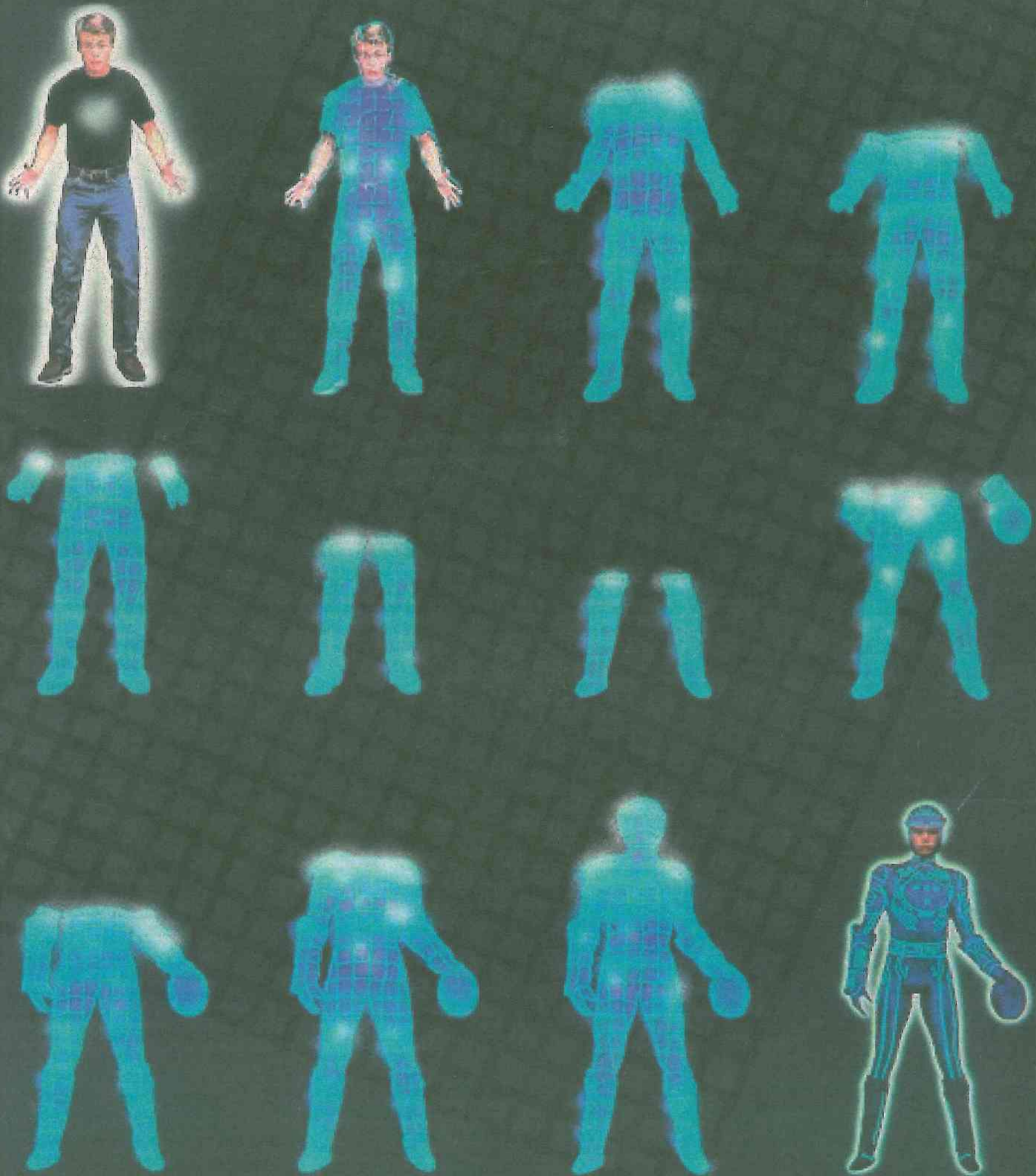


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# ON DIT

Adelaide Uni Student Rag  
Volume 73 Edition 15 09/08/05



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## Getting Out of Gym Class Alive

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### On Dit

**Volume 73 Edition 15**  
**08.08.2005**

*On Dit* is the weekly student newspaper of the Students' Association of the University of Adelaide. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Editors or the Association.

#### EDITORS

Clementine Ford  
Daniel Joyce  
Danny Wills  
ph: (08) 8303 5404

#### Advertising Manager

Melissa Fisher  
ph: (08) 8303 5004

#### Printing

Cadillac

#### Next Edition: Japanese Craziiness

Deadline August 11  
Published August 16

#### The Press Gang

##### Current Affairs:

Nick Parkin  
Alex Solomon-Bridge

##### Opinion

Nerissa Schwarz

##### Film

Sophie Plagakis  
Lauren Young

##### Performing Arts

Benedict Coxon

##### Visual Arts

Leo Greenfield

##### Music

Jennifer Soggee  
Ben Vistoli

##### Local Music

Heather McGinn

##### Food & Booze:

send to Alexis Buxton-Collins

##### Vox Pop This Week By:

Dan & Clem

##### Stylist:

Stephanie Mountzouris

#### About the cover

Front Cover: An exciting new role playing game based on the arcade classic *Discs of Tron*.

#### Wanna Write?

Come down to our friendly little office. We're down in the basement of the George Murray building, next to the boy's john. But it's just been painted which is nice. If the new paint is too bright for your human eyes, you can get in contact with us via email at [ondit@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:ondit@adelaide.edu.au) or call us on 83035404.

#### Guardians of the white tree of Numenor:

Jimmy, Alexis, Matt, Mikey, Jekab, punching bags, Hélène (x2), North Tce Optometrists for understanding, Tron Convention 2001, the AVCON Club for keepin' it real on campus, formative years of cheesy eighties adventure flicks.

#### Banished to the bog of eternal stench:

Seth Cohen, decrepid University printing, Napoleon Dynamite for making geekiness way too cool, the idea of marketing.



## ELECTION WATCH

with Clementine Ford



The keener eyes amongst you may have noticed that there's a new club in town. Dubiously titled Smack!, banners and tables have been popping up like nobody's business and I for one am more than a little bit interested in what this crazy new group is all about.

Smack! is a new political faction, borne out of last year's 'dramatic' defection from the Indies of Josh Rainer and Sandy Biar. While Rayner went off to shmooze the likes of Unity, Biar formed Smack! and began to recruit unsuspecting first years immediately. If I was to believe the rumours, which I am most often wont to do, I would assume that Smack! is a feeder ticket for the sleazier band of Unity kids, run by an army of right wing Christians and suspiciously set up as an official club to lessen the impact of political ambition. Surely such deception couldn't exist in an arena of such implicit honesty and integrity?

Yeah right...

In the spirit of unbiased journalism, I departed the rumour mill and asked Biar to explain himself. Perhaps it was the knowledge that I'd be printing the interview and any lies he told me would be exposed in a week anyway, but I found him to be disarmingly up front, if not a little slippery.

According to Biar, he began Smack! as an alternative to the factional politics that tend to dominate the SAUA and the AUU. Smack! is non-binding and provides everyone of its members the chance to vote on issues. Blah blah blah - we've heard it all before. In fact, this seems to be the catch cry of all the political groups on campus except perhaps for NOLS (better known as Activate during that irritating and colourful week of elections). NOLS at least admits its members exist in a hierarchy and isn't foolish enough to pretend it won't purge you if you begin to disagree with it. Look at the

case of Lavinia Emmett-Grey earlier this year - although, that could have more to do with the fact she blithely exposed all their more preferably forgotten drunken exploits in her Pandora column. Silly girl.

As to the group's numbers, all Biar will tell me is 'there are more than 20'. Considering the recruiting frenzy that's been going on all year, I imagine the number to be closer to 40. Such excessive bulk seems odd considering the minimal positions that will be available this year. Perhaps Biar's told his lackeys the tired old lie that they can still make a difference with their factional voting. I almost feel sorry for the clueless little cherubs. Almost.

And what does Biar say to those pesky rumours of religious fundamentalism? "Smack! is a group of people with diverse political ideologies...There are only two Christians among us!" Two Christians of which Biar is incidentally one. Despite his personal beliefs, he says he wouldn't stand in the way of other people in his faction pursuing their own ideologies. Ideologies, say, like the belief in gay marriage. "Personally I wouldn't participate in a protest [in favour of it] but I certainly would encourage members of Smack! to campaign for it if this is what they believed in." Biar admits he believes in the religious sanctity of marriage but says he has been lobbying his church to support the Relationships Bill [which gives same sex couples legal rights equal to those of heterosexual couples]. Observing his considered answers and the invisible whirl of political jargon whirring through his brain, I note that if nothing else, he's snaffled himself a VIP seat on the fence.

Of course, my ulterior motive for the interview is to dig up some dirt on worrying stores I've heard that Smack! will be running political candidates for *On Dit*. I can not stress enough what a bad idea this is. If even media on campus can't stay independent from factional votes, what hope have we got? Biar at least has the balls to admit they are trying to put together a team, but insists that he would 'never run someone that doesn't have any *On Dit* experience.' He also states that he believes strongly in the independence of *On Dit* from the SAUA. Why run political candidates for it then? "I would never stop any Smack! members from running for positions they wanted." Trudge through the mire of double speak here and you'll arrive at this corker - Smack! wants *On Dit*, will most likely employ the skills of at least one person with a modicum of experience and will use their self declared status of political independence to justify having aligned editors. This likely scenario suddenly lends a lot of weight to those aforementioned rumours of an alliance with Josh Ratjner's Unity. It's no secret that Raijnjer has wanted to get his grubby little hands in control of the uni press all year, even going so far as to suggest at one delightful council meeting that the newspaper office be moved into the SAUA under the thinly veiled guise of us all 'getting along a little better'.

But this is all conjecture. I don't know for certain that Raznyer is plotting a media takeover just as I don't know for certain that he would walk over his own mother to insert himself into a presidency of some kind. If this is the case (and I've never been wrong yet - I've watched a lot of *Survivor*) then I'm afraid we the students and those who care about the union have a great deal more to worry about than whether or not Smack! has recruited people through a pub crawl.

**Clementine Ford  
believes in making an informed decision**



Apparently Smack! doesn't stand for anything, but rather is a reminder that politics doesn't have to be all sour grapes and faces. I can see why some people might associate the practice of smacking with seriousness *and* jollies, but from a self proclaimed Christian it's all a bit odd. So as to prevent Sandy Biar any embarrassment, I've taken it upon myself to come up with a number of Smack!ronyms that he may borrow at a moment's notice.

**Smack!ronym #1**

## Students Making A Cute Kite

**Smack!ronym #2**

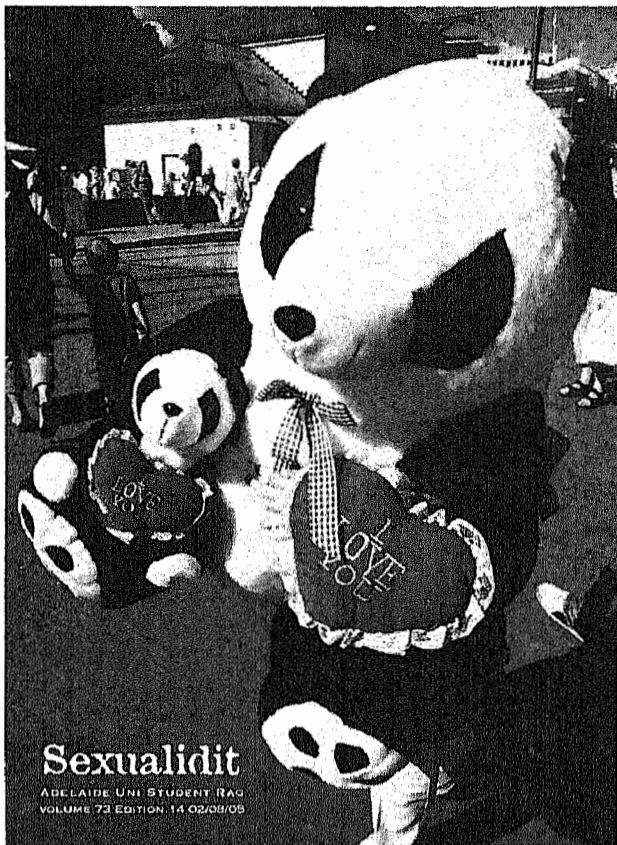
## Students Meeting At Celtic Kickings

**Smack!ronym #3**

## Snowmen Melting As Christopher Kills

**Smack!ronym #4**

## Simply Marvellous And Certainly Kinky



**Sexualdit  
Edition 14, 2/8/5**

Dear Editor,

I saw *The Life Aquatic* the other night. It was ace. I love Bill Murray and when I grow up I'm going to marry him and kiss him on the lips. Either him or Tom Skerritt circa *Poison Ivy*. He's a stone fox.

Yours,  
**Audrey Hefferneggar**

Dear Eds,

Am I right in thinking that VSU doesn't come in until next year? Cause our student printing services are already operating like a college chic at the Havelock on Thursday night - shabby, if at all functional. On several nights in the past

# EDITORIAL

Allo,

This is the Geek Edition of *On Dit*. It is called so because it celebrates the nerddom that is geek. It has many amusing stories written by self declared geeks and a variety of lovely photos of geeks themselves.

So why geek?

Well why not? Geeks are certainly a much under valued commodity in society. Most people won't pay much attention to a geek, especially if said geek is a little on the unattractive side. Personally, I think we've got a lot to thank geeks for. For example - my housemate and I are trying to set up a broadband account in our house. This is so he can do his uni and I can exploit the faster options of downloadable porn and Limewire music. Collectively, we know diddly about computer speak but luckily we know a particularly attractive computer geek who sorted the probelm out for us in a jiffy.

Geeks are also good to flirt with. They're not used to much romantic attention so they won't knock you back with affectations of superiority. Plus, they know stuff about stuff so a flirty conversation with a geek is never boring. Most likely, they'll also be a little kooky which is always a bit of a turn on.

few weeks I have gone to not one, not two but all three of the universities 24 hour computer suites. The printers, already surrounded by the masses of paper they had spewed out in their death throes, now showed no signs of life at all. Although one, suffering god knows what agonies simply smeared itself across the page I attempted to print leaving no legible writing whatsoever. I had to look away.

So what the fuck?! All three suites wihout a printing facility, get it together.

Regards,  
**Tim is Traumatised**

Dear Dr Dan.

Your scientification against the ideas of constructivism (I refer to your comments in this letters page of last week) have one basic flaw in their argumentation. When dealing, as Mr. Greenfield was, in areas of expression, one is treating the issue of complex emanations from what may very well be basic commonalities of cognition. Dealing with information and perceptual structures within an environment of behaviour already constructed and compounded of theseid very different with dealign with them in terms of singular brain mechanisms, in which identical brain behaviours at one level do not necessarily translate to identical real world behaviours and effects. There are many levels of interaction involved int he construction of a opinion or the characterisation of a perception, many of whihc are effected at the level of socialisation. One forgets not only that cognitive science deals with the specificity of single perception events, but that cognitive scince suggest that many of the ways in which our intelligences operate are through external memory devices (painings, fashions, even street signs) which involve a level of cultural feedback and suuggest as subtle redeignation of certain coded items in the environment as essentially regions of the mind. We are faced with a seperation between cognitive and expressive which very much alters the field of discussion from that of brain events exclusively as arbiters of reality. Indeed, evolution would suggest that similiarities of basic cognitive

process occure precisly becuase they allow the advantage maximal differentiation at higher cognitive levels.

Sincerely,  
**Brendan de Paor-Moore**

Dear *On Dit*,

Jenny Turner's pathetic attempts in last week's edition to justify the closure of the union studio made me feel not only physically ill but slightly greasy from the sleaze her column managed to project.

To claim that the closure of the studio was necessary is bullshit. The \$50,389 that went towards running the studio is such a measly smidgeon of our union fee to be rid of it is laughable in its ineffectiveness. Further, the claim that only 28 students used the studio last semester ignores the much larger number that vistied Sherry and Helen to have a chat or feel a little less crap on campus - students who I'm sure couldn't give a rat's ass about the union despite its blatant obsession with marketing itself.

The fact is, \$50,389 is such a minute figure compared to the \$550,597 we spend on the Sports' Association and the \$68,000 we spend on sports' grounds. In total, we spend more on sports at this university than we do on our own students' association - a total of \$619,397 compared to \$508,846. It fucks me off far more that I'm paying money for people to run around a field than supporting an art studio run by two women who collectively had spent almost 40 years on campus. Jenny Turner can justify it all she wants - if she thinks the way the union is being run now is anything more than farcical, she's much stupider than I thought (which, incidentally, would be pretty difficult.)

Sincerely,  
**Clementine Ford**

*(Ed's note: Clementine bears full editorial responsibility for the publication of this letter.)*

When it comes down to it, all I ask in people is that they maintain a respectable standard of personal hygiene and spend at least one hour a day outdoors. I used to live with my brother, and I kid you not, he would spend upwards of 40 hours a time playing online games with friends he had actually met in person. He's in San Francisco now and one can only presume he's making some time to enjoy the sights.

Peace out geekburgers,

**Clementine**

Buried within our pages this week is quite a bevy of NDA information. The National Day of Action held on Wednesday is intended as a broad display of student discontent with Howard Government policies, with a pointed focus on VSU and the "devastating effects it will have on student organisations".

In the past *On Dit* has been criticised for its reticence to support some of the SAUA backed protests, most notoriously Make Some Noise. With the NDA, *On Dit* has much fewer misgivings. The NDA seems to have been organised at little cost to the student and intelligently curated to receive wide media attention.

In the past students have often become their own worst enemies at protests. Knowing the conservative media's predilection for showing the worst side of student protest behavior and their bloodlust for images of "feral lefties" battering John Howard into a coma with slogan emblazoned placards it's bewildering to see the stupidity of 'activists' who serve up reels and reels of such brain-dead footage for the Packer and Murdoch presses.

On Wednesday the SAUA will have the cameras of every major news stations pointed upon them and have the rare opportunity to articulate their position to every household in the nation.

If they're smart they'll stay away from the usual chants of shame and the cheap political jibes and instead use the opportunity to push their campaign beyond mere tired slogans. They've said all year that given a receptive audience their arguments will prove true. For all our sakes they need to give themselves that opportunity on Wednesday.

**Danny**



# AUDREY HEFFERNEGGAR'S CUH-RAZY ELECTION RUMOURS!



So wacky they just might be true!

Good Lord, it's that doleful time of year again when multicoloured scabs suddenly break out across uni grounds, a pustulous celebration of lies, deceit and smarm. We agree elections are hideous, but we haven't found a way of stopping them yet. As Dumbledore would say, 'we mustn't sink beneath our anguish, but rise above it!'

In the spirit of the great man's words, I've decided to bring to light some of rumours that have astounded me over the past few weeks. Some are ludicrous and others scary, but of one thing I can be certain - there'll be more sleaze on ground this year than I've ever seen before - though sadly, far less charisma, brains or plain good policy.

**Q** A persistent rumour this year is that newly formed Smack! will be acting as a feeder ticket for Unity. Who can say if this is true, but frankly it makes sense if Unity's pulling power is anything to go by.

**Q** With VSU inevitable, Union Prez is the hotly contested package. Which of our most despicable student reps will sell their mother's soul to get it?

**Q** Indies' Miliana Stodjanisovic has been unusually quiet of late - would a move into the SAUA President's office urge her to finally start submitting office bearer reports?

