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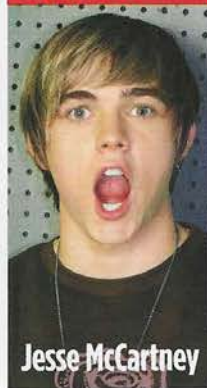
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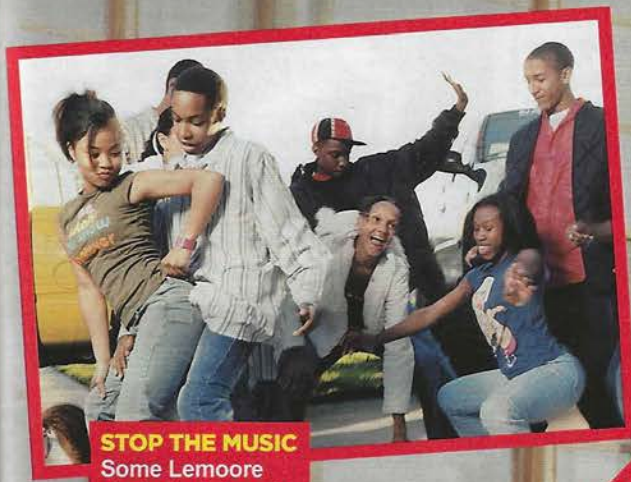
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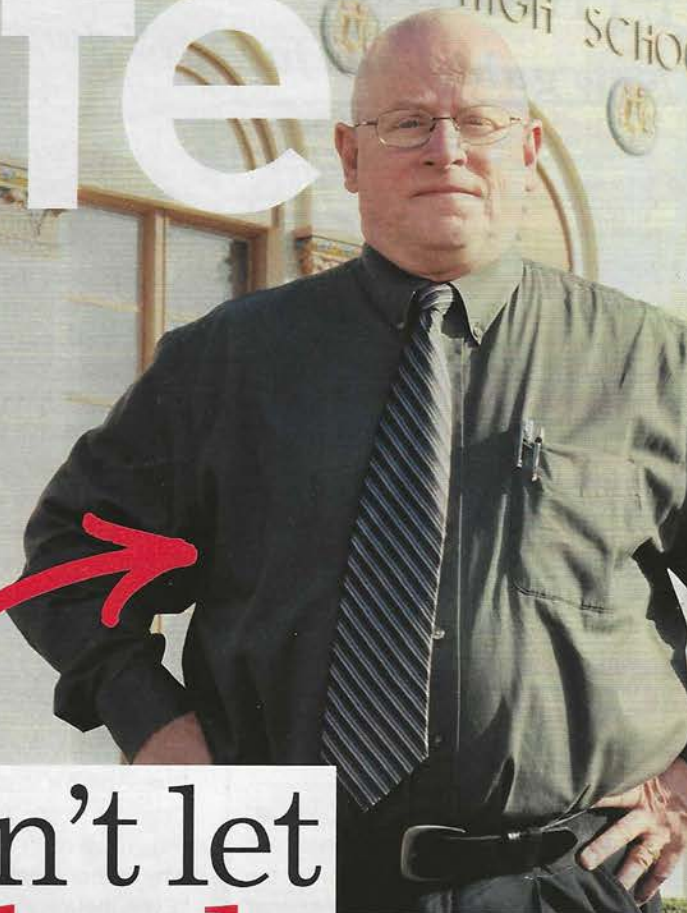
Jesse McCartney

17 ALERT: Get A Sneak Peek At **MTV's Miss Seventeen**—Our New Reality Show!

real life



STOP THE MUSIC
Some Lemoore students (above) feel like they're being censored by Mr. Bennett (right).



he won't let them **freak-dance**

This California principal told his students if they didn't change how they danced, they couldn't dance at all. Could this happen at *your* school? BY rebecca raphael


Saturday night, May 15, 2004, was Lemoore High School's prom. As Lemoore principal Jim Bennett looked around the dance floor, he saw most of the guys dancing behind their dates, grinding their hips against the girls as the girls gyrated back against them. They were freak-dancing, which is how most people dance to hip-hop, but Mr. Bennett had always felt it was too sexual for a school event. "It's [the same as] foreplay," he says. During the last song of the night, a girl got on all fours and rubbed her butt against

her date's groin. Mr. Bennett was horrified: That's *it*, he thought to himself, *I have to stop this!* So at the start of the next school year, he announced that freak dancing would be banned at *all* future dances.

