic school... but there are ways that it comes out of certain people. I grew up in a multicultural neighborhood, and I knew that African-Americans looked physically different than me, and I knew that there was a problem with racism toward them. But with Jewish people — I had never heard about it until I came to college....

"I really tapped into a lot of ugliness in myself," he said. "I think that's what's interesting about acting — in every person there's a kernel of all these different people. I could be a homosexual, a gay basher, an Aryan supremacist or an oppressed Jew. I just take those emotions and run with it."