**Q** Miliana's presidential aspirations may be thwarted by a certain John Pezy. NOLS' Pezy recently submitted an article to *On Dit* for publication. I believe they call it 'raising profile' in political circles.

**Q** Is it just my imagination, or has Unity's Josh Rainer been spending a lot of time with Lavinia Emmett-Grey lately? Is he getting tips on how to mount his campaign for the SAUA's Queer Officer?

**Q** Speaking of Lavinia, I think we can safely bet she's plotting an *On Dit* takeover next year. Apparently she's got all the preferencing stitched up and all she's looking for is a team. If i were her, I wouldn't get too excited yet though - it's a sure bet she's going to have

some stiff competition from a certain dream team waiting in the wings...

**Q** Where to next for our 'esteemed' union president Jenny Turner? Botox?

**Q** The Liberals are yukking it up now that their spank bank poster boy has control of the Senate. Will the student arena seem small fry now or will they continue their battle to disband the union from within?

**Q** With no banners allowed in this year's elections, talk is rife on how the parties will get themselves noticed. I'm guessing bright pink for the Indies to suit Melissa Purcell's sensibilities, light blue for Smack! to complement their aryan crew, orange for NOLS to symbolise Jess Cronin's hair and snot green for Unity to reflect Josh Rayner's personality.

**Q** With no banners to steal, how will Clementine Ford amuse herself during the week. Might she actually run? Seriously?

**Q** Lastly, with such a gloom hanging over the future of the union and the SAUA, will Brad Kitschke finally come back to finish his law degree and simulataneously save us all?

Peace out voters.

**Audrey Hefferneggar**

has only been a gimp once in her life.



## TEN PERCENT %

So what do you do if you're new at university, and feel "a little bit different" from everyone else? What if you're straight friends just "don't understand"? What if you don't feel accepted? What if you just want to meet some open-minded people? What if you've been at uni for years, and want to make some new friends?

Sounds like you might be interested in joining Ten Percent! 10% is an inclusive social group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and gay-friendly students, or for those who are unsure or don't like labels. We are a group of students mainly from Adelaide University, but welcome friends from other campuses (e.g. UniSA and Flinders) who meet up socially both on and off the uni campus for a chat, drinks, movie nights, picnics etc. We just like to hang out and have fun!

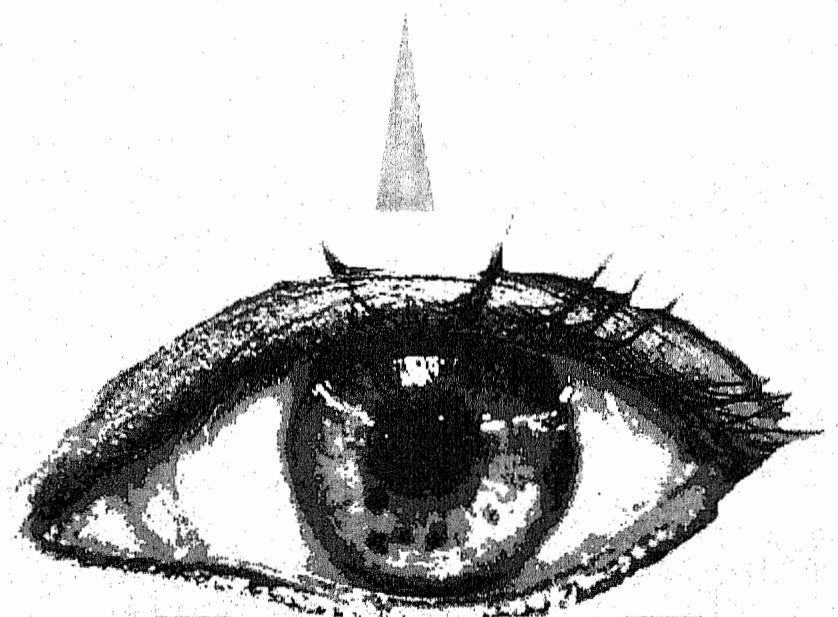
The current group is a great mix! We have boys and girls and hermaphrodites. We have people from different unis, people of varying races, backgrounds and ages (mostly younger uni students, but a few who are still young at heart!). There are long-term regulars, and newbies alike. It's a great place to make new non-judgmental friends and to hang out in a welcoming, supportive environment.

Let us stress, that Ten Percent focuses on being a *social* group, not a political activist group. We won't make you parade around wearing a rainbow flag, or spend hours debating the current hot-gay political topic of the month. We support you if that's what you're passionate about, but that is not what Ten Percent is about. We're just a group of laid back queers&co that enjoy talking about 'that local sporting team'... or not. :-D

You can find out more about the group at <http://tenpercentadelaide.tripod.com/>, or email [bone\\_fauna@yahoo.com.au](mailto:bone_fauna@yahoo.com.au). The current co-convenors are Paul and Emily, who are happy to meet with anyone and talk to them about the group and welcome them into the 10% 'family'! Or you can contact Kavy at the SAUA. If you like, we can put you on the mailing list where you'll find out about upcoming social events. Hope to see you there!

## North Terrace

### OPTOMETRISTS



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# July 7: Where the real danger lies



The recent London bombings were truly terrible in their human impact and, in terms of the human suffering they caused, a war tactic operating on a very low moral plain indeed. Certainly those attacks were truly abominable and on humanitarian grounds must be condemned utterly. However, what is also bad about them is the ammunition they have provided for Coalition propagandists to reinforce public acceptance of the atrocious behaviour of those governments in this conflict. The July attacks played into the hands of our own warmongers and they are having a field day availing themselves of it.

Over a longer period of time the so-called war on terror has carried with it a major threat to our civil liberties. Take, for example, the official depiction of Mamdouh Habib as an enemy of the state on his return from Guantanamo Bay to Australia. This was, and is, on present public knowledge of his situation, frightening in its implications. The assumption – the arrogant governmental assumption – seems to be that we must all accept the civil libertarian abuses in the Habib case, and those being inflicted on David Hicks, because they are necessary to fight and win the so called 'war on terror'. It's all part of a wider public relations con job to trick us all into believing in – or at least accepting – the wider pre-emptive strategy being used by the three Coalition governments to fight that 'war'. The wider sweep of this propaganda aims at making the populations in the three countries accept the strategies being used – including the Iraq incursion – as being normal and necessary to achieve the victory.

The sinister Orwellian echoes in this are unmistakable.

In the novel there is a war against an external enemy which is not so much directed at defeating an external enemy as it is at operating internally in holding the population in subjugation to the Big Brother state. The war is on going, with no definite start or end and given expression in a sort of slogan: 'Oceania is at war with Eastasia .... Oceania has always been at war with Eastasia'. Change

the names and we have a slogan that might well serve the three governments in their cynical manipulation of the on-going 'war on terror' to their own ends.

'The Coalition is at war with terrorism ... The Coalition has always been at war with terrorism'.

We run the risk now of having the 'war on terror' as a permanent – or, at least, a very long term - fixture in our international and domestic policy as a mechanism for keeping us all under the control of those calling the shots in the new world order. It's all part of a wider encroaching civil libertarian nightmare descending in the three Coalition countries, and beyond.

In the US David Hicks has been advised that his best chance of release lies in the avoidance of governmental criticism. And here in Australia the Federal Government was at one point in time sponsoring a move to discredit internationally recognized

as easily duped on these things as we are. And that is as true on our home turf here on campus as it is anywhere else in the country. After all, it is not as if the manipulation of us underlings by the state here at Adelaide University is a new thing. We've seen it all before so we should be on our guard. We should know better.

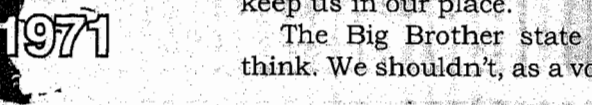
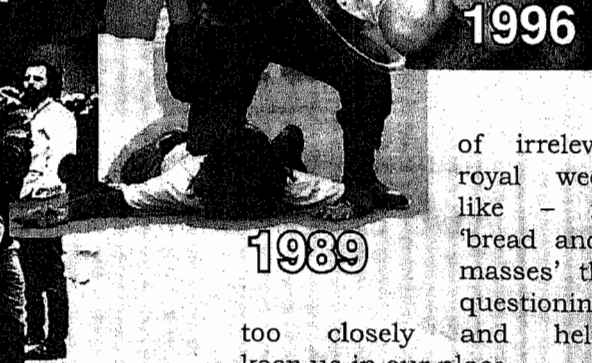
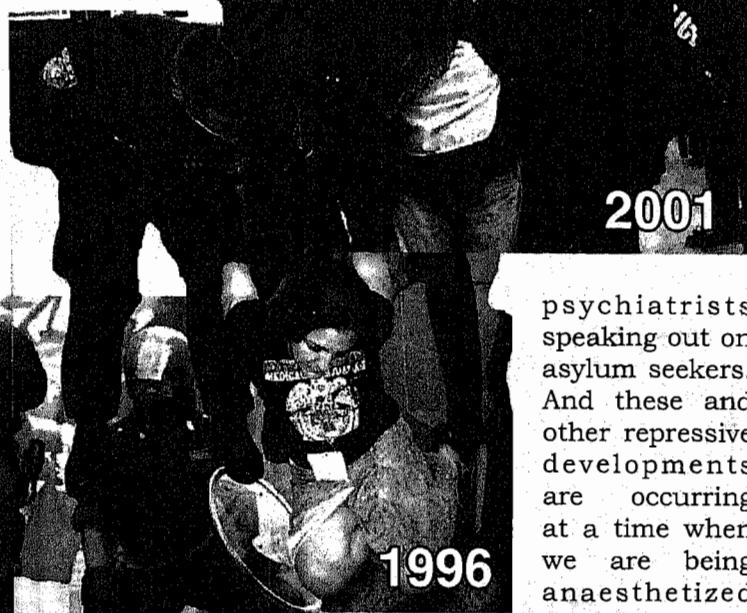
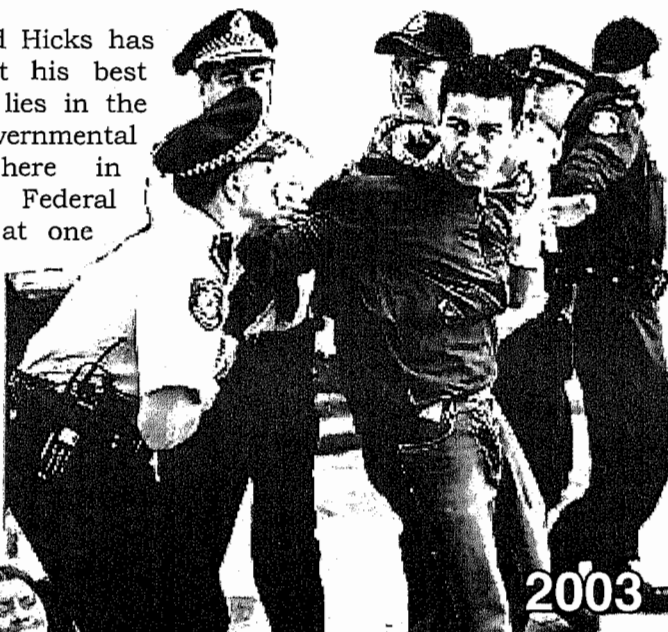
In the early 1960s, while we Adelaide University students were letting it all hang out, the state was busy secretly raising a regiment up there at Woodside (4 RSAR) to go off and fight Indonesian forces on the eastern periphery of the newly created state of Malaysia. The unit was stationed and did its fighting in the border area separating Indonesia and Malaysia in

Borneo. It was all part of our campaign to defend the western post colonial order of things by defeating Asian communism more extensively 'up there' to our north in the region – a wider regional campaign which is best known in popular terms in Australia in its manifestation in Indo China in the nineteen sixties and seventies.

In that decade many of these same students were suddenly extracted from civilian life with the sounds of

anti-war demos and wild parties still ringing in their ears and sent off to train for war. With student memories of 'the revolution', free love, marijuana and beer' less than a month old these young men were, whether they wanted to or not, made to march across parade grounds to the yells and screams of their NCOs, trained to hate and fear 'the little yellow man in the black pyjamas (ie the Viet Cong)', taught to aim their Self Loading Rifles at the 'centre of the seen mass' of a human target, on a military establishment in Victoria that boasted 'Tit Hill' as its best known geophysical feature.

My section corporal at Puckapunyl in the late summer of 1967, Corporal Rashleigh, was a veteran of this secret war against Sukarno's Indonesia. He trained us recruits in jungle guerilla warfare (basic training: 2RTB) substantially on the strength of this combat experience. While my recollections of my short Pucka stint are mixed I do have fond memories of him (and, for that matter, the training in general) at that time despite the rigours of the training that he and others administered. To a considerable degree all the yelling and screaming – the inevitable harsh edges to our instructor-recruit relationship – came with the territory and I accepted, and still accept, this. If you are going to have armies with the primary objective of killing people the training is bound to be like this.



psychiatrists speaking out on asylum seekers. And these and other repressive developments are occurring at a time when we are being anaesthetized as a population with all sorts

of irrelevancies – sport, royal weddings and the like – making up the 'bread and circuses for the masses' that stop us from questioning our leaders too closely and help therefore to keep us in our place.

The Big Brother state is closer than we think. We shouldn't, as a voting population, be



To me Corporal Rashleigh seemed strongly disciplinarian in his approach – more so than the other NCO's I came across there. Early in the training he singled me out for a time as 'Recruit Laurel' – a tag borrowed from the comic film duo Laurel and Hardy. He was prompted to do so when my trousers fell down during one of the morning platoon parades. Certainly I found the derision uncomfortable but that was his job – to be tough like that. And looking back on it, who knows in what ways he may have been traumatized by his Borneo experience in the year or so immediately prior to his Puckapunyl stint that might have made him more disciplinarian than he needed to be. Once, when the chips were down for me over something, a softer side in him came to the fore.

*"Who knows in what ways he may have been traumatized by his Borneo experience... that might have made him more disciplinarian than he needed to be."*

He's dead now so the chance to find out directly from him what he was really like as a person beneath that tough exterior has been lost. My guess is that, once you allow for everything, he was a pretty decent sort of a bloke. Like the rest of us, he was caught up in something larger. His – ours – not to reason why and all that.

Early in that intake's training a burly senior NCO stood up in the mess at Pucka and declared: 'Now listen in: forget all that crap you have been reading in the papers – you bastards are here to fill out the troops in Vietnam!' At that time the official government line was that national service was there to augment the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in a general way – not specifically for Vietnam – and that since the conscripts would be deployed across the wider force as the need dictated it would just naturally follow that some conscripts would end up in Vietnam. It was to counter criticism that Vietnam was the sole or main purpose of conscription. Then, as now, the army was a law unto itself when it came to

restricting access to its information and it was made clear to us it would be more than our life was worth to go to the press on any aspect of it. It was for us an early object lesson in the power of the state to control information – to control the lives of its citizenry generally.

All our university free thinking was no use to us on the parade ground at Puckapunyl.

Certainly, as they say, that was then and this is now. But, the way things are going now it could all happen again in some contemporary form. The alarm bells are – or ought to be – ringing. The fact that Coalition leaders have lied to us so badly over Iraq indicates the extremity of their duplicity and the magnitude of the danger to us all in complacency when it comes to their war mongering.

Certainly, there is no conscription for Australians of military age on the horizon at this point. And long may it be so. But this could change.

The Federal Libs are clearly sympathetic to the idea of another round of national service in what they consider to be 'the right circumstances' (Alexander Downer said so up at Woodside barracks on an occasion there sometime in 2003). The ADF is clearly currently having a bugger of a time recruiting. In crude terms the country doesn't have enough soldiers at a time when we have an ever-expanding commitment to overseas conflict. If one of those conflicts we are already involved in – say Iraq or Afghanistan – really starts to go very badly pear shaped (I mean even more so than is the case now if that is conceivable) – then the temptation to conscript may well be revived. The US is sending reservists to Iraq and elsewhere and it may well be that the idea of sending civilian soldiers to war like this may well catch on here as part of our general sycophancy in our relationship with the US.

So, my fellow students, don't let the bastards

fool you: terrible though the London terrorist attack was, the real additional danger for us at this university, and in the country as a whole, lies in the use it might be put to in further subjugating us to the will of the elites who really call the shots in our society. I and my contemporaries in age are too old now to be conscripted and sent off to fight their wars for them. But most of you are of military age and potentially in the firing line if the shit does hit the fan in some way overseas and our powers-that-be once again want to send the likes of you off to war.

At the very least, before you allow yourself to run the risk of ending up a cadaver in one of those green body bags, or the limbless torso thrashing about in the aftermath of some middle eastern explosion, you must demand of our leaders full and truthful information as to why, should the call for such self sacrifice come your way, it would be – really be – a necessary one in the national interest. In our democracy at present there clearly is an unacceptable level of mind control going on when it comes to the so-called 'war on terror'. When it comes to this conflict the old lie is still out there and as strong as ever: *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*.

So, be warned fellow scholars: us old hippies would be watching it all from the sidelines; but you young men and women would be the cannon fodder for the securing of the interests of the dominant forces in the Bush-Blair-Howard new world order. For you, and for Australian society in general, the price for the current popular apathy on such matters could be a high one.

Terry Hewton

*Is a mature age student who first attended Adelaide University in the 1970s*

# Don't call me ~~Racist!~~

A replay of the Pauline Hanson syndrome, or a reflection of mainstream Australia's attitude towards non-white immigrants? Perhaps Andrew Fraser's frank admission on *A Current Affair* on Monday, the 25<sup>th</sup> July was just his opinion. Being an Indian student in Australia, I would certainly like to think so. To me Australians are friendly yet politically correct when it comes to dealing with people from non-European backgrounds. So Fraser's insistence on the 'righteousness' of the White Australia policy on national television in contemporary multi-cultural Australia was a real shocker. And I'm even more surprised that it hasn't attracted much attention from the subjects themselves – Australia's newest citizens.

The string of surprises doesn't end here. Fraser holds an academic position at Macquarie University's Department of Public Law. While the university has issued a statement condemning racism, they continue to stand by their worthy associate professor, using the rather ubiquitous justification of freedom of speech. If I were a student of that university, I would seriously contemplate quitting if Fraser wasn't sacked. But why sacrifice your future for the sake of a past prejudice? The problem is – has the prejudice really passed?

On a normal day walking through the Barr Smith lawns, I am proud of creating a niche for myself in a place so different from my country of origin. But looking deeper, I haven't developed

a taste for footy, and I don't have many local friends. The ones that I do have belong to the vegan and yoga category. Bear in mind that this is a university, and people here are meant to be more broad-minded than the general community. Of course I could blame the lack of local-international student interaction on organisational indifference. Student reps, however, can only do so much. Universities, again, are 'internationalising' with a vengeance, but cannot change people's hearts.

Do we need to discuss racism more openly? In today's age of economic give-and-take, open discussions on real concerns are unlikely to succeed. As long as the dollars are flowing in, and the human resources being generated, there will never be a human peace index. Racial and ethnic tensions, however, can subtly destroy the most vibrant of economies. Can a nation really be held together only through networks of corporations, universities, and governments? What can we say about the 30-something Aussie bloke who loves his curry at the local Indian bistro, but doesn't hesitate to complain to the council when he gets wafts of the same gastronomic delight from the compound of his new next-door neighbour? Or, for that matter, what can we say about the 20-something Asian student who travels 20 miles only to meet other fellow students?

