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HALFTIME HEAT

Hype, Hits, and a High-Stakes Lawsuit

"I wanna make a move. I wanna play their favorite song, but you know they love to sue."

These were the words rap superstar Kendrick Lamar used during his halftime performance at this year's Super Bowl to introduce his song "Not Like Us." Although he may have intended it to be a joke, his words proved prophetic.

Of course, the "they" referenced in Lamar's intro was fellow rapper Drake, with whom he'd been engaged in a high-profile feud resulting in "diss tracks" and fiery public statements. Although rap battles are nothing new — the late 1990s murders of the Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac Shakur are widely rumored to have been linked to their public conflict — the Lamar/Drake schism reached epic proportions during the February sporting event, playing out in front of a global audience of more than 130 million. Most incendiary of all, "Not Like Us" features lyrics suggesting that Drake — who has sold more than 500 million units in his musical career — has a sexual interest in minors.

Lamar's performance of the track exacerbated an already contentious defamation suit Drake filed in January against Lamar's record label, UMG

Recordings, which, interestingly, also oversees *the plaintiff's* music catalog. In an amended complaint filed shortly after the Super Bowl, Drake alleges that Lamar "duped" the audience into believing he had immoral proclivities.

"It was the first, and will hopefully be the last, Super Bowl halftime show orchestrated to assassinate the character of another artist," the suit adds.

Faced with a major lawsuit filed by one of its artists, UMG quickly issued a public statement, voicing dismay over Drake's legal maneuverings in recent months.

"Drake, unquestionably one of the world's most accomplished artists and with whom we've enjoyed a 16-year successful relationship, is being misled by his legal representatives into taking one absurd legal step after another."

While the ultimate conclusion of Drake's latest move in his longstanding feud with his musical arch nemesis was unknown at the time of this writing, what is clear is that combining a bruised ego with big money often leads to interesting times for the legal world.





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THE BOLTON BULLETIN

The Case for Smiling

EVEN WHEN LIFE GETS HARD

It's funny. Something as simple as a smile has become surprisingly complicated. On one hand, we know smiling can brighten a room, lift a mood, and even spark a connection with strangers. On the other hand, there's a growing pushback against the old idea that women, in particular, should "smile more often," an idea I fully agree is outdated and unfair.

So, let me be clear: When I talk about smiling, I'm not saying we should force it on anyone. What I am saying is that when I *choose* to smile, it changes something inside me. It helps me feel lighter, more positive, more able to handle whatever comes my way.

Now, don't get me wrong. I know life isn't always sunshine and roses. We go through real struggles: grief, depression, injustice, and frustration. And in those moments, you need to be allowed to feel what you're feeling. Sometimes, sadness or anger is not only valid but necessary. And if you're battling depression, no one should ever tell you to "just smile." That's not how it works.

But here's what I've found: Our outlook can shift depending on where we put our focus. Suppose I choose to look for the bright side, to find the opportunity inside a challenge, to remind myself that maybe I'm not scared, but actually excited. In that case, it changes how I experience the situation. It doesn't make my problems disappear, but it makes me feel more capable of facing them.

That's where smiling comes in. When I smile at the cashier, the waitress, or the person at the dry cleaners, I'm not only making their day a little better. I'm making *my* day better. It's not superficial; it's deeper. Smiling is connection. It reminds me that good is all around me.

And sometimes, I have to nudge myself into it. If I'm feeling low, I'll turn on a comedy special or a funny show while cooking or driving. Before long, I'm not just smiling, I'm laughing, and that always lifts me up. I've even heard laughter can strengthen your body's ability to fight illness. I don't know if all the science is settled on that, but it works for me.



The truth is that life will always hand us irritations: traffic, bills, people who rub us the wrong way — those come without effort. But you have to search for the things worth smiling about actively. And when you do, the hard stuff feels a little more bearable.

So, no, I'm not telling anyone to smile because they "should." I'm saying give yourself permission to smile when you can. Look for those moments that make you grin, laugh, or feel a little lighter. Share them with others, too, because when we brighten someone else's day, we brighten our own.

And if you need a little push, here's one: World Smile Day is on Oct. 3, so this month may be the perfect chance to test it out. Smile at a stranger, laugh at something silly, or just catch yourself in the mirror and give a grin. It won't solve every problem, but it just might make your day and someone else's a whole lot brighter.

-Ruby Bolton



RECEIVERS AND RHAPSODIES

The Birth of Streaming Sound

We celebrate the late Steve Jobs of Apple and Spotify CEO Daniel Ek as innovators in the world of music streaming, but the *true* pioneer of how most of us enjoy tunes in 2025 is a man who died nearly a century ago.

A lawyer by trade, Thaddeus Cahill (1867–1934) spent his free time as an innovator, a hobby that eventually led him to revolutionize sound. In 1897, he received a patent for the Telharmonium, a 200-ton organ created to turn telephones into what could be considered the world's first iPods. Looking more like a NASA control board than a musical instrument, the Telharmonium used electromagnetic impulses to create sounds similar to those of modern synthesizers and transmit them over telephone networks, essentially making the "hold music" of its time. Although bulky, the invention captured the hearts of music aficionados, including Mark Twain, who famously said, "I couldn't possibly leave the world until I have heard this again and again."

The instrument made its public debut in 1906 with the opening of Telharmonic Hall in New York City. Guests could grab one of the phone receivers placed throughout the venue and listen to the synthesized music Telharmonium operators were performing on the floor below. Soon, phone users embraced Cahill's technology at theaters, eateries, hotels, and homes nationwide.

