

blatant propaganda

editorial

BEWARE THE MOR MENACE!



They're immensely popular, they have devotional followings, and their music has been linked to death and self-destructive fan behaviour.

Judas Priest? Marilyn Manson? Guess again. I'm talking about Celine Dion and Backstreet Boys. They're evil, they're dangerous and they must be stopped.

Sure, you may laugh.

Celine is a harmless, if annoyingly phony, Middle-Of-The-Road (MOR) singer, you say. In fact, she's so MOR she probably has a white line down her back. And, you say, Backstreet Boys are just wussy, pre-fabricated teen heartthrobs.

But before you get too comfy in that Scoff Chair, consider the following news stories: According to Reuters, a 47-year-old Connecticut landlord was sentenced to life without parole for shooting and killing five men over a rent dispute. His only words prior to being sentenced were lyrics from the Celine Dion song "Because You Love Me" — seemingly innocuous phrases such as "You gave me wings," "You are always there for me" and "You're the one who saw me through it all." The victims, aged 21 to 25, were shot in the back of the head and their bodies were set on fire.

Another recent tragedy, this time from overseas: A young Norwegian woman trav-

elling on a cruise liner accidentally killed herself after she fell from the bow of the ship while trying to recreate the "flying" scene from *Titanic*. So what? Well, it just so happens that the mega-hit theme song from that movie was sung by the very same Ms. Dion. Innocent love song or hypnotic death mantra? You decide.

And while you're at it, consider this, too: The letters of Celine Dion's name, when re-arranged, spell "die nice n lo." Gives you a chill, doesn't it?

And then there's *this* item: The *Edmonton Sun* reported that a Backstreet Boys concert this past August "unleashed mayhem as dozens of pre-pubescent fans were crushed in their bid to get close to their teenage idols." Many fans were left bruised and bleeding. An eight-year-old girl would have been crushed were it not for a security guard lifting her to safety. "It was pure hell," said a 16-year-old female fan.

Murder, fire, blood, mayhem. Are these the things of harmless pop music?

And where's the outcry? Where are society's self-appointed watchdogs and righteous parental groups when our children are being crushed and sadistic multiple murderers spew Celine "Die-on" lyrics like Charlie Manson quoting "Helter Skelter"? While these moralist gatekeepers and sticker-happy censors are preoccupied with relatively small fries — a few rap and heavy metal artists — the MOR Goliaths are allowed free reign. And now it's too late; their music is everywhere. Nobody's safe — not our children; not even our *parents*.

How can we protect ourselves from the MOR Menace?

I suggest warning labels. Something like: "WARNING: This CD may contain lethally bland music and lyrics that are sinistinely schmaltzy and horribly clichéd. Repeated exposure may turn you into a homicidal maniac or cause you to do something fatally stupid."

But until then, we must all remain vigilant. Next time you're at the mall, and you hear one of their songs, run! Run for your life! That music is deadly.

—Jim Kelly

Jim Kelly is a regular contributor to Chart.