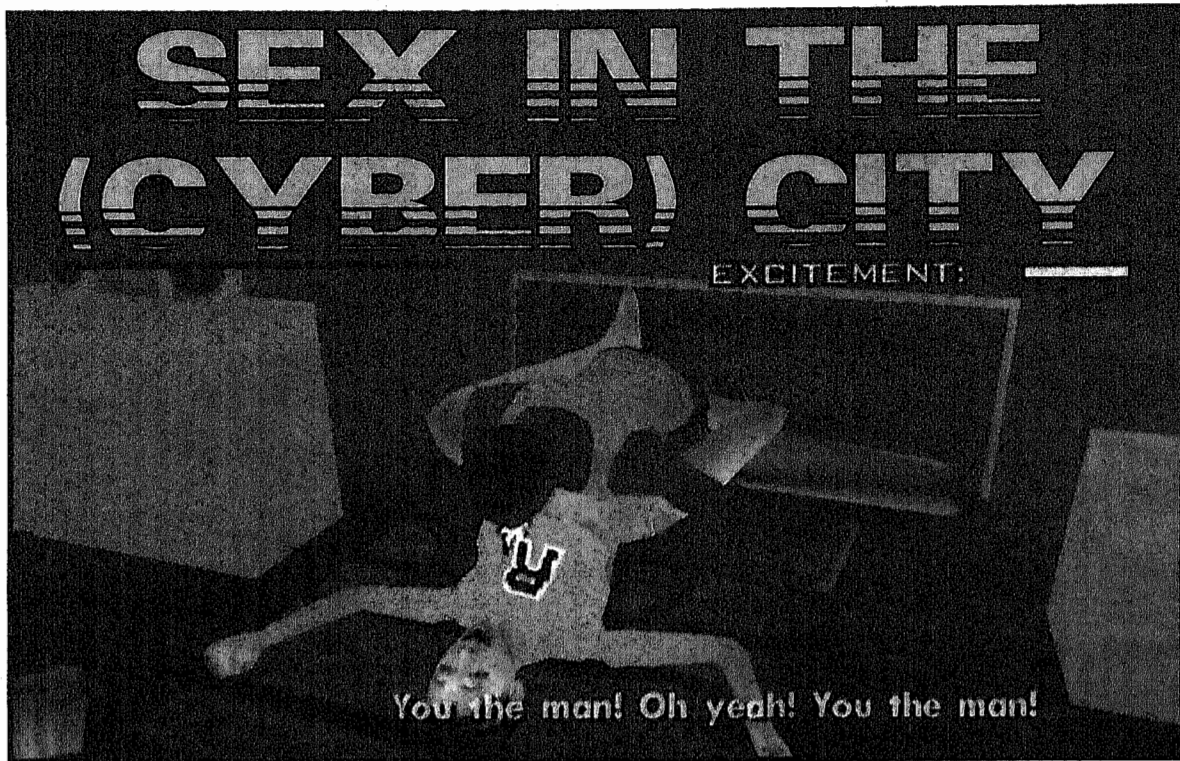
All I can do here is to speak out once and for all. Do

minority in regards to his views on immigration? I am sure the majority of Australians, unlike Fraser, do not think that African migration increases crime, that Australia should withdraw from refugee conventions to avoid becoming 'a colony of the Third World', and that cognitive and abilities, testosterone and 'input' vary according to race, and that we should look after their own interests. Do we do? Are we welcome here? Can we do a survey by asking all students to respond to this conclusion, based on (local or international) racism? Do we own





GOOD REAL  
DICTIONARY



It seems like every couple of months or so our society is rocked by yet another censorship controversy. Normally these scandals involve the film and television industry, and relate to some kind of unprecedented explicit French sex scene.

However, recently the controversy regarding sexual material in popular culture has spilled away from 'arty' porn films to the ever-evolving world of video games. How come? All because one US politician got wind that a hidden 'sex minigame' had been placed within the popular videogame, *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*.

The scandal broke only a couple of weeks ago when a so-called 'Hot Coffee' modification for *Grand Theft Auto* appeared on the internet. This modification, which can be downloaded and then installed into the game, allows players to go and get a "cup of hot coffee" with their virtual, in-game girlfriends. If you are in need of a translation for this euphemism, it means that they can go and have virtual sex. Allegedly, this involves a sex scene in which the player mashes buttons as fast as possible in order to 'increase performance' with his girlfriend. The scene shows no genitalia or penetration, just a couple of 3-D bodies moving up and down on a couch.

The developer of *Grand Theft Auto*, Rockstar Entertainment, immediately blamed the 'Hot Coffee' modification on some random internet geeks, who, they claimed, had constructed the seedy scene for their own amusement. However, it soon came to light that the 'Hot Coffee' scene was actually hidden within the game code itself, meaning that the programmers at Rockstar Entertainment had actually constructed it, probably as an office prank, never intending it for public viewing.

However, just like any good Paris Hilton escapade, publicly viewed it was. And not even just by rampantly pubescent 12-year-old boys, it also somehow came to the attention of influential US Senator, Hillary Clinton. Unsurprisingly, the polygon lovemaking got the Senator pretty fired up. She immediately brandished "the disturbing material" of *Grand*

*Theft Auto* as responsible for "stealing the innocence of our children", and referred the matter to the Federal Trade Commission.

Only a couple of days later, it was revealed that an 85-year-old grandmother had filed a lawsuit against Rockstar Entertainment for the emotional trauma the game had allegedly caused her 14-year-old grandson. The grandmother had bought the game for her grandson as a birthday present, and had been shocked by its sexual content. Obviously she failed to read the 'Mature - only for ages 17 and above' ratings sticker that had been attached to the front cover.

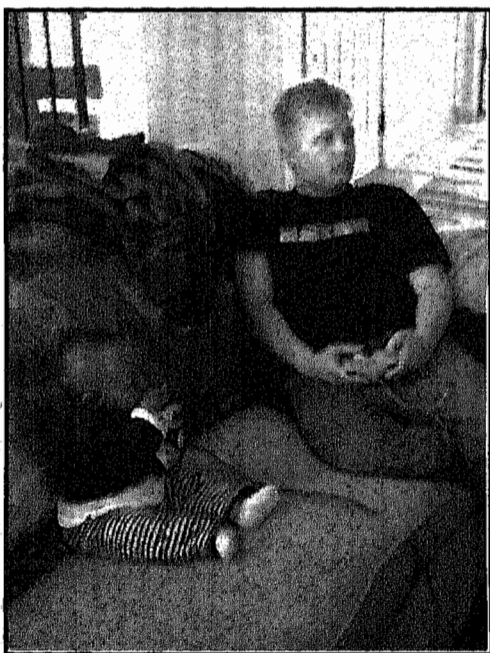
But the biggest ramifications for Rockstar Entertainment actually came from our own little side of the world, Australia. As of the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, the game is now officially banned within our country; it is illegal for any retailer to even stock copies on its shelves. All this, just because of a hidden soft-core love scene on a couch.

Now, I'm not going to use this article as a means for debating the pros and cons of censorship, suffice to say that there are good and bad arguments to both sides of the political spectrum. However, it needs to be made clear that the outcry over *Grand Theft Auto* does appear to be quite ridiculous, and, if nothing else, highly hypocritical.

Why? For starters, the *Grand Theft Auto* franchise has been around for almost a decade now, and has always involved highly controversial subject matter, which, for some reason, had been deemed acceptable until now. For instance, ever since the 2000 version, you have been able to go and pick up prostitutes off the street and have sex with them. Indeed, the 2002 version brought with it strip clubs and topless dancers, and, since the 2004 version, you have even been able to wield a giant, novelty, purple dildo as a weapon to go around and hit people with.

And let's not forget what the whole purpose of this game is: namely, to run around and wantonly kill people, including innocent bystanders (not that censorship supporters really mind about violence anyway).

How Senator Clinton could possibly consider



What innocence? This mohawked toddler happily helps his bro 'mash' out another one.

the 'Hot Coffee' modification to be any worse than these previous developments almost beggars belief. And the hypocrisy does not end there.

There are a whole sleuth of other videogames that are far more damaging and demeaning than *Grand Theft Auto*, just look at *Playboy Mansion* or *Postal 2*. Indeed, even the recent upsurge of pornographic mobile phone games should be causing considerable alarm, especially seeing as they are advertised weekly in the *Sunday Mail*. However, all these games somehow managed to avoid the censorship circus, and obtained their OFLC stamp of approval without debate.

The fact that it's also a lot easier for kids to just download and view hardcore pornography off the internet, than it is to even find the 'Hot Coffee' modification, seems to have been forgotten by most parent groups as well.

It's enough to make a nerd's blood boil. And lets not even get started on comparing the content of *Grand Theft Auto* to that of the film industry. I mean, its not like the 'Hot Coffee' patch is the next *Baise Moi* style gang-rape scene. Or even a *Big Brother*-esque 'penis massage'.

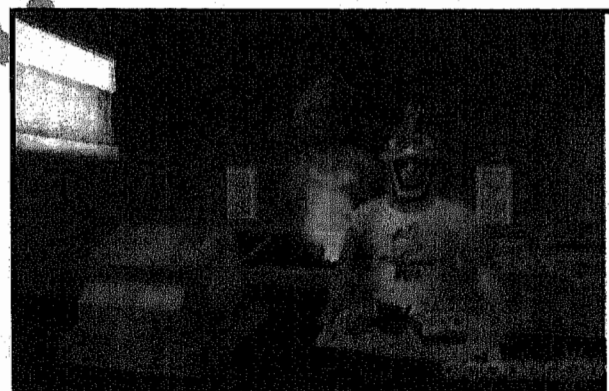
There just seems to be something slightly askew in this censorship decision; something that reeks of hypocrisy. So why has *Grand Theft Auto* suddenly become the next cultural spawn of Satan? Maybe Senator Clinton's choice of words provides the vital clue, that the videogame is somehow responsible for "stealing the innocence of our children".

This is important because it demonstrates that *Grand Theft Auto*, and indeed, the entire video game industry, is slowly becoming the latest scapegoat in the never-ending quest to stamp out the moral 'degeneracy' of today's children. In the 80's, the problem lay with *Terminator*; in the 90's, it was hip-hop music. Now, it's the videogame industry.

Maybe politicians fail to realise that by far the majority of those who regularly play videogames, as surprising as this may sound, are actually adults over 18 years of age. Maybe, also, politicians and parents fail to realise that kids are always going to partake in drugs and sex, whether it be in the context of playing *Grand Theft Auto* in 2005, or whether it involved going to the drive-in to watch *Diamonds are Forever* in 1955.

In any event, as the videogame industry slowly evolves into a mainstream market, the political and media slack is only set increase even more. It is just hoped that censorship decisions on videogames will, in future, be based more on proper argument and deliberation, not on political expediency. But, really, when you think about it, the chances of that happening are about as likely as a kid actively seeking to hit people with purple dildos after playing *Grand Theft Auto*.

Nick Parkin



Most disturbing were the realistic depictions of fast food holiday work.



# Notice of 2005 annual student elections

STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE & THE ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY UNION

Election week for the 2005 Annual SAUA & AUU Elections shall be:

Monday, 29th August until Friday, 2nd September 2005<sup>1</sup>.

AUU nominations open: 9.00am, Monday 8th August 2005<sup>1</sup>.

SAUA nominations open: 9.00am, Thursday 4th August, 2005.

All nominations close: 4.00pm, Friday 12th August 2005<sup>1</sup>.

Compulsory briefing sessions<sup>2</sup>: 5.30pm Wednesday 17th August 2005, 5.30pm Thursday 18th August 2005

## NOMINATION FORMS SHALL BE AVAILABLE FROM AND LODGED WITH:

- Union Information Office, Level 2, Lady Symon Building, Union Complex, North Terrace Campus (9.00 am - 5.00 pm)
- Students' Association Office, Level 2, Lady Symon Building, Union Complex, North Terrace Campus (9.00 am - 5.00 pm)
- RACSUC Office, Union Building, Roseworthy Campus (8.30 am - 3.00 pm)
- WISA Office, Waite Campus (9.00 am - 3.30 pm)

Please Note: Nominations close at RACSUC and WISA offices at close of business, Thursday 11th August.

Nominations from Roseworthy & Waite Campuses can be forwarded to North Terrace until 4pm, Friday 12th August.

## ABOUT NOMINATIONS

Nomination forms shall be available from the opening of nominations at the above locations. Completed nomination forms (including 200 word policy statement and photograph (if desired) for Union Board, Union Activities, and SAUA positions, and a 100 word policy statement and photograph (if desired) for all other positions) shall be lodged at the above locations by the close of nominations. Upon lodging a nomination form a receipt shall be issued, and candidates shall receive; (AUU) a general guide for the conduct of the election and the Union's Election Regulations; (SAUA) a copy of the SAUA Bylaw for the Conduct of Elections and Referenda. Students who cannot get to the above locations during those hours may receive and/or lodge their nomination form by contacting the Union Information Office by telephone on (08) 8303 5401 or by post (mail to The Returning Officer, Adelaide University Union, University of Adelaide, 5005), or the Students' Association office by telephone on: (08) 8303 5406 or by post (mail to The Returning Officer, Students' Association, University of Adelaide, 5005). Nomination forms by post MUST BE RECEIVED by the respective offices by close of nomination.

A compulsory briefing<sup>2</sup> for all nominees will be held at 5.30pm on Wednesday 17th & Thursday 18th August to outline conduct during the election and responsibilities of all elected officers.

## POSITIONS AVAILABLE FOR ELECTION:

### AUU<sup>1</sup>

**GENERAL MEMBER OF ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY UNION (AUU) BOARD (18 positions)** AUU board is the governing body of the AUU and is directly responsible for the Union Complex. The AUU also provides funding for affiliate bodies of the organisation. The Board meets monthly and has various sub-committees in which Board members are expected to participate. Any members wishing to stand for this position must be over 18.

**GENERAL MEMBER OF UNION ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE (10 positions)** The Union Activities Committee is responsible for organising Union activities for students. The Committee meets monthly and members are expected to help in creating Union activities projects.

### SAUA

**SAUA PRESIDENT (1 position)** Responsible for the overall co-ordination of SAUA's activities, chief spokesperson for the SAUA and Chair of SAUA Council.

**SAUA EDUCATION VICE-PRESIDENT (1 position)** Chief student advocate in academic matters and assists students who are having problems with the University's academic procedure.

**SAUA ACTIVITIES/CAMPAIGNS OFFICER (1 position)** Co-ordinator and facilitator of SAUA's activities for students and campaigns to promote student interests during the year.

**SAUA WOMEN'S VICE-PRESIDENT (1 position, candidates must be female)** Responsible for promoting a positive role for women within the University and the community at large, an advocate for women's interests, co-ordinator of women's action on campus and assists student with problems such as sexual harassment and discrimination.

**SAUA ENVIRONMENT OFFICER (1 position)** Responsible for co-ordinating SAUA and student projects designed to promote, protect and/or regenerate a sustainable environment in Adelaide, Australia and/or the world.

**SAUA SEXUALITY OFFICERS (2 positions- 1 female, 1 male)** Responsible for creating awareness of sexuality issues, and to act as a referral service to assist students in locating appropriate organisations, persons & social groups.

**SAUA ORIENTATION CO-ORDINATOR (1 position)** Responsible for SAUA's 2006 Orientation Programme which includes O'Week, O'Campus, O'Ball and O'Guide.

**ON DIT EDITOR(S) (1 position, up to three students may nominate together to be joint editors)** Responsible for the publication of SAUA's student newspaper which is published most weeks during academic term. It is highly desirable that the successful candidate(s) have some knowledge of producing a student newspaper (if you are considering nominating please find out what is involved).

**STUDENT RADIO DIRECTOR(S) (1 position, up to two students may nominate to be joint-directors)** Responsible for the co-ordination of the Student Radio programs on Radio Adelaide and the co-ordination and training of students involved in producing programs. It is highly desirable that the successful candidate(s) have knowledge of producing radio programs.

**GENERAL MEMBER OF SAUA COUNCIL (10 positions, meets fortnightly)** The group responsible for determining SAUA policy and the watchdog of SAUA Office Bearers. Members are expected to contribute to the activities of SAUA.

**NUS DELEGATES (6 positions)** The National Union of Students is the body that is charged with the responsibility of representing student interests. Delegates are expected to attend State and National conferences of NUS and contribute to the development of policy and action at a State and National Level.

## NOMINATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE CLOSE OF NOMINATIONS SHALL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Only students of the University of Adelaide may nominate. A student may only nominate for one paid<sup>3</sup> position. For time and place of voting, please see the forthcoming notice that details polling places. For further information, contact the respective office bearer Jennifer Turner- AUU President or the Returning Officer. Telephone (08) 8303 5401.

David Pearson - SAUA President. Telephone (08) 8303 5406 / (08) 8303 5401

<sup>1</sup> Subject to the outcomes of the AUU Governance review (August 15th 2005) and the resolutions of the regular AUU Board meeting of August 8th 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Please note that SAUA candidates can be disqualified from nominating should they not attend one of the two compulsory briefing sessions.

<sup>3</sup> Please note that all paid positions may be subject to change, this will be explained at the compulsory briefings on August 17th/18th 2005.





# Anticipating Howard's Reforms

an academic's twist on the Liberal's industrial and student agendas



## VSU, IR and your future

When parliament passes this week the legislative stage of the Howard government's radical industrial agenda will commence proper. As is expected the first major piece of legislation will be the VSU bill, which is aimed at destroying student organisations; therein ending their ability to act collectively. The second stage will be the broader Industrial Relations (IR) bill, which will be introduced in October. The IR bill aims to fundamentally alter the power relations between employer and employee. In this article I will draw out the parallels between these two pieces of legislation and give a bleak vision of what is likely to be the future should the government succeed in its sweeping industrial agenda.

## Euphemistically speaking: 'Greed is Good'

The VSU and IR changes are couched in term of two euphemism, 'choice' and 'reform'. The claim is that VSU will offer students choice in whether to join a student union or not; but given the history of comparable Western Australian legislation, this claim hides the government's agenda of ending collective actions and cooperative provision of services for students. The question is: where will the services be to choice from when they have disappeared? A much larger socialisation agenda hides behind the government's VSU legislation and that is to inculcate into students a view of the world, where individualism overrides cooperation, where self-interest overrides collective interest, where, to echo Gordon Gekko in *Wall Street*, 'greed is good'.

If the government is successful in its VSU campaign, by the time students graduate they will take as an unquestioning belief that there is no collective interests only their own economic interest. If the Howard government's IR 'reform' is successful, this belief will place the would-be fulltime employees in a far more precarious position than employees are today. The reason being that current employees are covered by collective agreements that guarantee wages and conditions of employment, based on the principle that employees are industrial citizens. The IR 'reforms' aim to abolish collective agreement and replace them with individual contracts, called Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs). The government's intention is to undermine collective agreements and to reinstall a form of master-servant relationship. Such an intention is evident in the fact that the push for AWAs is far more extreme in Australia than in any other OECD country, even the

USA. In these other countries collective agreements are treated equally with individual agreement; whereas under the proposed bill, AWAs will override collective agreement with the aim of effectively abolishing 'choice' for employees.