Unfortunately, the system proved glitchy — the organ's electronic tones interrupted ordinary phone users mid-conversation — and AT&T decided not to invest in Cahill's impractical invention to expand its reach. That inconvenience, coupled with high manufacturing costs (each Telharmonium cost \$200,000, a fortune then) and operational demands (it required 2–4 musicians to play), eventually led to declining popularity and the closing of Telharmonic Hall by 1920.

Sadly, no surviving audio recordings of the Telharmonium are believed to exist, and its last known version was dismantled and scrapped in the early 1960s.

Surprising Southern Halloween Laws

Clergy, Candy, and Criminal Codes

Depending on where you live, Halloween is either a holiday for spooky fun or a one-way ticket to the wrong side of the law. Surprisingly, certain parts of the country have Halloween-related laws regulating everything from who can wear a mask to whom you're allowed to make laugh. Here are a few obscure-but-true laws in the South that, if broken, are scarier than any haunted hayride.

The Great Mustachioed Priest Menace

If you're a Halloween reveler in Alabama, be careful with your costume choice — God and the law are watching. Dressing up like a priest, rabbi, nun, or other clergy member on Oct. 31 or any other day of the year could cost you a fine of up to \$500 or up to a year behind bars. The law was established to show respect to religious institutions by discouraging citizens from impersonating faith leaders.

Additionally, Alabama's focus on maintaining a sense of decorum in religious practices extends to what citizens do in

the presence of *actual* priests. Naturally, disrupting services by prompting attendees to burst out laughing is bad form, which is why the state prohibits anyone from wearing a fake mustache in church to elicit a chuckle. Was this practice *really* widespread enough to inspire an actual law? While the law's historical origins are unclear, it demonstrates the state's commitment to religious faith and willingness to fine anyone who attempts to mock it.

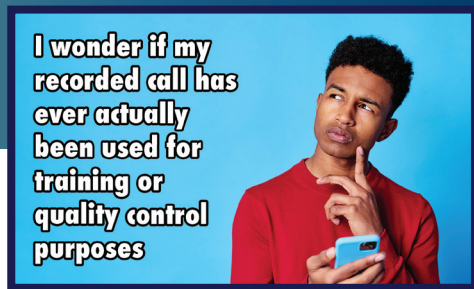
The Decriminalized Children of Dublin

Dublin, Georgia, has an odd — and, depending on your age, *totally fun* — legal perspective concerning facial coverings. Although the city's rules were loosened temporarily at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, municipal laws prohibit people from "wearing a mask, hood, or other apparel or regalia in such manner as to conceal [their] identity, or in such manner that [their] face is not fully visible, or



in such manner that [they] may not be recognized." However, Dublin makes an annual exception for children under the age of 16 who "may be garbed in the usual or customary children's Halloween costumes." While parents or older siblings will face a misdemeanor charge if they're caught wearing a mask while accompanying their little ones trick-or-treating, at least children in Dublin won't be deemed juvenile criminals for covering their faces while on the hunt for neighborhood candy.

TAKE A *BREAK*



APPLE UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

Inspired by IHeartEating.com



Ingredients

Topping

- 1/4 cup unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar
- 3 Honeycrisp apples
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted

Cake

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 large egg

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. In a 9-inch round cake pan, add butter for topping. Place in oven for a few minutes until melted.
3. Sprinkle brown sugar over melted butter.
4. Cut apples into half circles about 1/4-inch thick (no need to peel) and arrange them in circles, overlapping slightly until they fill the entire pan. Set aside.
5. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, ground cinnamon, and salt.
6. Add milk, melted butter, vanilla, and egg. Whisk until combined.
7. Pour batter over apple slices, smoothing as needed.
8. Bake for 30–35 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
9. Let cool to room temperature, invert on a plate, and serve.

STRONG STARTS

Denmark's Secrets to Raising Happy Kids



In a black-and-white world, Danes embrace the gray.

The University of Oxford's "World Happiness Report" cites Denmark as the second-happiest country behind Finland. Denmark clearly knows a thing or two about fostering a culture that prioritizes contentment and personal well-being. Not surprisingly, the rest of the world often looks to Denmark for inspiration to lead a more positive life. Regarding parenting, Danish citizens have crafted a philosophical and practical approach that could benefit children in countries far from their own.

Attitude Determines Attitude

First and foremost, Danish parenting is a practice steeped in empathy, caring, communication, and respect. While these core tenets aren't particularly revolutionary, parent-child relationships in Denmark thrive because of how they apply each. Stringently nonviolent, Danish parenting focuses on the inherent goodness in all children and encourages independence, optimism, and honesty. For example, parents eschew "helicopter parenting" to allow their children to engage in playtime and other activities with as little intervention as possible. Practitioners believe granting their little ones this high level of freedom enables them to develop greater self-esteem and leadership skills than if they constantly dictate their actions and give strict directions. Additionally, Danish parenting stresses the importance of validating a child's emotions instead of telling them *how* to feel. This ongoing encouragement to embrace and examine feelings likely enables Danish children to develop stronger self-trust and a clearer perception of the world around them.

Bad Patches and Damaging Praise

Naturally, plenty of old-fashioned tough love balances the openness apparent in Danish parenting. Parents rarely shy away from addressing negative events, feelings, and circumstances head-on with their children. Suppose a Danish parent is having a rough day or is upset about unexpected bad news. In that case, they're more likely to explain to their children *why* their disposition is darker than usual rather than bottling up these thoughts and shielding the little ones from reality.

While talking things out is the norm in Denmark, overloading children with compliments is considered bad form. For example, studies suggest that constantly praising a child's intelligence harms their self-worth when they encounter mentally challenging tasks later in life. Instead of working through these obstacles, they're more likely to give up in frustration. To that end, Danish parents emphasize *effort* over *accomplishment*, helping children gain greater confidence in overcoming hurdles.