

Forum

Teen pregnancy in media fuels unnecessary fuss

MARY WOOD

Staff Reporter

How teens are affected by the media and how they receive sexual education have always been a controversial topic. Recently, they've been combining to create another realm of controversy: should pop culture be responsible for sending more realistic messages about the consequences of sex?

Over the summer, an article was published on the "Newsweek" website

berating the media for its portrayal of teenage pregnancy. It complained about the lack of discussion about birth control in movies and on TV and criticized the unrealistic ease with which teenagers in fiction and in Hollywood manage their pregnancies.

It's true that pop culture doesn't send a very realistic or informed message about teen pregnancy, but it doesn't really need to. The creators of shows and movies involving pregnancy aren't making them to be shown in health classes; they're made for entertainment and shouldn't be looked to as guidelines for life.

While praising "Baby Borrowers," a reality show made to teach teens the difficulties of raising children, the article

criticized the movie "Juno," which portrays a teen girl who becomes pregnant and gives the baby up for adoption with ease. It suggested replacing a line about knowing when to wait with, "I thought I



raised you to use a condom." Although using condoms is a great message for teens (or anyone) having sex, "Juno" isn't necessarily where the message should be spread. When Diablo Cody wrote the script, she was probably trying to create a feature film, not a sex ed video. She shouldn't have to include health tips.

The article also mentioned that in the show "The Secret Life of the American Teenager," it's never discussed how Amy, the main character, got pregnant in the first place. I think most would know that some form of unprotected sex was involved, and those who don't can find out with the message at the end of the show. After every episode Shailene Woodley, the actress that plays Amy, encourages teens and parents to talk to each other about sex and

provides a website (www.stayteen.org) with more information. I think this show is doing more than its part to make up for any unrealistic ideas it gives off.

Seventeen-year-old celebrity Jamie Lynn Spears was also attacked for giving teens unrealistic expectations about what they would be able to do for a child. Her ability to buy expensive toys and baby clothes and to hire a nanny whenever she needs was referred to as "fake." Of course, the vast majority of teens couldn't do that if they

were to have a baby, but it is very real for Spears. We don't get so fired up about adult celebrities spoiling their children more than most parents could, so teen celebrities shouldn't be held to a different standard.

It's great that there is concern about teens having the information they need about protecting themselves from the consequences of teen pregnancy, but we shouldn't try to force the media to be the one conveying that information. It should be

the responsibility of parents, schools and doctors to inform adolescents about sexual safety.

It shouldn't be assumed that all teenagers will take the messages in movies and on television to heart. We can be naïve, but I don't think we're all that stupid. With the proper guidance from knowledgeable adults, we can understand the reality of teen pregnancy while enjoying entertainment that doesn't always show its consequences.