## The ACTU advert: 'days of our lives'

Many students will have seen the ACTU advertisement of the mother impelled to work by her employer. Student can empathise with

the advert because many work in casual work, where their hours and conditions are heavily dependent upon the prerogatives of management. Student put up with the vagaries of casual working conditions because it is temporary. But the aim of the new legislation is to make permanent jobs as precarious as casual employment (and therein weaken the conditions of both). The pinsecure conditions of casual work could well be the permanent days of our lives. The reasoning here is that the legislation overwhelmingly empowers employers over employees. There are 6 ways in which the promised legislation will cause this shift in power relations:

- 1 Reduce the role of trade unions to protect wage-earners pay and conditions.
- 2 Increase the capacity of the employer to prescribe the conditions of work - on a 'take-it-or-leave-it' basis.
- 3 Legally entrenching the power of contractors.
- 4 Substantially weaken the safety net of wages and conditions.
- 5 Allow employers of 100 or less employees to dismiss them unfairly.
- 6 Stripping the Industrial Relations Commission of its role as umpire, replacing it with a (likely pro-employer stacked) Australian Fair Pay Commission to set minimum wages.

As is clear from these 'reforms' the reality behind the rhetoric of choice will be to strengthen the choice of employers and to weaken the protections for the employees. For many employees the choice will be to accept the conditions of the employer or give up their jobs. Moreover, for the 4 million Australian employees in enterprises of less than 100 they can be unfairly dismissed without (effective) recourse to redress.

## The Government advert: 'do it for the economy'

The government's full-page adverts, attempting to counter the ACTU campaign, claims that the new legislation will not only make for a 'stronger economy' but 'higher wages'. The advert says the new

legislation, while removing the other award protections, will protect four basic award conditions: 4 weeks annual leave, personal/cares leave, parental leave and a 38-hour week. However, before the ink on the advert was dry, Treasurer Costello was arguing that conditions such as lunch breaks could be up-for-grabs and that unfair dismissal could become universal. Moreover, these 4 award conditions are so bare that they do not even protect the current award conditions over weekend, holiday and shift work. Additionally, it is somewhat hard to see how the minimum wage will be higher when the hearing will lag a year behind price rises, such as petrol. Also as the Sydney economist David Peetz shows, individual agreements, taken as a whole, produce lower wages than collective agreements. As such, the government's evocation of 'doing it for the national economy' can be decoded as doing it for the higher profits for the employer and lower wages for the employee.

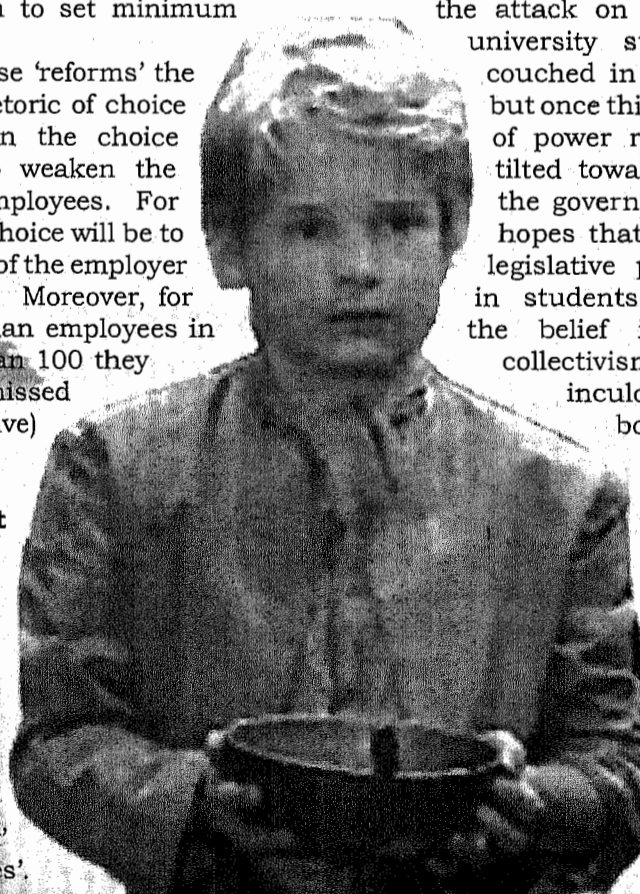
## Government power over the University Sector.

Australian universities are in the direct line for this return to a master-servant relationship. The government's interference in the universities belies their rhetoric of choice. The government is using the stick of tying government funds of \$280M to the universities, in an effort to bully them into adopting the government's IR agenda. Since 1996 the respective Howard governments have systematically and unrelentingly undermining the independence of Australian universities. While the government provides only 40% of the universities funds it wants 100% of the control over its management, including its industrial relations. Universities are thus caught in an ideological (universities function on collective collegial research and teaching endeavours) and material struggle with the government's managerial and individualist agenda towards them

Finally, there are strong parallels between the attack on VSU and that on the university staff. They are both couched in the rhetoric of 'choice' but once this is placed in the context of power relations the 'choice' is tilted towards the employers and the government. The government hopes that by its rhetoric and its legislative power it will inculcate in students and employees alike the belief in individualism over collectivism - if it succeeds in this inculcation the future for both will be bleak.

## Dr. Greg McCarthy

Dr McCarthy teaches Politics at the University of Adelaide but is writing this piece in his capacity as the elected South Australian Secretary of the NTEU





# Rally to Stop VSU National Day of Action

If VSU is about choice, then let the students decide for themselves if it's implemented  
**Wednesday - August 10 - 1pm - Barr Smith Lawns**



## Will Definitely Go

Student Radio  
 Nation Union of Students (NUS)  
 Council of Australian Post  
 Graduate Associations (CAPPA)

## Already Lost

The Studio and T-Shirt Shop  
 Free bookings of rooms and facilities for Student  
 groups during non-academic time  
 Flexible opening times for food outlets during  
 the holidays

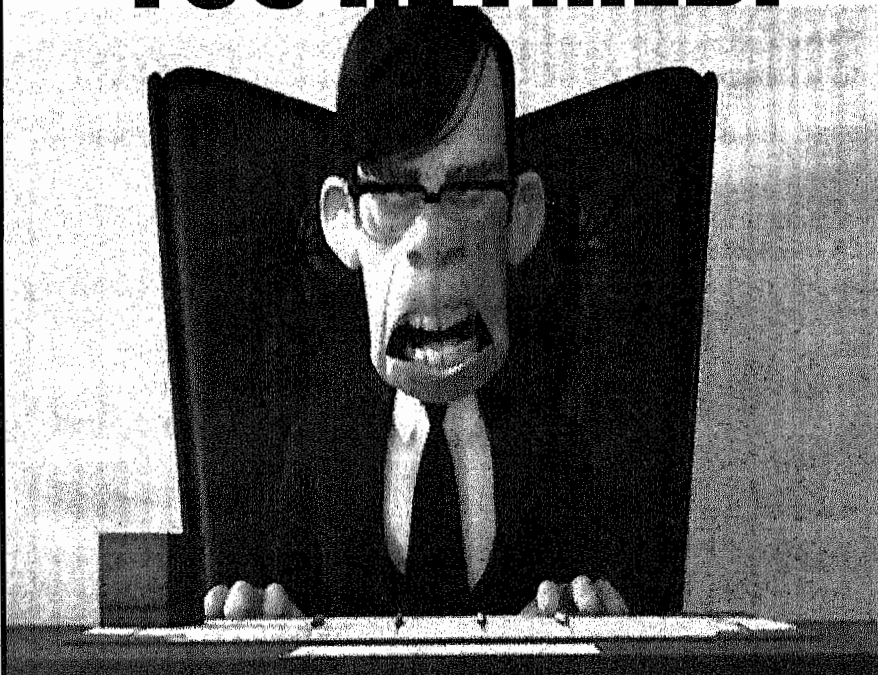
## At Risk

Undergraduate representation  
 Postgraduate representation  
 Overseas representation  
 Orientation  
 Activities throughout the year  
 Employment service  
 Free room bookings  
 Clubs and societies  
 Sports  
 Student Diary  
 Free legal and tax help  
 Student loans  
 The Resource Centre  
 24 hour computer suite  
 The Mature Age Students Association  
 And much, much more

**VSU WILL DESTROY CAMPUS LIFE,  
 REPRESENTATION AND STUDENT  
 SERVICES.**

**SHOW YOUR OPPOSITION TO VSU IN A  
 RALLY ON AUGUST 10TH (WEDNESDAY)  
 AT 1PM ON THE BARR SMITH LAWNS.**

## YOU'RE FIRED!



## DO YOU REALLY WANT TO TAKE ON YOUR BOSS ALONE...

Radical changes to Industrial Relations legislation and  
 Unionism will affect both your future job security and the next  
 years of university life.

To hear more come to the Barr Smith Lawns @ 1pm,  
 Wednesday August 10 for the National Day of Action.  
 Speaking: Janet Giles - President S.A. Unions  
 & our very own Dave Pearson!  
 ...plus many more.

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For AN  
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Year





# An Anti VSU Environment

In recent news the Federal Government has seized control of uranium mining, declaring the Northern Territory open for new sites. Mining companies have been given the go-ahead to exploit the \$12 billion of known uranium deposits in the territory and to look for others. Ian Macfarlane (the federal resources minister) said the Government would approve any project as long as it had the approval of indigenous landowners and met environmental standards.

As students we all know that under the liberal government very little meets environmental standards. Because we know this, the environment department fights



against actions that are harmful to the environment. However, under VSU it will be a very different story. To make it easier to understand imagine that VSU is like a wood chipper, cutting and cutting until there are no more services left and that the Liberals, well, they are like a wood logger, clearing out the students that get in their way. Their strategy behind VSU is not to give students "a wider choice", but to stop students from retaliating against the oppressive conservative ideals they force upon us. The Howard government wants to crush dissent to their environmentally destructive policies, like the wood logger wants to remove trees.

With VSU we have no voice to fight with and our right for fair representation is taken away from us, because services no longer exist. The reason being that there will simply not be enough money to fund the departments and all the things they do. Under VSU you will have to pay more than \$11 per semester to use the bike shed, you will have to take things home to recycled, environment collectives will have no way of advertising to students because student media will not exist, and there will be no free events like bike tuning demonstration, free barbeques and market stalls. These are all of the services that the SAUA environment department offer. With out the bike shed how

many of you would get your bike stolen or damaged each year? But most importantly VSU is an attack on student environmental activism (and thus the wider environment movement) and will hinder the environment movement to an extent that people may not have an opportunity to get involved.

Student unions have historically played a major role in broader campaigns for environmental and social justice. The involvement of student unions provides a strong force to a campaign because of their activist base, resources, space to collectively organise, and ability to disseminate information and mobilise support from a large audience. The point is that without a student representative voice, a voice which is concerned about the environment in this case, we students are left to fight battles on our own, and we all know how hard this can be.

If you believe that every student deserves to be represented regardless of who they are, then fight, together with your student union, to stop this attack on environmentalism, unionism and student representation. Stick a tree up the wood logger's rear, and see how he likes that...

Milijana Stojadinovic

## Got An Opinion?

Have your say on the limits of your civil liberty in the next *On Dit*

Recently in the news, a Monash University student, known only as Abraham, claimed to have received a visit from the federal police in the middle of the night. The police had begun monitoring him because of books he had bought and hired from the library - all of which were required reading for his terrorism studies course. Might I add, all of which were analyses of terrorism and suicide bombing by genuine academics and researchers. Apparently, Abraham's patterns of book-hiring and let's face it, his Arabic name, had stirred the interest of the federal police.

On hearing this, I felt an immediate sense of outrage. Outrage that the government's policies involve such measures which totally undermine personal privacy and what I would see as every person's right to access such material as they wish without fear. Just what sort of access to our personal business do the federal police actually have? Furthermore, since when did the government have a mandate to undertake such measures?

But the more I think about it, the more I doubt my initial reactions. The uncomfortable reality of the situation begins to sink in and I'm left with the unavoidable thought that maybe some invasion of our privacy is just the price we have to pay for our safety. Terrorism is a real threat. And some measures are undoubtedly necessary. But I can't help but feel a little uncomfortable with the idea a Big Brother state, where the government is watching our every move, even if we were safer than ever.

Still, the unavoidable question lingers: how much freedom should we be willing to sacrifice for our physical safety?

If you have an opinion, please email Nerissa at [onditopinion@yahoo.com.au](mailto:onditopinion@yahoo.com.au) by August 16.

## University Sanctions Student Attendance at NDA

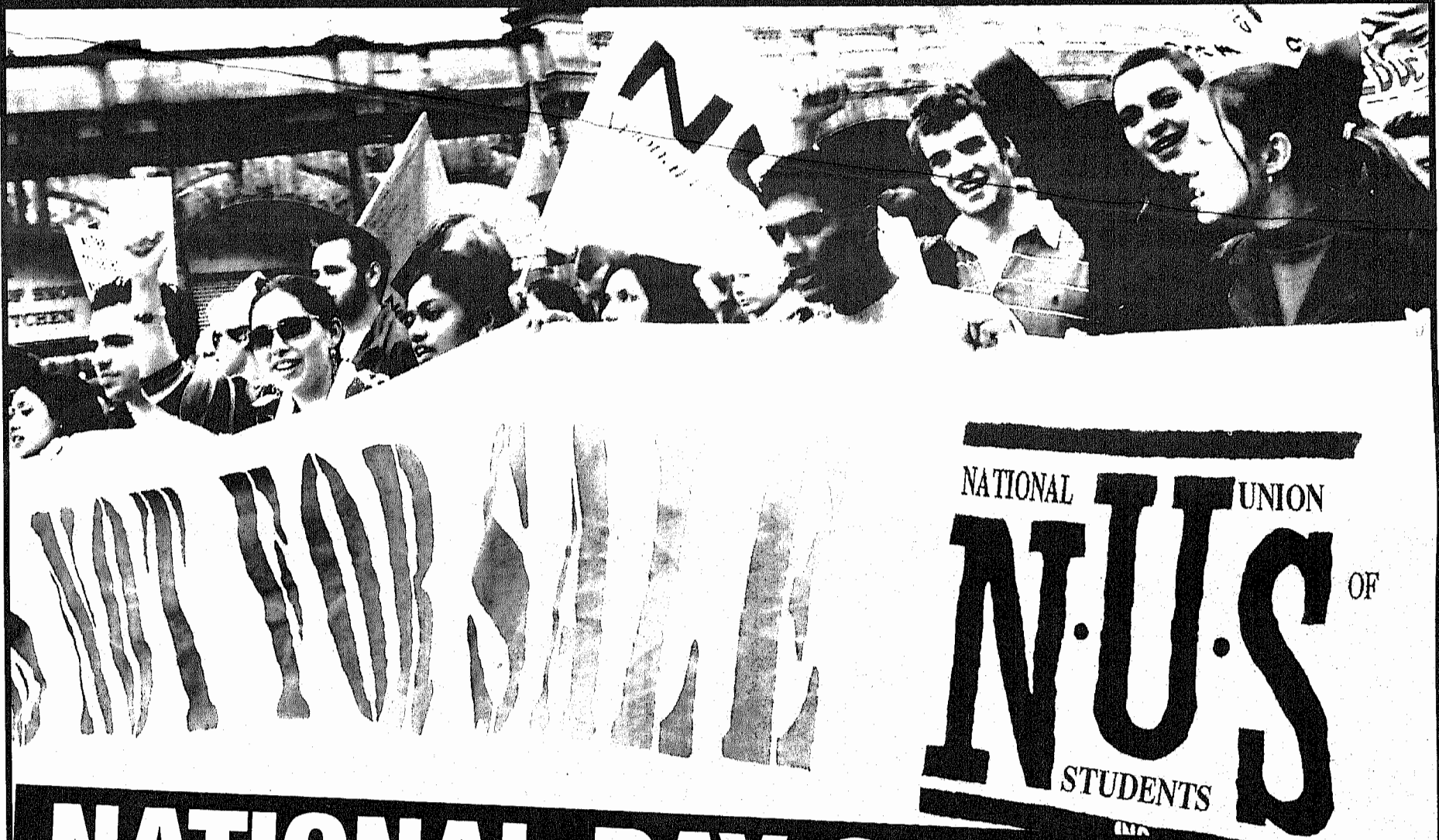
Spend the day on the frontline instead of in the classroom

At Academic Board last Wednesday a motion was put on the table to allow students to attend the protest and not to penalise them for non-attendance at tutorials. It was agreed that Executive Deans could advise staff in their respective Faculties that students should be given every opportunity possible to attend the protest and not be penalised.





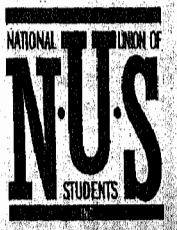
# UNIS NEED STUDENT UNIONS! SAY NO TO VSU!



## NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION August 10th

### BARR SMITH LAWNS 1pm

AUTHORISED BY FELIX ELDRIDGE, NUS PRESIDENT 2005





# Deutschland Discontents

## Students Protest Against Funding Cuts

With a bottle of red wine and a block of cheese, both passable, at a few Euros a piece, the German winter was looking far more merry than the bruised sky might imply. Perhaps that economy of inexpensive contraband also helped the Munich students to withstand the cold and stand 40,000 strong in protest of the SPD/Green government's (equivalent to a Labour/Greens coalition) cuts to higher education funding. Now 40,000 students may not seem much in a European context but Munich's metropolitan uni population is around 90,000. A proportional turn out for an S.A. protest would see about 20,000 uni kids hit the streets when in reality we usually get 1,000 banner bearers at the most. With the National Day of Action next week it's worth wondering why so many more of our German counterparts got involved and exactly how it was so successful, considering the very similar threats to education in both countries.

Germany's lumbering giant of an economy had been for a few years burdened (according to the EU) by public spending and risked millions in fines if it didn't drastically reign in its public debt (hovering at only 2.5% - 3%) in accordance with EU debt regulation. In many ways Gerhard Schröder had no choice but to slash and burn - much less choice than our government which, while still competitive in the global market has no such restrictions. Still, for many students the decision to literally pull the plug on entire departments (imagine Adelaide Uni actually making Humanities disappear) in Munich was incongruous with the funding that was still flowing towards other less necessary public works (such as the fastest train in Europe). Students, faced with the prospect of having to find a new university next year and staff having to find new jobs the were ripe for the picking when the time came to gather a crowd.

Moving through the Maximilian Universität halls and marvelling at the arched marble foyer I chattered to a friend about the ease of rousing a protest amongst such grandiose statues of ancient scholars and palatial rooms patterned to produce optical delight. Sliding playfully around the corner (I was obviously quite excited to be attending a foreign protest) the chatter was abruptly cut by the sight of hundreds of people snaking up the foyer stairs and lining the long hallway that led to the chancellors office, but more surprisingly, only the soft, static sound of whispering. Immediately dropping to a whisper myself I joined the hushed lines of students patiently holding hundreds of identical miniature placards. Full of anticipation it took me about half an hour to realise that we were simply waiting for the university chancellor to arrive, but still, disciplined by some unseen plan they left enough space for several people to walk down the hall which had now become a gauntlet of plainly staring, silent faces with an unmistakably clear message.

As the chancellor arrived I braced myself for the chants, taunts and blatantly abusive slanging that so embarrassingly leers out of Australian protesters at the sight of their prey, but even now most of the whippers dropped away and the chancellor probably heard little more than the clicking of his shoes on the floor as he strode past, slightly bewildered. The amount of self control required by such a mass of people had previously seemed impossible to me and without a doubt, it provided nothing but positive press, for the impressed media attended in force. The ominous theatrics of the 'stunt' was not lost on the academic board either as an hour or so after their meeting had transpired the news was broken to the protesters that they were postponing any decisions, presumably until the government had had time to reconsider its directives. It was really not until then that the first cheers bounced around the high marble ceilings.