SELF-EXPRESSION

At 9 P.M. on Saturday, December 11, Lemoore seniors Kelley Castadio and her best friend, KayDe Naylor, both 17, walked into their winter formal with their dates. All fall, Kelley and KayDe had been looking forward to their first senior formal. "Lemoore is a small

town, and there's not much to do on Saturday nights," says Kelley. "So it's a big thing to have a dance." And dances, KayDe adds, are "one of our school's only traditions."

At 9:30, the DJ put on Nelly's "Hot in Herre." Almost all of the 400 students on the dance floor immediately began freak-dancing—and Mr. Bennett walked right over to the DJ. "Stop the music," he said as he took the mic. "Ladies, gentlemen," he announced sternly, "if you continue freak-dancing, there will be no more dances." Some of the students booed Mr. Bennett as he 



best of "The best moment was when **Kristin** and **Stephen** from **Laguna Beach** went to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, and Kristin danced on the bar. Stephen screamed, 'You look so good—keep dancing on the bar, slut!'" —Haley, Wilmette, IL

Principal's Message

New guidelines for LHS dances

17 exposed

Students must sign the dance ticket prior to entering the dance, agreeing not to participate in "freak dancing" at all, including but not necessarily limited to the following:

- Lap dancing
- Gropping or fondling another about the buttocks, genital area, or breasts
- Simulated sexual intercourse or other sexual activity
- "Making out"
- Rubbing suggestively against a dance partner
- Rubbing or caressing a partner's midriff area
- Simulating strip-tease
- "Sandwich" dancing (dancers press full-body with other dancers, sandwiching between)

The students must sign a condition of admission to the dance for any of the above, the chaperone ask them to leave the dance for any of the above, the principal will be available immediately without protest or appeal, cell phones will be available.

HIS PLAN
Mr. Bennett's rules, based on Kelley and KayDe's idea.

up a formal memo to Mr. Bennett, asking if he'd reinstate the Sadie dance if students signed a contract on the back of their tickets promising not to freak-dance. If anyone broke the rules, they'd have to leave. Three weeks later, on January 11, 2005, Mr. Bennett got on the loudspeaker: "We can have the Sadie dance," he said. "But there will be rules." Then Mr. Bennett went on to read

gave the mic back to the DJ, who turned the music up. But since KayDe, Kelley, and their friends had *always* danced that way to hip-hop music, they couldn't believe Mr. Bennett would carry out his threat—so they kept on freak-dancing.

KayDe and Kelley's proposal. It is better than *nothing*, the girls told themselves.

FAIR COMPROMISE?

On Saturday, February 26, the Sadie Hawkins dance was held in Lemoore's cafeteria—and KayDe's fear came true: About a third of the students didn't show up. "A lot of people were like, 'If we can't dance how we want, why bother [coming]?' " KayDe says. "Even though my date came, he refused to dance." But to Mr. Bennett, the dance was a success—and he allowed the prom to be scheduled.

SCHOOL RULE

On Monday morning, KayDe was at her school's career center when she noticed the weekly newsletter for the staff. "Freak dancing is . . . obscene!" she read in Mr. Bennett's column. All dances were going to be called off, he had written, unless students came up with a plan to stop the freak dancing. "I couldn't believe that he was serious," KayDe says. "That's just how we dance—like my parents used to do the twist!" She and Kelley had been elected to plan the Sadie Hawkins dance in February, and if Mr. Bennett was *really* banning freak dancing, she began to worry that no one would come.

That afternoon, KayDe and Kelley got the Sadie committee together to talk about the possible ban. "I'd still rather have Bennett limit how we dance than take the dances away completely," KayDe said. "It's the only way we'll get to have a prom." The other students thought Mr. Bennett's new rule was like unfair censorship, but they agreed with KayDe.

The next day, the committee typed

MTV STARS

FREAKIEST MTV MOVES



FREAKY VIDEO

"dirty"

Saturday Night Live parodied Christina Aguilera's steamy video.



FREAKY MOVIE AWARDS

"ass like that"

Eminem's puppets performed racy moves at the 2005 Movie Awards.



FREAKY ON TV

"me against the music"

Britney Spears's outfit was tame for her—but her dancing wasn't.

what you can do

If suggestive dancing has led to a ban at your school, you can:

• attend a school-board meeting.

Try to voice your opinion and explain the importance of expressing yourself at dances.

• look for another venue to hold a dance, like a community center.



"It was so great to see the Olsen twins at the 2004 MTV VMAs after Mary-Kate went to rehab for her eating disorder. She looked so healthy and happy." —Hilde, Bethesda, MD

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