Construction causes considerable inconvenience for students, staff

COLE HULDEN

Staff Reporter

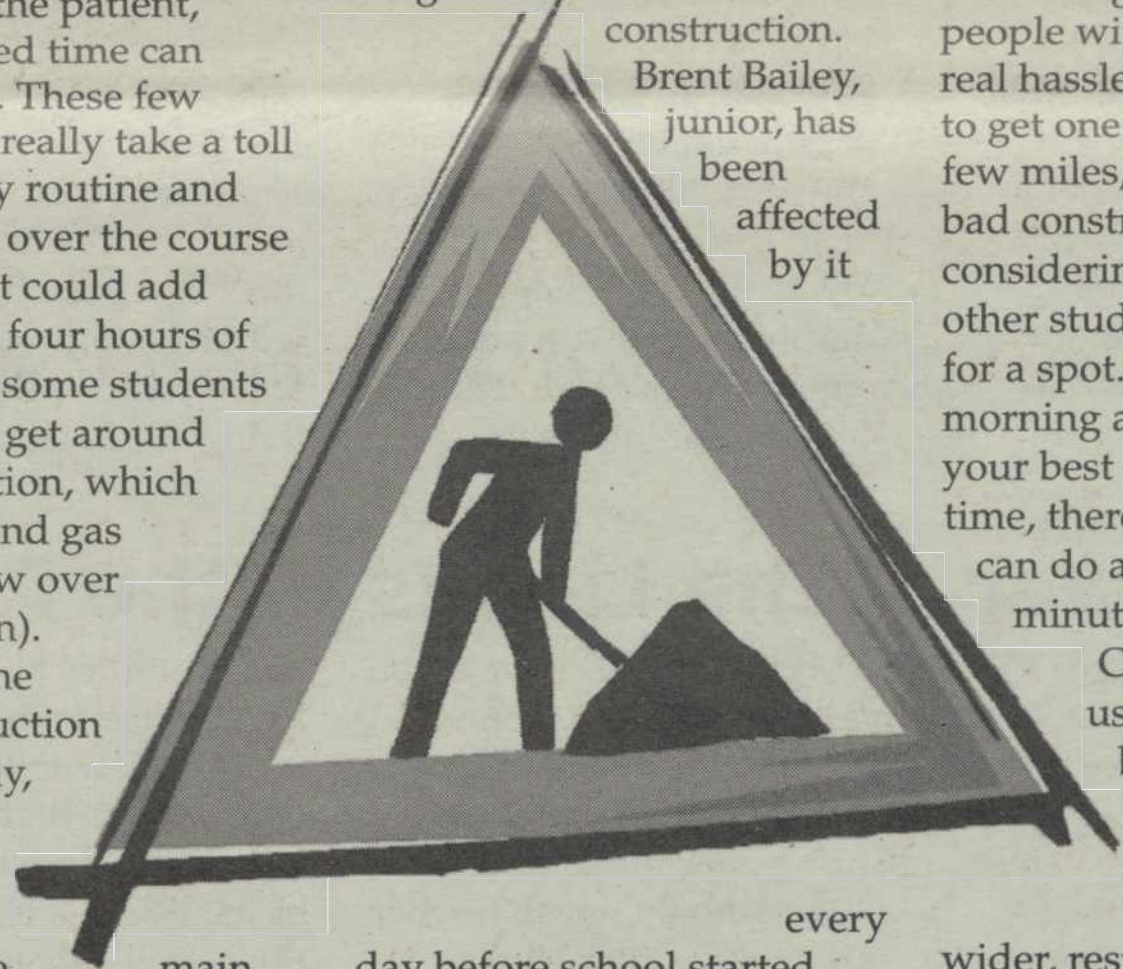
Due to the recent construction, students and staff faced 5-10 minutes delays, and although that doesn't really seem that bad for the patient, all that wasted time can be annoying. These few minutes can really take a toll on your daily routine and when added over the course of a month, it could add up to almost four hours of waiting. But some students find ways to get around the construction, which saves time, and gas (which is now over \$3.50 a gallon).

The Skyline Road construction started in July, but the end date has not been posted. The main reason for the delays is the resurfacing of the road. This makes them have to cut off half of the road, making cars funnel into one lane. But seeing as the road goes all the way up the hill, waiting for your turn to "funnel" can take quite a while. You either just go right through or you

may have to wait up to ten minutes.

Some have resorted to taking other routes to get to school, or just to get around. Taylor Swanson, sophomore, makes use of Highway 43 to get around the construction.

Brent Bailey, junior, has been affected by it



every day before school started, and ends up arriving home about 10 minutes later.

Students that ride the bus can also be impacted, not only by construction, but other traffic as well. When drivers get backed up in traffic, it makes it hard for the buses to get out. Buses are obviously rather large

and hard to maneuver, even on the road itself. With cars in the way, it certainly doesn't make it any easier. Students on the bus may get home upwards of 20 minutes late due to the construction.

Finding parking spots for people without them is a real hassle. It's hard enough to get one that's within a few miles, especially if it's a bad construction day. And considering how many other students are looking for a spot. If you have a late morning and you're trying your best to get to school on time, there is nothing you can do about waiting 10 minutes for traffic.

Construction is usually done for our benefit, whether we know it or not. It could be making a street

wider, resurfacing it, or dealing with cracks in the road, or, as in this case, Qwest installing conduit for new cable in order to update the infrastructure.

So go around the construction, allow extra time for driving or take alternate routes. Above all, be patient.

Drinking, driving, deciding: teen rights, responsibilities come into question

CALLEY LATHROP

Staff Reporter

Until the age of 21, we all have age restrictions for driving, voting. These laws have been created because lawmakers and voters are under the impression that we are too immature to make responsible decisions regarding our health and our country. All of these laws need to be reviewed,

as times have changed and many teenagers are ready to embrace adulthood... and the decisions that come with it.

Alcohol is a substance that is, consumed by people of all ages, whether it is legal or not. It seems that the only difference between drinking at the age of 18 and 21 is that a 21-year-old can stroll into the bar and

have a drink, while teens are breaking the law. Peer pressure is very influential when it comes to drinking. Some believe that if the age were lowered, it would be less of a mystery and teens would be less likely to try it out of curiosity.

A teenager's brain is

New laws for teens

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Amplifier

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