Like a senile old man talking of the changing look of currency styles since 1932, it's hard for me not to seem a little melodramatic when recalling the event but it was only a very small part of a much much wider and well organised campaign. Starting earlier that day several of the faculties had organised separate protests, though they eventually decided to form a broad front for the final protest in a weeks time, regardless of how the funding cuts affected them separately.

Most of the people gathering at the uni for this first day seemed to be quite regular students, accompanied by none of the 'frothing ferals' that unfairly or not are said to characterise Australian protesters. Despite knowing that their faculties in Munich were under serious threat they all seemed to wear quite naive smiles, craning their necks to see the spectacle and finding that it was themselves, as several thousand had turned up for that purpose. Very little seemed to happen at the time except a few mild mannered speeches letting everyone know about the Chancellor's meeting later that night and other protests occurring before the major demonstration

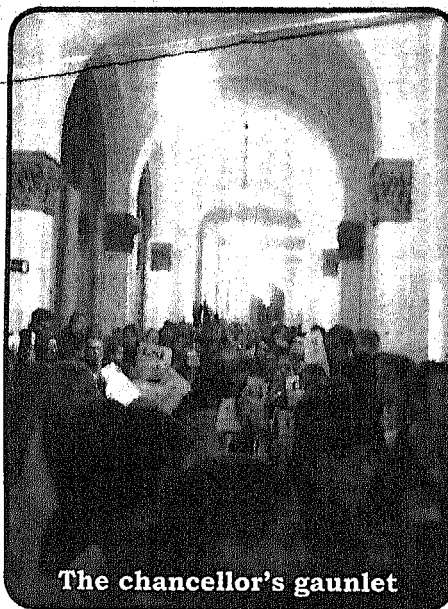
Somehow the difficult task of convincing people of the cause and it being worth giving up a few hours in a day to participate had already been done. Animated by a festive and electric atmosphere the crowd just needed to know where to go and had a sense that someone responsible enough was leading them. Perhaps it was simply that protests were reasonably rare (with free education in Germany) and students hadn't grown calloused and so were thrilled by the prospect of something important, worthwhile and obviously exciting about to take place.

The hidden organisation of the protest may have had something to do with it. Student faculty reps had catalysed support within lectures and tutorials handing out information and asking for students to volunteer for key roles. Political parties, as always, lurked in the background gelling the faculties into a less disparate group. A small group of core people seemed to have formed out of the ether of political competition but functional groups of non-partisan volunteers were given roles such as Media Liaison, Promotion, Logistics etc. In times of emergency the Germans apparently stop even trying play down the stereotypes and fall into their cog like positions as part of some of shining epitome of German efficiency. Such an organisational machine makes the SAUA look like, well, pretty much what it is, a fairly messy, over emotional, rhetoric ridden, den of sloth.

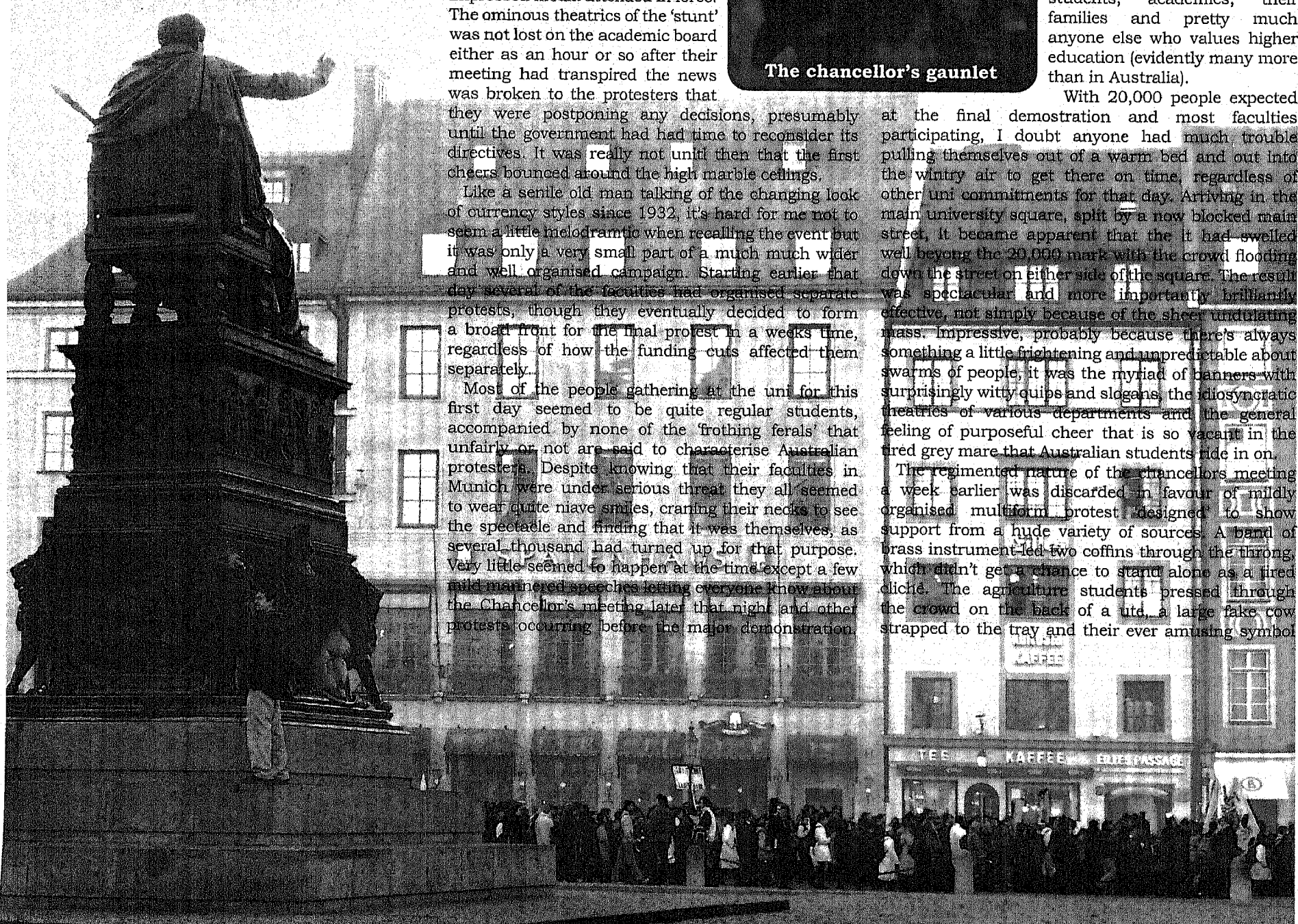
After a week of steady protests all over Germany and period of lobbying beforehand, the German government was at least having to defend itself against a growing, truly grassroots support from students, academics, their families and pretty much anyone else who values higher education (evidently many more than in Australia).

With 20,000 people expected at the final demonstration and most faculties participating, I doubt anyone had much trouble pulling themselves out of a warm bed and out into the wintry air to get there on time, regardless of other uni commitments for that day. Arriving in the main university square, split by a now blocked main street, it became apparent that the it had swelled well beyond the 20,000 mark with the crowd flooding down the street on either side of the square. The result was spectacular and more importantly brilliantly effective, not simply because of the sheer undulating mass. Impressive, probably because there's always something a little frightening and unpredictable about swarms of people, it was the myriad of banners with surprisingly witty quips and slogans, the idiosyncratic theatrics of various departments and the general feeling of purposeful cheer that is so vacant in the tired grey mare that Australian students ride in on.

The regimented nature of the chancellor's meeting a week earlier was discarded in favour of mildly organised multiform protest designed to show support from a huge variety of sources. A band of brass instrument led two coffins through the throng, which didn't get a chance to stand alone as a tired cliché. The agriculture students pressed through the crowd on the back of a ute, a large fake cow strapped to the tray and their ever amusing symbol



The chancellor's gauntlet





- the arms length latex glove - hanging as balloons from the rails. Banners capitalised on recent German cinematic success with the pun Goodbye, Learning! Amongst some standrad protest slogans many were more playful and gleefully poked at politicians, several even went to the extent of illustrating the plight of education - a stick figure student digging a hole to fill one already created by the top hatted stick figure politician. The use of the old style capalist symbols again drew cheeky smirks from the crowd.

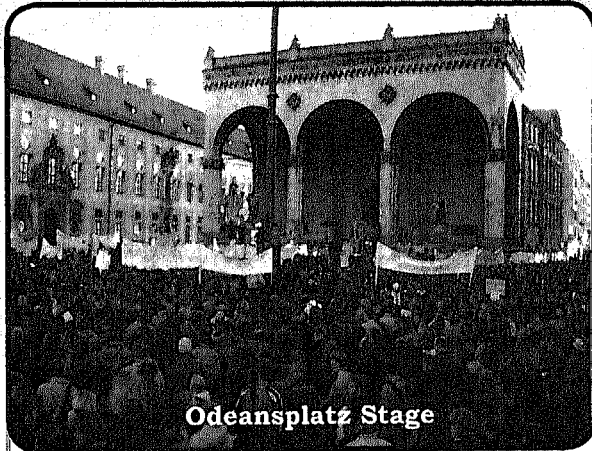
Once moving the crowd, many with gluwien in hand, snaked through the old city streets for at least a kilometre eventually massing again outside Edmund Stoiber's Munich office (Stoiber was considered responsible for the cuts after looking to press for market credibility before announcing his candidacy



On the way to Stoiber's place.

for German Chancellor). After asking the statesman to come out for a chat, 40,000 people in cheeky rather than vindictive revelry sang you'll never be our Chancellor, a personal jibe at Stoiber's failing attempts to become the Chancellor of Germany, flaunting the protester's brazen and confident position.

The winding pilgrimage came to rest at Odeonsplatz, the monumental stage where Hitler made his first revolutionary speeches. Flanked by huge stone lions and staring down the main boulevarde it is undoubtedly the place to make a rousing speech. With the night now falling and no one leaving, the speakers made an effort not to grandstand and the band led everyone in several Germanic songs whose political



Odeonsplatz Stage

overtures I was completely at a loss to understand. But the point had been made.

Following that demonstration of community resentment the government granted students a partial victory. Cuts to funding did have to be made but most faculties remained intact, the major change being that students will now have to pay for their second degree, the first one still being free, as the government moves towards a partial HECCS style system. Interestingly,

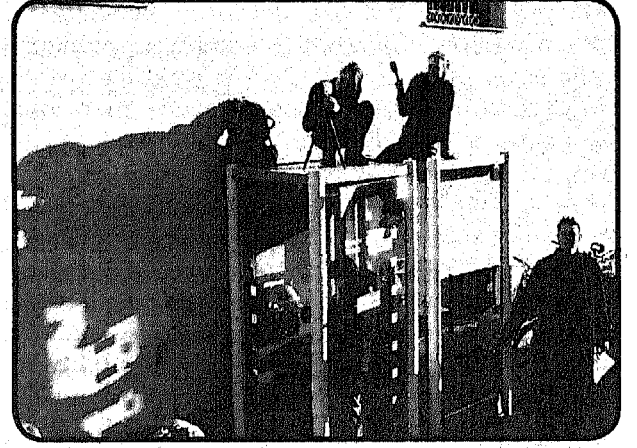
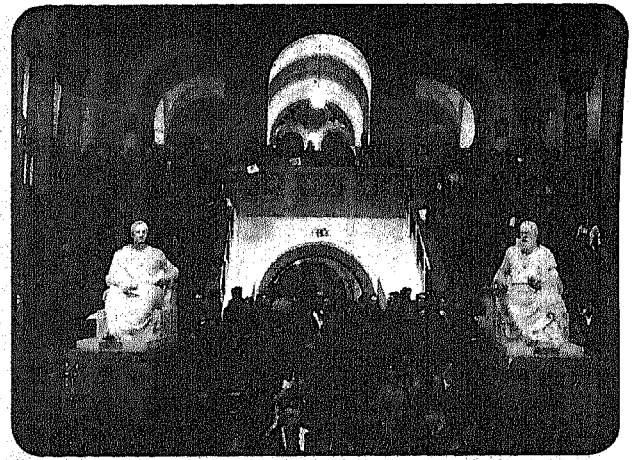
most students agreed that the change had to be made anyway and were quite bemused and ridiculing when I mentioned that my government was moving away from HECCS, which they are now modelling their universities on as a strong compromising system.

It's obvious that our flailing student leaders could learn a great deal from such a widely supported, well organised and highly successful effort. There are some key differences between the two countries however. The German government was forced to show its hand immediately because of EU threats, so new legislation affected students during their immediate university life. The Liberal government is naturally much more sly than that and thought the increase in fees of 25% and a switch to the HELP (ironically named?) system is possibly a more severe change it is less jarring as services won't be cut and students who are actually at uni aren't affected. Therefore the bulk of the burden is left for future uni kids who aren't yet of political age. The Germans did though manage to convince a government that was entirely hamstrung by international reponsibilities while Australians are dealing with a Liberal party that could be more flexible, 'only' restricted by ideological desire and political expediency.

While aging Germans seem a bitter and run down lot, the German youth have an academic sharpness and a desire play a part in international successes which is easily translated into common sense political participation. Along with the openness of mind that comes from not living on a island, it makes them, in my opinion, a much more likable and admirable bunch than the parochial and proudly careless people that meek out their insulated lives in my country.

Wether the German character, or the immediacy of the problem meant that the protest was easily led there are several things for the SAUA and student activists in general to take out of it. The protest, the largest student protest I've ever seen, was organised in a university that *does not have a student union*. This obviously questions the need for student unionism in political organisation. Though I believe their validity can be demonstrated in other ways, it hopefully illustrates to empassionaed but ultimately frustrated activists that students will stand up if an issue genuinely matters to them. Rather than going after every little issue like a bulldog after a car bumper, they should wait until an issue is very important and make sure students are well informed over a period before the protest. Most importantly they must be communicating with faculty reps and trying to get academic support as well as actually going into lectures themselves.

Intuitively the organisation of the German protest is obvious but rarely implemented by the SAUA which usually leaves one person fumbling over several volunteers. Completely contrary to Australian protests and a great starting point would be to instil some sense of the discipline in activists that I witnessed in Germany. Without really solid numbers the media is crucial to getting community support and government attention but too often we give them too many images of spittle launching, politically extreme and intellectually derelict undesirables. If only activists could somehow maintain their motivation but take themselves and their cause less seriously, toning down their emotional involvement to the level that most students can maintain - knowing that in most instances, life will continue much the same as it did yesterday, but occasionally we can find something important enough to be part of, do with some creativity and purpose, and even enjoy ourselves at the same time.



From top to bottom: the arched foyer at Maximillian Universität. A student camera crew gets a higher vantage point. The jolly funeral procession. The strangely camp and threatening Munich police.

Background left: The protest snake through Munich's picturesque streets. Background right: 40,000 people flood into the university square.



Dan J



## THE COMPASSIONATE SOCIETY



To say that we are a society that thrives on selfishness may be an overstatement, but not by much. We are certainly heading in that direction, and that is something which I believe we, as a community, should be deeply concerned by. Over the past decade there has been an undeniable nationwide shift away from the notion of being a community and what that entails. This has manifested itself as a shift away from empathy for those around us. A shift away from compassion.

Compassion is above all, the quality that separates us from the animal world; it is a key to our humanity. Compassion is the ability to imagine ourselves in another's position and to empathise with that person's suffering. It is the ability to become distressed by another's unhappiness and to be pleased by their joy. Compassion is essential to the emotion of love, that emotion we hold higher than any other, for who could be happy when their beloved weeps? And while we are not capable of loving everyone, we should be able to empathise with everyone in need.

The move toward individualism has worried me from the time I first became socially and politically aware. In recent years, the changes have accelerated because of the current federal government and Howard's pursuit of his ideological agenda. The GST was widely touted by Liberals and other conservatives to be fairer than the previous system. Everybody would pay the same tax on every item. The truth was not as simple as that. What it really meant was that cars and other items available only to those reasonably well-off members of the community, were taxed at a lower rate than had previously been the case, whereas basic necessities were taxed more heavily. The net effect of this was that poorer people were paying more tax, whereas wealthier people were paying less. If that doesn't seem very equitable or fair, it's because it's not. It is a prime example of selfishness and lack of empathy for the poor. And this is highlighted by the ridiculous idea that the poor need to experience the pain of their situation in order for them to escape it, an argument put forward by many conservatives. The tax cuts given in the last budget also show the same signs of selfishness. Wealthier people got better tax breaks than the poor, not an unusual move on the government's part. Conservatives always spout the nonsense that since wealthier people earn more, proportionally they should receive greater tax cuts. The reason the wealthier members of our community should pay more is very simple. It is that they can afford to. Once again, this works on the idea of compassion and empathy for others less fortunate than oneself. There are those in the community who need help, and people with the resources to do so have a responsibility to fulfil.

There are, of course, those who unfortunately rort the system and abuse the welfare services. These people are indignantly pointed out by the selfish, who then demand welfare be reduced across the board to stop the "bludgers". But most people aren't bludgers, most people don't like not having work, and to use a minority of

unethical and *selfish* people as a reason to stop helping all the others is disgraceful. The irony of the welfare rorters is that they are aping the selfish conservative ideals.

Another result of compassionless and selfish ideology is the Australian Workplace Agreements being introduced to workplaces. Again, conservatives tout it as being fairer, which is absolute rubbish. What it means is that workers negotiate with their employer one-on-one. So if we just follow this through, the employer can make whatever demand s/he wants and if the worker doesn't like it they have no bargaining power at all, no means by which to press for better conditions, pay or anything. The worker must rely on the goodwill of the employer, which in this individualistic society, I highly doubt will be very common among employers. After all, they will only care about what's good for them, and that means low wages and few benefits. Trade unions are an entity hated by Howard. They epitomise so much of what Liberals despise. They stand together and help each other for mutual benefit. While it can be argued that this is selfishness on the part of the workers (and anti-unionists do, frequently), it is the unfortunate result of employers being untrustworthy and not compassionate toward workers. I'm sure several of the readers will be familiar with *I, Claudius*, and recall when one of Claudius's advisers claimed that it was better to keep the price for grain high because then only he was being greedy, whereas if the price was low, the rest of the city was. The parallel is striking, and both arguments are little more than "sophistry".

It is clear that student unions occupy a special place in the dark recesses of conservatives' hearts. A place marked with cross hairs, probably. The concerted attack on student unions demonstrates categorically that the government is deficient in compassion toward those students most in need of it and those whose employment depends on the unions. Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) will result in thousands of job losses. It will mean thousands of students will lose services that they cannot afford in a user-pays environment. Where is the empathy for these people? Where are the hearts of the pro-VSU campaigners? In their wallets by the look of it. The loss of services will be detrimental, but so will the loss of representation. Student representatives have been working for students at Adelaide for over 100 years. They have represented students on many issues ranging from the cost of textbooks and HECS fees to defending the rights of minority groups. But I wish to focus on one particular example to illustrate the effect of selfishness and lack of compassion.

It has been lobbying by Women's departments that have resulted in universities around the country being made safer for women to walk through. VSU will mean the diminishment of lobbying power for women's groups across the nation. Where is the compassion for women? Where is the empathy for a woman who is forced to walk through badly lit university grounds alone and at night? In Reorientation

Week, I heard a student comment that he didn't want his student fees being spent on stopping some "slapper" getting assaulted, to the cheering of his mate. I was utterly horrified by his comments. That someone could be so totally selfish that he would rather have his fees back than help stop a woman being raped is the extreme result of the way we, as a society are moving.

The trade unions, taxes and student unions are all forms of organised compassion. They are there to ensure that society has a means of helping those who need it, by making the better off members contribute on the understanding that they can empathise with people in less fortunate situations. The obligation comes hand in hand with having a society in the first place.

The selfish ideology I have described is a primitive form of reasoning. It consists of nothing more complex than "this action will be beneficial to me, therefore I will do it" and is essentially the "law of the jungle." It is the reasoning that makes a male lion kill the cubs in a pride he has just taken over. It is the reasoning that makes killer whales capture seals and toss them around playfully until they are killed and eaten. And it is also the only form of reasoning of which animals are capable, which is why we say the seal has been killed and not murdered. But humans are different. We can transcend the selfish instincts of the animal. We can feel not only for ourselves but also for each other. Why should we restrict ourselves to the primal instincts of our ancestors if we are capable of so much more? The answer is unavoidably that one must lack compassion and empathy to act totally selfishly. It is well documented that some psychological illnesses, including the anti-social personality disorder, mean the person suffering the disorder lacks a conscience and lacks compassion for others. In this case, the person acts in a selfish way because they lack empathy with the people around them. So some people actually have something wrong with them that causes this behaviour. Others, I suspect, do not have this disorder, or any other. So their deliberately selfish behaviour lacking in compassion or empathy is a choice. A choice which, when taken to the extremes above, is actually evil.

I have tried to put forward here the idea that in the long run, people matter more than anything else. A well functioning economy is important, but only so far as it improves the lives of the majority of Australians. Things don't matter. People do. And it's when people are treated like things that the biggest mistakes are made. Only through compassion toward each other, and empathy for others will we ever make true progress as a society. It doesn't matter if humanity reaches the next solar system if people still have to fight for such basic things as fair pay and their human rights. So unlearn the ideology of the selfish and open your heart and mind to others. It is the only real way forward.

John Pezy



# PRO-FEMINISTS: Friend or Foe?

A while ago, I was having a drink with a few mates. Like many of our drinking-sessions, we began discussing the world's problems and, like many of my drinking-sessions, I began to discuss women's lack of power, equality and opportunity in our society. To my great surprise, however, my male friends nodded, and agreed, and nodded some more. I questioned them on their lack of dissent, and they proudly asserted: "We're pro-feminists". I felt stupefied. I'd never heard of this phrase, and didn't want to be outdone in the politically-correct arena.

So, I began to do some research, and found that pro-feminists are men sympathetic to the understandings of feminism, yet acknowledge that men can never call themselves 'feminist', but instead 'pro-feminist'. Particularly in the PC-world, pro-feminists are everywhere - and accepted for being so. They can be men from both the Left and the Right and the In-Between - they can be your brother, best mate, uncle, lab-partner, co-worker, etcetera. Apparently, pro-feminist men want the same things feminists want: a world in which relations between men and women are egalitarian, peaceful, trusting and joyous (seems like a gettable goal, doesn't it?!).

I've never considered feminism to be particularly trendy, and couldn't argue that being a feminist is an easy experience. I see women always defending feminism and its relevance today. Some would describe such experiences akin to that of the Feminist Backlash. But it has to be asked: do pro-feminists endure this same Backlash?

I put these sentiments to my many 'pro-feminist' friends, and got very similar responses by all: men talking with men is very different to women talking with men. Simply put, men-to-men persuasion is much higher than women-to-men. Although straightforward, this is ground-breaking: if true, then it suggests that all of feminism's work has been somewhat futile, at least those campaigns aimed specifically at men.

Many 'old-time' feminists would demand we leave these games to 'the boys' and get on with our work, but surely it is time to re-think the feminist's position regarding men and their involvement in feminism. Surely, if a man is as willing and enthusiastic and informed as other budding feminists, then it could only benefit the Feminist Movement to adopt a position of inclusion rather than exclusion (to a very defined and certain extent). I don't want to sound like I want to start including men into women's organizing collectives, and cannot think of a more terrifying scenario than of men leading the Feminist Movement, but I do think that it is time to recognise the good work certain men are doing for feminism, and perhaps acknowledge that by doing so, feminism would be taking one step forward.

So, how can these pro-feminists help? Simply spreading the feminist word is a good start. Using gender-inclusive and non-sexist language, and staying informed about women's and feminist issues all help to further the Feminist Movement. Encouraging other women to get involved in the Movement is also a good start, as is perhaps initiating pro-

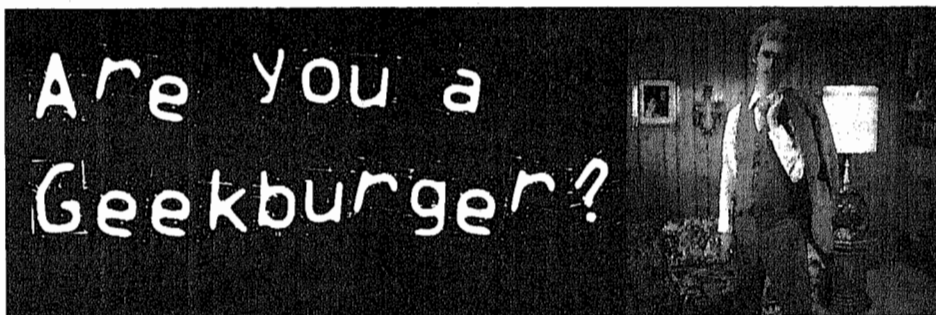
feminist groups (both social and active). But most importantly, pro-feminists can help by supporting feminists and the Movement, and simultaneously, recognising the autonomy women need to organise and further their work.

So, I call out to all pro-feminists to proudly assert your loyalties and go on fighting the good fight! (And let us hope that the fundamentals of feminism are never forgotten by both sexes).

by Tara Bates  
NUS SA Women's Officer



Geekman knew everything there was to know about being a pro-feminist.



Concerned you those funny looks you keep getting at the bus stop might actually mean something deeper? Take the *On Dit* quiz to find out just how truly geeky you are!

### 1. Dungeons and Dragons is

- a) I believe the correct grammar is Dungeons and Dragons *are*.
- b) A low rating movie starring Thora Birch and the guy that used to be in Lois and Clark.
- c) A consuming role play game that dominates my entire life and gives me more pleasure than the touch of another human ever could.

### 2. You've just bought a new computer. Can you set it up yourself?

- a) Do you remember *The Simpsons* scene when Homer drags his computer home on a rope behind the car? That's me.
- b.) I can't promise anything, but give me the manual and I'll have a crack at it.
- c) In the time it's taken you to ask me that question, I've not only set it up, but upgraded the software, hooked up a high speed broadband modem and commenced relations with a foxy model from France.

### 3. Would you ever date a geek?

- a) Ewww, and get pus all over my face when I try to kiss them?

- b) Hey, I can't afford to be choosy, but all I ask is they brush their teeth regularly.
- c) I would, but things are getting pretty serious with the girl from France and I wouldn't want to lead someone on.

### 4. How would you describe your attitude to social board/card games?

- a) I don't care for them much to be honest.
- b) They can be fun to play in teams but I wouldn't like to get to serious about them.
- c) I like to win at all costs and will employ any method, ruthless or otherwise, to ensure my victory.

### 5. Look down at yourself. What are you wearing right now?

- a) Well, it's pretty cold so I've doubled up on my polo shirts today. I'm also wearing a pair of Tsubi jeans and some Diesel shoes.
- b) I'm wearing skinny leg black jeans, a black Emily the Strange hoodie and a red belt.
- c) Blue jeans, my lucky Necromancer tee shirt I was wearing when I won my first tournament and a long black coat.

## Results

### Mostly As

You are Blair McDonagh. One part pep squad, one part home brand, you're definitely not a geek but could stand some shaking up in the personality department.



### Mostly Bs

You are Seth Cohen. You think you're a bit geeky, but only because you think being geeky is a bit cool. This makes you a dork, which requires an entirely seperate quiz to deal with.



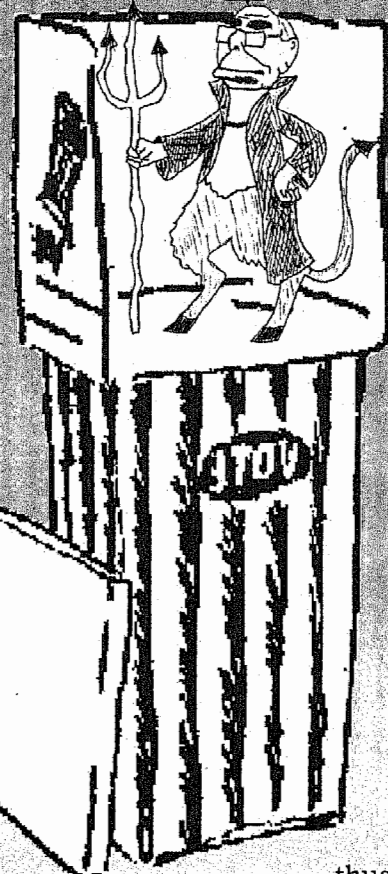
### Mostly Cs

You are Kip Dynamite. You live and breathe computers and the many babes you can find on them. You'll never be a cage fighter but if you're really lucky, you too might find your Lafawnduh some day...





# Why Voting Conservative Is Morally Wrong



By definition, to 'conserve' means 'to protect from loss or harm'. Conservative political candidates and parties present an option that promises less change. The major assumption underlying their politics is that there is basically nothing wrong with the way things are, and 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'.

The term 'radically conservative' thus appears to be an oxymoron. The current Australian government, led by Prime Minister John Howard, is often described in such apparently contradictory terms. Of course, in one sense, this government is not conservative; it is right-wing, and there's a difference. Indeed, it is radically (as opposed to moderately or conservatively) right-wing, having fundamentally changed or wanted to change every area from cross-media ownership laws, to higher education, collective rights in the workplace, the ownership status of public organisations, criminal law, administrative law, constitutional federalism, international relations and the role of Australia in international conflicts.

In another sense, however, the Liberal Party since its formation has presented itself as conservative: by retaining its title - 'Liberal' - it markets itself as a government with core and fundamental values that are unchanging and unchangeable, that subscribes to a centuries-old political idea that is simultaneous with the very idea of Europe itself, and that promotes change by pandering to a collective (fearful) myth/perception about how the world has changed.

There's certainly nothing inherently wrong, or bad, about 'conservatism'. It's only when what is being preserved is exploitative or unsustainable that conservatism becomes wicked.

Perhaps paradoxically, there is one idea that conservative political parties everywhere subscribe to: that of progress, of a linear inevitability that lets each successive generation see itself as the 'end of history'. Indeed it would be difficult to find a political party, conservative or otherwise, that does not operate to this assumption. For instance, the Australian Greens promote the idea that Australia, as a nation, can move from its present über-reliance on commercialism into an era in which its people(s) value sustainability and diversity. The probability that most, if not all, people in 'westernised', 'democratic' states, have internalised a similar assumption makes it politically unviable for a party to espouse ideas of history that are non-linear.

But the assumption of linear inevitability made by conservative parties like the Australian

Liberals is an assumption of a particular linearity. Whatever the precise relationship in western Europe between the rise of the liberal doctrine(s) and that of industrialisation, it is pretty clear that each must have had at least something to do with the other.

The discourse of conservatism is fairly easy to identify, once we know what we're looking for. Political references to 'our way of life' in relation to 'terrorism' and Australia Cards is one example. The promotion of the fear of difference and of the unknown in relation to asylum seekers and refugees is another.

But let's stay with the terrorism example for now. The cycle of 'major' incidents of terrorism in 'western' or western-ised centres like New York, Washington, the Bali nightclub scene, Spain and London since the day 'the world changed' (in the words of the conservative Queensland Premier, Peter Beattie) on 11 September 2001 has been conceptualised by conservative politicians and commentators as attacks on 'us', on 'our way of life', even as declarations of war. This particular political strategy, which has been predicated on the promotion of fear, has been a boon for conservative political parties and politicians in Australia, the UK and the USA. The Machiavellian enactment of Kafkaesque laws, and the confinement of most 'anti-terror' operations inside the secretive and ostensibly important parameters of the Australian Security & Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), has led to the inevitable promotion of fear based on ignorance among the general population. (Similar strategies have been deployed in relation to asylum seekers and 'unauthorised non-citizens'.)

There has, of course, been no critical analysis of 'terrorism' or its many manifestations including suicide bombing among conservative governments, politicians or commentators. A

few academics have given it a go. The Sydney Palestinian-Australian, Ghassan Hage, has attempted an anthropology of (Palestinian) suicide-bombing. He tries to convey to his mostly 'western' readers and students that there is a particular narrative regarding suicide bombing in the 'west', which mostly ends in the moralistic conclusion that there can never be any justification for it. But Hage surmises that the act is a social act, and, indeed, is one grounded in the competition

among individuals for symbolic social capital within a society (Palestine) that is precluded from offering its youth any other form of hope.

He quotes another Palestinian Australian: 'Let the Americans give us the monopoly over nuclear power in the region and the strongest army there is and we are happy to do "incursions" and hunt down wanted Israeli terrorists by demolishing their houses and "accidentally" killing civilians. Who would want to be a suicide bomber if such a luxurious mode of fighting is available to us? You can kill more Israelis and the world will think you are more civilised!'

Hage expressly rejects the hypothesis that suicide bombing is a characteristic of a society in its death-throes. Even if it is, and I don't believe so, we must surely be aware that the throes of death were thrust upon it from outside. 'How on earth you can not recognise the existence of someone as fat as Sharon sitting on top of you

suffocating you, I don't know!'

Of course, an analysis of Palestinian suicide bombers within the Israel-Palestine resistance paradigm is likely to be of limited application in the debate surrounding so-called 'Islamic fundamentalist' terrorism. (It's probably going to be about as useful as attempting to apply half-baked analyses of LTTE activities in northern Sri Lanka to the present debate, as the Murdoch press's favourite 'terrorism expert', Rohan Gunaratna, is fond of doing.)

But while Hage, who is at best a little-known public academic, might dare to turn his focus on the apparent targets of 'terrorism' ('western' super-industrialised states like Australia, Spain, UK, USA) in his preliminary anthropology of it, the rest of the popular discourse has been firmly directed at the 'terrorists' themselves, deliberately absolving anyone of the responsibility (and depriving them of the possibility) of engaging in critical analysis of the super-industrialised states themselves.

Robert Manne, Phillip Adams, Raymond Gayta and a handful of other public academics-cum-op-ed writers do so, but often they're either preaching to the converted (ABC Radio National listeners, and readers of the *Age*, the *Monthly*, the *Griffith Review*, *Arena*, etc) or, in the case of Adams, are deliberately included in the fluffy *Weekend Australian's Magazine* for that paper's readership to express their vitriol in the all-important Letters pages.

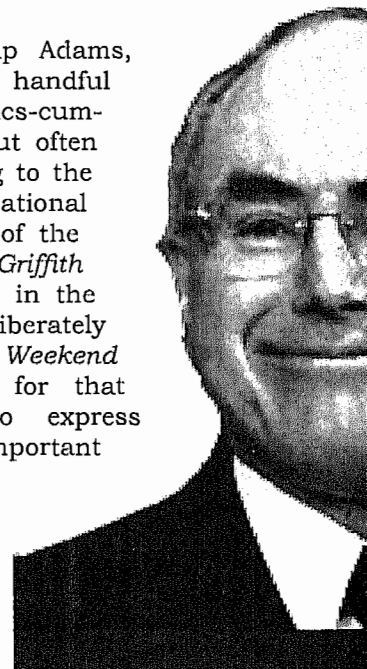
But conservative politicians and political parties continue to engage in vitriolic witch-hunts of their own, strengthening border protection to protect the allegedly vulnerable motherland within. But that motherland - 'our way of life' - is globally cancerous.

'Terrorism' in superindustrialised nations kills hundreds, across the world, in a really bad year. In less industrialised areas, it kills thousands. In Iraq, Zimbabwe, Sudan, the DRC, Chechnya, and in recent times Timor-Leste, Bougainville, Aceh, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Cambodia, South Africa, China, 'terrorism' - by state, state-sponsored and non-state actors - it is a much bigger problem.

Although, compared to problems like poverty, hunger and malnutrition, disease and infection (including AIDS), relative overpopulation, resource shortages and civil, guerilla and international war, 'terrorism' should hardly rate a mention. But 'terrorism' is said to threaten 'our way of life'; poverty, hunger, disease, scarcity and war do not. Yet. Indeed, these conditions are necessary to sustain 'our way of life'.

The 2004 Massey Lecturer, Canadian historian Ronald Wright, spoke about the 'experiment' of civilisation: 'We in the lucky countries of the West now regard our two-century bubble of freedom and affluence as normal and inevitable; it has even been called the "end" of history, in both a temporal and teleological sense. Yet this new order is an anomaly: the opposite of what usually happens as civilisations grow. Our age was bankrolled by the seizing of half a planet, extended by taking over most of the remaining half, and has been sustained by spending down new forms of natural capital, especially fossil fuels.'

The Global Footprint Network, whose mission is to advance the 'science of sustainability', has calculated the current available capacity of the Earth in terms of global hectares per person. Given today's population (over 6 billion, having expanded from one billion in 1825 and less than



**"Conservative political parties and politicians ignore the moral and ethical questions and vow to defend 'our way of life' to the death (of 'them')".**



half a billion in 1500), each person living on this planet could utilise the equivalent of 1.8 global hectares to sustain her way of life. Australia uses 7.7 global hectares for each member of its population, fourth in line behind the world leader, the USA (9.5).

I recommend we all log onto <www.footprintnetwork.org> and calculate our own 'global footprint'. Depending on which measure I use, I need between 5 and 7 Earths to support 'my way of life'. It's a gimmick, sure, but it's useful in the sense that we can be reminded of just how damaging our everyday actions can be. What also becomes blindingly obvious is that structural change is required, above and beyond the incremental changes we can make as individuals.

As permanent as it seems to us now, the All Ordinaries Index has only been part of broadcast news bulletins since the 1980s. Its inclusion was a consequence of the rise

of the 'shareholder democracy' of which John Howard now speaks so proudly. While the vast bulk of investments are held by large companies, particularly those dealing in superannuation and insurance services, an increasing majority of Australians can be described as 'mum and dad investors'. But the shareholder democracy is, by and large, a selfish one; often companies are allowed to make profits regardless of social and environmental consequences. Just what part did the Australian-owned Anvil Mining play in the October 2004 massacre of over 100 people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for instance?

If there was once life without a nightly update of the movements of the stock exchanges, there can be once more. Sure, there's now a host of organisations out there helping investors and pressuring companies to 'go green' (sustainablebusiness.com; care2.com; ethical.shares.green.net.au), but it's not enough. I wonder how long before Sustainability Indices are included alongside, or even replace, the All Ordinaries Index and the Dow Jones? I wonder how long before a Global Footprint Index signals the

revolution that must come?

This is not intended as a gigantic polemic against the Liberal Party. Let's not forget that the Australian Labor Party is now a political party that, much like the government, advocates 'wealth creation' rather than its redistribution. This is akin to Adam Smith's 'invisible hand' of god/the market, or to the ways in which accountants can 'externalise' the more annoying and socially expensive costs of production like pollution. Curtin and Chifley would turn in their graves.

'Our way of life' is a cancer upon this planet, and 'we' have the temerity to be surprised when some of those people being exploited so that 'we' can sustain it dare to retaliate. But in true Machiavellian style, conservative political parties and politicians ignore the moral and ethical questions and vow to defend 'our way of life' to the death (of 'them'). In doing so, they oppose radical change, and, when in power, deliberately create conditions (such as 'anti-terror legislation') that favour political incumbency by fostering ignorance and fear. Voting conservative is not cool.

Russell Marks



Too Right Why Be Politically Correct When You Can Be Right?

## THE CONSERVATIVE MIND

When Russel Kirk wrote *The Conservative Mind* in 1953 he had no idea that it would be so well received and so widely read by both conservative and left leaning intellectuals. The book was in part successful because it appeared at the height of the Cold War when people were casting around for a summary of anti-socialist thought.

After its publication the left conceded for the first time that conservatism fused with the innovative engine of capitalism had made important contributions to the development of the West. The right realised that its intellectual weight, for so long maligned and misunderstood by revolutionaries had real value. It was a significant book. It also helped to make Kirk a handy million.

In a nutshell Kirk pointed out that the tenacity and vigour of conservative ideas, far from collapsing upon themselves as Marx has promised (because they were so inextricably linked to capitalism) had given rise to remarkable intellectual, cultural and political diversity.

### Pragmatism not Dogmatism

The ideas which brought us here and for which notions of market oriented capitalism are centred can be grouped under several heads of philosophical influence. First, the Burkien school after British politician Edmund Burke set out the conservative challenge to the French Revolution as a philosophy that valued discrimination between competing interests on the basis of preserving security ahead of deciding between competing interests on the basis of how close you could get to an ideal. Put another way: if you need to decide how to apportion welfare, Burke said a conservative would decide on the basis of how best to preserve the values which he or she considers valuable. Others, such as Socialists, might decide on the basis of building

the Socialist ideal – putting fidelity to that ideal ahead of anything else. In that way, conservatives can be more pragmatic than Socialists and Social Democrats. Indeed, as Owen Harries, a former Editor of America's *National Interest* magazine points out, this approach was neatly illustrated by Dean Acheson, the American Secretary of State under Truman. At the height of the Cold War Acheson remarked, "I am not the slightest bit worried because somebody can say, 'Well you said so and so about Greece, why isn't all this true about China?' I will be polite. I will be patient, and I will try to explain why Greece is not China. But my heart is not in the battle." We see the modern Burkien principles of conservatism in the Howard Government, and its willingness to treat different countries differently because they are different, or to make different concessions to different interest groups because they comply with or act contrary to the governments collective value system. So, in summary, Conservatism is not inherently beholden to a dogma, such as Marxism or Socialism, where the principle is greater than the problem and the state greater than the man.

Some conservatives, of course, promote their creed to the extent that it becomes a dogma: by forcibly imposing their personal values on a liberal democracy they can run the risk of becoming as inflexible as the Socialists that they abhor.

### Human Nature and Conservatism

The Burkien school was blended with ideas advanced by others such as David Hume, Alexander Hamilton and James Madison. These philosophers emphasised the fact that human nature governs human behaviour and any political philosophy that fails to account for instinct, prejudice and habit can hardly be

described as a political philosophy at all. In other words, a theory of political science could not be valid unless it explained how these customs and habits played out in society, especially in economic behaviour.

### Insulating the Individual from the State: The Free Clubs and Associations

Burke also flagged concepts such as the civil society as integral to the conservative mind (that is the networks of private association formed between individuals in a free society). This concept was expanded by Alexis De Tocqueville, who argued that the United States was strong because it had dense networks of private associations. Such associations included sporting clubs, religious societies, political groups, special interest leagues and so on. Conservatives believe that the individual, supported by networks in society is better off than the individual beholden to bureaucrats of the state.

### The Enduring Attraction of the Conservative Mind

The most fundamental and simple attraction of conservatism, of course, is that it abhors revolution. This is what Kirk identifies, and what Burke was arguing against; indeed it is what conservatives all around the world should champion. Humans are cautious, even conservative by nature. Conservatism, Kirk tells us preserves the successes of society and gradually permits an ordered and plentiful progress. That is the secret of conservatism.

DRC



# Browned Off

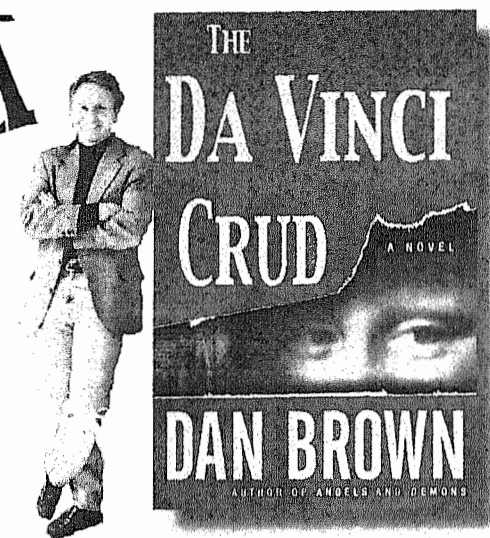
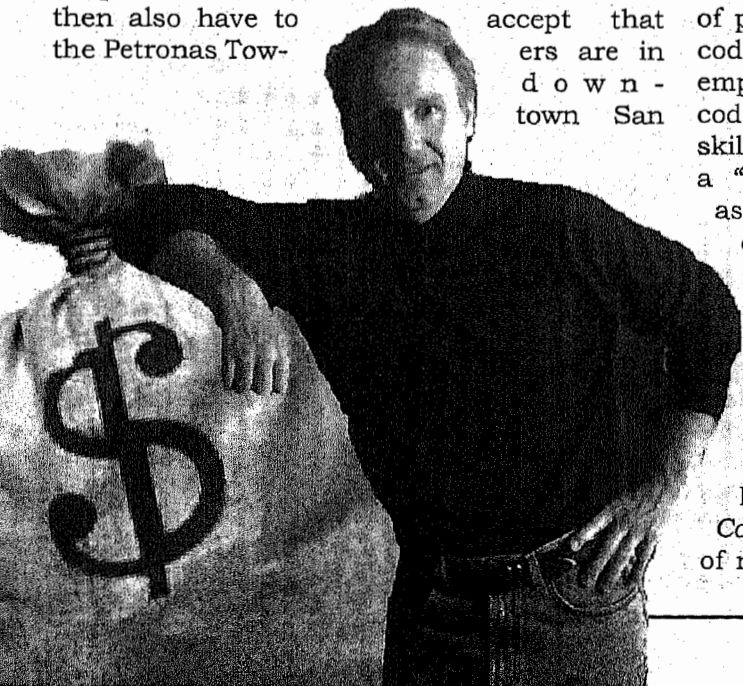
OR: Dude, your editor sucks.

In general, I have a lot of time for nerds. The ability to have at one's disposal comprehensive, highly specialized knowledge is one of skill, and useful too. I don't like people who fancy themselves nerds, but are in reality just gormless fools looking for an excuse for social ineptitude. I don't like people who try for nerdiness, and fail miserably, usually because they are too thick. I don't like Dan Brown.

More accurately, I don't like the work of Dan Brown. I find it offensive that someone with such an inelegant grasp of prose, characterisation and basic continuity has so captured the public's imagination. It is a shameful triumph of marketing over talent or common sense. I find it offensive that someone would presume such a comprehensive expertise in history and science, but gets even matters of simple geography wrong and peddles clumsy mistruths in every field he deals with. I find it offensive that someone could make such an impact on bestseller lists with such manifest laziness, with many glaring errors which could have been easily fixed by spending ten minutes on Google.

But Yak, calm down, it's just fiction, so he can write what he wants right? Wrong! Fiction is no excuse for such appalling mediocrity to be inflicted on us all. See, I accept that poetic license is taken with historical, artistic and religious facts for the sake of the story. After all, fiction relies on the willing suspension of disbelief. I cannot however suspend disbelief to the point of ignoring very simple errors in continuity or internal consistency. Further, there is a limit to how many times I can engage my suspension of disbelief in a single sitting.

For example, I happily exercise willing suspension of disbelief when reading Hardy Boys, because the idea of teenage boys breaking international terrorist rings, and going toe to toe with burly henchmen is a silly idea, but one which I can accept for the sake of the story. Beyond that basic (and far-fetched) premise, the world of Hardy Boys is internally consistent. After I have accepted the premise, there aren't repeated occasions where I am required to suspend disbelief. For instance I don't then also have to accept that the Petronas Towers are in downtown San



Francisco, and that Hotdogs were invented by Eskimos and that blue is red. In addition I don't have to deal with the marketing of Hardy Boys trying to convince the public of the scholarly merit behind facile rubbish. They are generally accepted at face value as adolescent escapism.

But the marketing strategy of *Da Vinci Code* is to position it as a credible work requiring further scrutiny and Dan as a scholarly, academic expert in English, writing, history and religion. He claims that the intensive research for each book takes years, but he gets almost everything wrong in fields of his self-appointed expertise as well as in every other field besides. It beggars belief then, that it has spawned such a credible culture of books and documentaries and public discussion.

To engage willing suspension of disbelief, I have to accept all of the following, and more (this is far from being an exhaustive list):

**that the layout of Paris is not the layout of Paris**

Read *The Da Vinci Code* with a street map of Paris (very easily available) in front of you and try not to laugh. Try it with a brochure of the Louvre. Also, try reading *Angels and Demons* with a street map of Rome.

**that the imaginary number 'i' is not the imaginary number 'i' (Da Vinci Code)**

The main character is condescendingly making a point to his female sidekick by clumsily attempting to reformulate an argument in terms she'd understand.

"No more false than a mathematical cryptographer who believes in the imaginary number 'i' because it helps her break codes"

Let us for the present ignore that the term "mathematical cryptographer" presupposes that there is such a thing as a "non-mathematical cryptographer," whatever that may be. Let us also ignore that "cryptography" refers specifically to the encryption of plain text into code and anyone employed for code breaking skills is in fact a "cryptanalyst". These two considerations aside, I can't think of any cases where complex numbers (very useful in vector calculations) would help the essentially scalar task of breaking codes. Feel free to correct me on this.

**that a character can use a manual shift and cannot use a manual shift (Angels and Demons, Da Vinci Code)**

In *Angels and Demons* and the *Da Vinci Code*, the main character flits between states of not knowing how to drive a manual when

it builds tension, but is able to when driving armoured vans about the place

**that a mile is not a mile (Da Vinci Code)**

Teabing's driveway is at first a mile long, then a half mile long later in the story. When escaping the Louvre in the SmartCar, "The embassy was only about half a mile away..." but two pages later: "The embassy was less than a mile away now"

**that a terabyte is not a terabyte (Da Vinci Code)**

The characters consult a theological database which is several hundred terabytes (TB) in size. Compare this to the US Library of Congress, one of the largest repositories of the written word in the modern world, whose plaintext content in ALL fields is estimated to be about 20 TB. The main character's heart sinks when putting it in vague search terms, a few thousand hits are recorded. So in a collection the size of ten Library of Congresses devoted to theology, a search of three general terms (pope was one of them) returns less than a bookcase full of results. Despite the suspiciously specific results, the main character is disappointed that he doesn't immediately get the answer handed to him. Hmmm, seems reflective of the author's attitude to research.

**That fifteen minutes is not fifteen minutes (Da Vinci Code)**

The search speed of this database is specified as 500 MB/s. This search is specified to have taken fifteen minutes. Hang on, it's a little trivial to calculate that the time required to search 200 TB at 500 MB/s would be more than four days. (One Terabyte is 1000 000 MB and there are 86 400 seconds in a day) In years of research, surely this error could have been noticed.

**that the Aztec empire was not the Aztec empire (Angels and Demons, I think)**

The main character, in a lecture which he is giving on a topic he is a world authority on, claims that the Christian idea of 'god-eating' is borrowed from the Aztecs, a claim which is laughable. The Aztec empire was around more than a thousand years after the life of Christ and Christians didn't make contact with them until 1492.

**that a nuclear reaction is not a nuclear reaction (Angels and Demons)**

A quarter gram of antimatter is taken up in the papal helicopter (?) and detonated at about half a kilometer above the Vatican. Previously in the story this has been estimated as being equivalent to roughly 5 kilotons. This is wrong to being with, it's actually about 10 kilotons -about the same size as the Hiroshima bomb. Additionally, the thing with thermonuclear devices is that they are often detonated

His research is impeccable!  
-The New York Daily News

in what's called an airburst. The Hiroshima bomb, for instance, was detonated at about *half a kilometre above the target* to extend the range of the destructive shockwave So there is a nuclear reaction of similar magnitude to the Hiroshima bomb detonated at a similar altitude used for the Hiroshima device. Yet not a brick of the Vatican below is displaced. In fact the main character is able to jump safely from the helicopter to avoid the explosion, which occurs seconds after he jumps. The energy released from the antimatter annihilation event would



propagate over that short distance at the speed of light, and reduce him to a nuclear wind. Assume that this doesn't happen, then there is still the trifling matter of several hundreds of megapascal of overpressure which would do serious trauma damage to the main character, as well as accelerating him on the front of the supersonic shock wave well beyond terminal velocity and smear him as a thin paste over the landscape. God, I wish that happened to Dan.

**that modern technology is not modern technology (Da Vinci Code)**

Dan several times describes a gun as a 13 round Heckler and Kock UPS40, and insists on talking about the Beechcraft Baron turboprop. Now the UPS series pistols invariably come with a ten round magazine, and Beechcraft Barons have piston engines.

That's not the result of years of research, Dan.

His whole marketing strategy is for his work to come across as scholarly, rigorous and credible. But by trying to come across as a legitimate and thoroughly researched piece of fiction, Dan Brown overreaches his ability to bullshit, and overspecifies situations so that they aren't merely somewhat improbable, but thoroughly impossible on many levels, and so become ridiculous and insulting.

Why couldn't Dan leave well enough alone? Why couldn't he spend ten minutes of his years

of research' on Google looking into the basic plausibility of the situations he's suggesting? It is hard to avoid the impressions that Dan feels he absolutely needs to so explicitly specify the guns, planes, databases and the rest of it to prove just how much more than everyone else he knows about technical jargon. On the one hand this doesn't add anything to the story for people who aren't conversant of the objects he describes, except for poisoning their minds with half baked misinformation. On the other hand he actively antagonizes the people who are familiar with the fields he deals with by being so blatantly wrong.

*Unputdownable!*  
- THE WASHINGTON POST

**"Yeah, yeah, might have a few mistakes, but it makes you think though, innit?"**

Fraid not. If he doesn't bother with even simple editing, why accept any of his more ambitious postulates? When the mistakes aren't

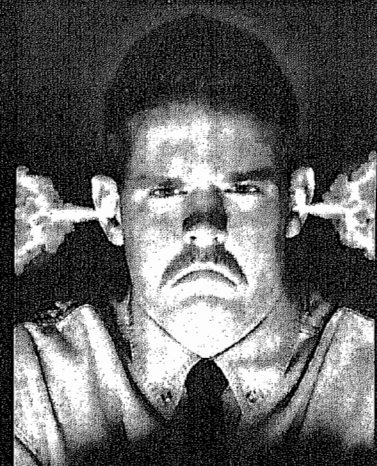
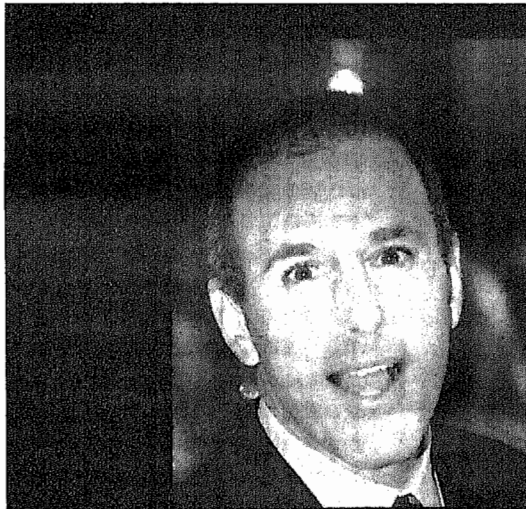
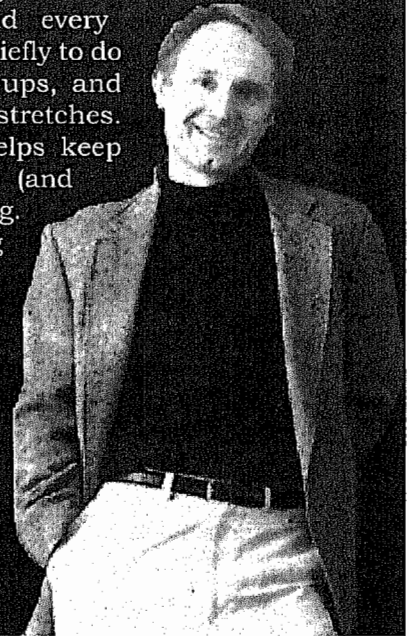
limited to minor details outside his supposed expertise, but persist in all the fields which he claims himself well-versed, the ideas aren't worth further consideration. The story idea (of *Da Vinci Code* at least, *Angels and Demons* is beyond any sort of help) could have been crafted into a compelling and thought provoking tale, but Dan's clumsy treatment of the subject matter and the incidental matter makes it fall apart on every page.

**Yak**

FROM THE  
DESK OF...

Give us three "Good to Know" facts about you. Be creative. Tell us about your first job, the inspiration for your writing, any fun details that would enliven your page.

If I'm not at my desk by 4:00 A.M., I feel like I'm missing my most productive hours. In addition to starting early, I keep an antique hour glass on my desk and every hour break briefly to do pushups, sit-ups, and some quick stretches. I find this helps keep the blood (and ideas) flowing. I'm also a big fan of gravity boots. Hanging upside down seems to help me solve plot challenges by shifting my entire perspective.



Interview by Matt Lauer and Yak on the TODAY show:

**Matt**

How much of this is based on reality in terms of things that actually occurred? I know you did a lot of research for the book.

**Dan**

Absolutely all of it. Obviously, there are--Robert Langdon is fictional, but all of the art, architecture, secret rituals, secret societies, all of that is historical fact.

**Yak**

Er.. no it isn't.

**Matt**

So what'd you do? You traveled the world, you know, running into museums and...

**Yak**

Without a map.

**Dan**

Essentially, yeah.

**Matt**

...interviewing a lot of historians.

**Yak**

Without a clue.

**Dan**

My--well, I'm very fortunate. I married an art historian who, you know, with whom I travel, and we have a great time.

**Matt**

Her name's Blythe, by the way. You dedicate the book to her.

**Yak**

Appropriate sort of name, isn't it? As in "Blithe ignorance of the facts"

**Dan**

Yes.

**Matt**

Was she the inspiration?

**Dan**

In many ways, yes. She--she is an enormous da Vinci fanatic and really got me extremely interested in this

topic. And I approached it with some skepticism and became a believer the more time we spent in Europe in these museums. She's a great editor.

**Yak**

You need to fire her right away.

**Matt**

But the lightbulb is going on here. Now you take your wife to Europe, to Paris and places like this, and yet you get to call it research and write it all off.

**Dan**

Well, as far as my accountant knows, it's entirely research.

**Matt**

It's all through the book.

**Dan**

That's right.

**Yak**

'Nuff said.



“Is that a protractor in your pocket or are you just glad to see me?”

Why Geeks are Cooler than Jocks - A Comparative Analysis

Think those collar-popping, board short-sporting, beer-sculing Jocks have got it all? Think again. Nerissa explains why the coolest guy in the world wears masking tape on his glasses and Brylcreem in his hair...

Body

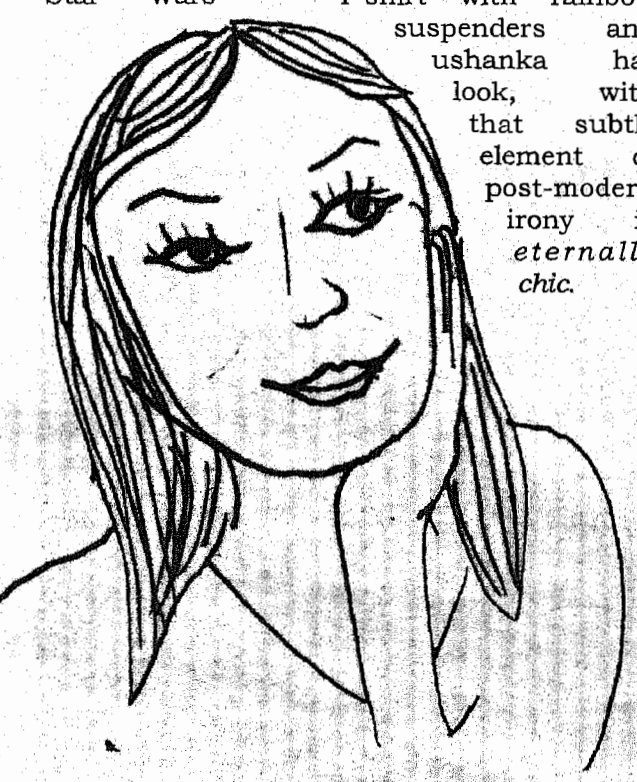
You think the Jocks win out on this point? Don't be so sure. Sure, the Jocks might be tanned all-over and toned to the nth degree from all that footy training and weight-lifting, but who needs that level of perfection to compete with? When it comes down to it, nobody really wants to be feeling insecure about their lumps and bumps when they're with a fella. The Geeks, with their pasty skin and gangly arms will make you feel so relaxed and comfortable, you won't even stop a second to worry how big your bum looks in those pants.

Availability

Find it difficult to squeeze yourself into the Jock's timetable? Yes, it can be a challenge. A Geek on the other hand, with no sports training sessions, ladies on the side or, (let's face it) any social engagements for the next three months, will be ready to respond to your every whim. Think of it...no planning, no calling, and no football games to compete with...just rock on round whenever it tickles your fancy!

Clothes

Is it just me, or does it seem as though all the guys in Adelaide uni woke up one day five months ago and decided that the 1980's golfing grandpa look was suddenly the coolest fashion style going 'round? Yes, somehow they think they look handsome in those Polo shirts, camel pants and white shoes, but the Geeks know better. Because the Geek understands that fashion trends come and go, but the black-framed glasses, socks and sandals, faded Star Wars T-shirt with rainbow suspenders and ushanka hat look, with that subtle element of post-modern irony is eternally chic.



Brains

If you're looking for any level of intellectual stimulation in your life, all I can say is that you're unlikely to find it amidst three half-naked, drunken goons singing "The Holy Grail" and hugging each other atop a beer-soaked table in a sleazy karaoke bar! ...Need I say more?

Prospects

The Jocks may have it going on just at the moment, but while they're out sculling beer and partying it up, the Geeks are planning their takeover. Yes, deep within the convoluted, Byzantine, perverse grotto that the Geek's mind lies a painstakingly planned and measured ploy for world-domination. Just look at Bill Gates. I don't know about you, but in thirty years time I'd rather be chillin' with a millionaire skinny white dude than watching football and drinking VB with a hairy overweight bogan in a wife-beater and stubbies wondering where my life went!

Sex

When it comes down to it, experience definitely does not maketh the man in this department. Sure, the Jocks may have got it on with every Sally this side of Sunday, but since when does that mean they're any good at it? Who needs that sleazy Jock singing "We are the Champions" while he humps his unfortunate subject so monotonously that he fails to notice that dull look in her eye? A Geek on the other hand will be so excited by the rare sexual encounter he'll be pulling out all the stops to please his woman. Furthermore, all those hours spent reading and surfing the net are never wasted if the Geek managed to receive at least a basic education in the mystical art of luuurvve! Regular visits to porn-sites may be seen as somewhat deviant, but they're certainly more educational than *The Footy Show*...

So remember ladies, the next time you're checking the room for the hottest guy there, check the back corner. The funkier fellow you'll ever meet is sitting at the back behind a laptop, inch-thick glasses and a layer of zits, simultaneously musing on who would win in a fight between Yoda and Spock, and wondering why he doesn't have a girlfriend...

**Nerissa Schwarz isn't a geek but man is she a fox**



Geeks I Have Loved

by Clementine Ford



The Nerd from *Sixteen Candles*. Who didn't fall a little bit in love with him when he told Molly Ringwald he had 'never banged a babe' and asked her for her underpants?



Cameron took a day off with his pal Ferris and almost had a nervous breakdown. Cameron had been with his deep baritone rendition of "When Cameron was in Egypt's land- let my Cameron go..."



Garthy Garthy - so nervous next to the more sexual Wayne. What he lacks for in pizazz he makes up for in sensuality. Remember the Foxy Lady dance? Schwing!



Jeez I love Seth Green, and his turn as Kenny in *Can't Hardly Wait* made me burn with desire. Watching him lose his virginity to Claire from *Six Feet Under* made my stomach flutter. Yes Kenny, I want what you got.



Who doesn't love Willow? The consummate geek, she proved through seven stellar series that not only can geeks be über hot, but sometimes they really do get the girl....





President



Women's Vice Prez



ATSI Officer

Well, this is it, we've had many debates about VSU this year. The Students' Association ran a VSU table outside the resource centre most of last week, and a number of us spent a fair bit of time out there talking to students about VSU and getting people to sign the petition. We've received more than a thousand signatures from the Adelaide campus, and many, many more from across the country. I think the debate has pretty much come full circle, and it's now time for people to make a stand.

We've celebrated the benefits of Universal Student Unionism at the make some noise festival earlier in the year, and now it's time to make a very clear public statement. That the student community does not want this legislation passed.

Market research was conducted jointly with the AUU and the University earlier this year into a number of things including VSU. One of the most significant findings of this research was that "given a choice, 84% of students would support paying the Student Services Fee (at some level) over choosing a user pays system".

84% of students would prefer to see the maintenance of the student services fee or Universal Student Unionism, according to this research which from talking to a large number of students over the last two weeks would seem about right to me. We now need to prove this claim right. It's time for all students who do not want the student community to take a crippling blow to take a stand.

We are having a peaceful rally this Wednesday meeting on the Barr Smith Lawns at 1pm, and marching to parliament house. Some people may question what's the point, but there is a point. A large enough rally will be taken notice of, we will be marching to parliament house, as a symbol of government, to tell the Federal Government we do not want this legislation. We will also be marching past 100 King William Street where there are a large number of Federal Liberal Ministers, MP's and Senators officers. Finally, we will be marching through the city where the broader community can see that students aren't happy. We'll almost certainly get lots of media coverage, if there are lots of students there, and as a result we will continue to make VSU an issue not just for us but for the community.

If we can do this, if we can keep the public debate up, and the pressure on the Coalition then there is a very good possibility of getting this legislation changed. Just like the 25% HECS hikes, we aren't the ones who are going to suffer the most from this, as the student organisations slowly die thanks to the cutting off of almost all of our funding, it will be those people who are in school at the moment that will suffer, it will be our younger brothers and sisters, or anyone else who wants to one day go to uni. So join us this Wednesday, 1 pm on the Barr Smith Lawns and make a stand to 'Stop VSU'.

**Shaggy**  
SAUA President

### Elle Dit

Many a \$9 carafe of bad Exeter Red has been shared between Clementine Ford and me, as we have explored the exciting task of creating and editing the annual women's magazine, Elle Dit. We are looking for enthusiastic women who also like cask wine to join our Elle Dit collective and take on the task of brainstorming, collaborating and editing the mag. Whether its feminist analysis of the new Harry Potter or a detailed report on the elusive female ejaculation, Elle Dit wants uni women to submit their letters, stories, articles and reviews for an all-woman submission in October. If you are interested in joining the collective, editing, or submitting work for Elle Dit, email me on [melissa.purcell@student.adelaide.edu.au](mailto:melissa.purcell@student.adelaide.edu.au)

### Women fighting for Women's Departments

VSU (Voluntary Student Unionism) is not going to affect all students in the same way. Student Unions provide specific representation for women students by women students, acknowledging that women's experience of university and their access to university services is not necessarily the same or equal to that of men. Not only do Union women's departments provide representation for women on University and Union decision-making bodies, they also provide advocacy and advice on matters including sexual harassment, and run campaigns on issues that affect women on campus and in the wider community. They lead women's collectives and maintain the women's room on campus, providing a safe autonomous space for women to chill out, network and organize campaigns. The 2005 women's department at Adelaide University has run International Women's day celebrations, an Abortion Forum (August 8) and a very successful production of *The Vagina Monologues* raising \$3000 for Catherine House and the Hamlin Fistula Foundation. Under VSU these services and representation of university women are under threat.

Help us make a stand for Student Unions and women's departments on Wednesday August 10. If you are a student, join us at the Barr Smith Lawns at Adelaide University at 1pm. All other women are asked to join our women's bloc at Victoria Square at 1:30pm. If you are from a women's union, group or organization, feel free to bring your banners to lead our united procession to Parliament House where there will be speakers. The bigger our numbers and the louder our voice, the more the Australian government will become aware that attacks on student unions and women's departments in particular are not acceptable and won't go unnoticed.

**Velma**  
Women's Vice Prez

### Hey all

Sorry for my lack of OB Columns as of late, been some hard times last couple of months. Thank you all for the well wishes. Anyway for those who know me I have two passions, the celebration of aboriginality and Australian Rules football. Well these two things became one last Monday with the announcement of Indigenous team of the century. After viewing the team I perused around several public forums on the issues. Some of the responses did not surprise me.

"Nah, the whole thing is bullsh\*t. Typical of the AFL to generate this hoopla. Aboriginal footballers are equals. It's like saying "hey, here's the best of the black fellers, let's give them a slap on the back and tell them how honoured we are to recognise they're different than us".

"Even my wife said to me, who has no interest in Football, why is there an Aboriginal team of the century? She then said shit would hit the fan if the league had a white team. Double standards just to keep the peace. Watch out, they will claim Footy Park next!"

As an Aboriginal person I was excited and proud about this concept. I can understand how people may object to the naming of this team of the century but lets enjoy for the simple fact they were/are talented footballers.

For the record:

Backs: Chris Johnson, Daryl White, Bill Dempsey, Half Backs: Gavin Wanganeen, Adam Goodes, Norm McDonald, Centres: Peter Matera, Maurice Rioli, Michael Long, Half Forwards: Nicky Winmar, Stephen Michael, Syd Jackson, Forwards: Chris Lewis, Michael O'Loughlin, Jim Krakouer, Followers Graham Farmer, Andrew Mcleod, Barry Cable, Interchange Michael Mclean, Byron, Picket, Michael Graham, David Kantilla, Ted Kilmurray, Peter Burgoyne, Captain: Graham Farmer, Coach: Barry Cable, Umpire: Glenn James

Nukkin Ya

**Fred**  
ATSI Officer

### Fate of the Union:

You know, being an economically rationalist but left wing President of the Union in a year like this isn't all beer and skittles. (I'm sorry, I watch a great deal of British comedy). In such a factional environment as this, you often find that you are too left for the right-wingers and too right wing for the left. Before I descend into the shamelessly factional and obscure student political references that my predecessor enjoyed before grudgingly handing over the reins to me, let me clarify that what I am intending to do with this column is keep you updated on what the AUU is actually doing with your money in 2005.

The AUU is currently undertaking a restructure that came out of our 2005 VSU Strategic Plan. It involves possible amendments to our Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. This is the document that governs the terms and conditions of employees in the Commercial Operations and Administration of the AUU. Currently, it involves the AUU paying rates that may not be affordable after the implementation of VSU and an inflexibility of rostering staff on and off. This means that during non-semester time, when hardly any students are on campus, the AUU still has to pay wages of staff that as a term of their employment must be rostered on for a certain amount of hours per week. We also have to still pay expensive electricity and maintenance bills - except with hardly any income coming in, because students aren't here. However, this now has to go through a process with the three trade unions that represent the range of staff that work at the AUU, the NTEU, LHMU and the ASU.

The AUU Board has also committed to a Governance review. This involves a potential change in the composition and size of the AUU Board as well to the way the organisation is managed. This is the reason that you will note asterisks next to the AUU positions in the elections ad of this week's edition of On Dit. However, like it says at the bottom of the ad, if you have any questions about this - please contact me and ask away.

**Serappy Doo**  
President  
Adelaide University Union



# WHY WARCRAFT IS BETTER THAN LOCKER-ROOM MELVINS

OR THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH, starting with Twisted Meadows

Martin Heidegger argued in his later, post-Nazi work that the path that technology has forged in our lives has evolved faster than our inherent philosophical infrastructure can handle. Subsequently, all of our philosophical roots now no longer have value, as Plato, Socrates *et al.* did not ever consider the event of such social behemoths as computers, mass transport and communication. Heidegger concludes, by being blighted with zero knowledge of the "essence of technology" and left without knowing what we ourselves are existing for, we have lost our vision of God.

However, Professor Martin Heidegger had never played *Warcraft*.

As a multi-player, fantasy-based, highly intense game, *Warcraft* has great potential for human beings. (Naturally, I can only explain my own experiences with the electronic foray. I can't talk for the poor children that lock themselves away for days on end.) When LANing, (where computers are all joined up in a communistic fashion - the only really wholesome way to play) *Warcraft* is first and

foremost a wonderful social equaliser. Small-assed ponyboys can finally get their fix of larger, jocular types' blood, which they could never have achieved in a normal reality. In fact being of a much smaller stature (or having loads of glutenous energy stored away) is a positive advantage. During long stalemates nerds need only 68% of the energy intake of heaving jocks. All of the angst that broods into Columbine/Port Arthur styled tragedies could probably have been annulled had the culprits been able to switch on the release tap in the general direction of hordes of Undead warriors storming into a classmate's war camp. All humans have a vulgar yet natural tendency towards war and violence - we are not Jebuz Christ. In fact until the birth of Christendom warring was quite Godly.

In a generation starved of reading material and anything that ferments the imagination more than a blurry patch of female genitalia on a *Big Brother* daily show, surely any medium that makes kids think about faraway worlds is a good thing. Also in *Warcraft* it is an advantage to have read Sun Tzu or Machiavelli, and while these are not the most healthy of books they at



least are better than *Ralph* or *Jugs* or whatever the hell the kids are reading these days. It also means they are listening to Sibelius or Wagner or something because it makes the moment more intense and they can't concentrate listening to that fucking crazy frog shit.

Add a smattering of comradeship in paired victories, an understanding of the value of shared resources in a cohesive society, and the respect given to females for their magical prowess and this game is more progressive than your standard liberal voter, jock or any tool of Satan. But it's not as good as D & D.

Jimmy Trash



# Terminal Rebound



*I thought about you today. I smelled your perfume on every woman I saw.*

Beautiful, huh? So was the boy. In the 21st century, he would have been known as my fuck buddy. When

I was feeling a little wistful, I thought of him as my lover. And what a lover... sigh. Tall, handsome, strong, intelligent, funny... But romance is like comedy; it's all about timing. And I'm no Robin Williams. Of the men that I've had in my life, roughly 67% of them have been on the rebound from long term relationships or grand crushes. In a superficial, temporary sense, this works well for me. It means they are on the look out for quick source of validation and I am often able to score way outside my league. However, if feelings become entangled, it's inevitably doomed because they're never interested in a relationship. When I'm feeling the benefits of a calming four litre cask of cheap goon, I try to think of myself as a slightly less virginal Mother Theresa. Being the Rebound Girl is a very charitable act; I provide an ego-boosting service that heals the wounds of their former unrequited or doomed love and allows them to go back into the world of Random Hook Ups with their heads held high. For the Luxury Treatment, I can even develop an attachment. There's nothing like ignoring a needy text message, or complaining about a persistent stalker to really swell your head. In a sense, you could say my timing with this young man was good. He had been in a long term relationship since age 17 (can you say "doomed" much?) and I met

him in its death rattle. At the time, I was in love with the young lad from last week's article and my Rebounder was in love with his ex girlfriend. The first Friday after his break up was the end of semester party; he told me of the break up as we threw back tequila shots at The Elephant. I took him home and stroked his ego. All night long, I stroked his ego. And the next night...You get the picture. He became the first man who I trusted sexually, in fact, the first with whom I even bothered to have regular sex. The chemistry back then was electric; he could make me shiver as he ran his tongue along my spine. Then he would blow cool air gently on my neck, stimulating goosebumps in places I didn't even know you could get goosebumps.

Of course, like all beautiful things in my life, it became tainted by complications. During the exam period, I didn't see him for a week. And then I slept with the boy I loved again. I cared about both of these boys, but I loved the other boy with a kind of doomed desperation. Wanting two people at the same time is a very effective way of losing them both. My Rebounder got his revenge though; I apologised for hurting him and then he revealed that for the whole week where I hadn't seen him, he'd been fucking someone else.

That wasn't the death knell of our tryst, but it was in the same time period that the chemistry began to wane. Jealousy doesn't go well with my complexion, nor did it with his and neither of us technically had the prerogative to be jealous. We had two paths before us; we could take a risk and save what we had before envy destroyed it completely, or we could let it slip through our fingers. Slipping was easier.

It was when I watched his last fuck buddy watching him pick up his newest in Zhivago's that I decided to end it. I'm aware of what I am - I am a Rebound Girl and I'm damn good at it. But this girl looked crushed by her crush. She felt used and abandoned; she hadn't become accustomed to those adjectives like I have. The last time my Rebounder and I really talked, he told me he wanted something more with me but he just wasn't ready for it. I told him I would wait, but not forever. That night at Zhivago's, I wanted to tell him how long I would wait. That if we still wanted each other by September, then maybe.... But watching him with his third conquest, I realised that I had served my purpose. There would be no September, there would be no more shivering or sighing

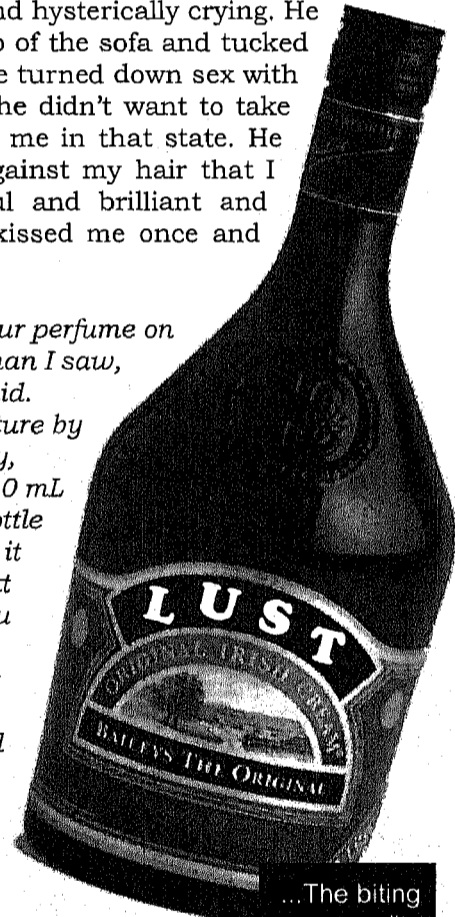
with him. He had rebounded and it was over. I ended it with him the following night over the phone; the prospect of a bittersweet goodbye kiss made me ache too much to risk it.

*I hope her taste was worth it  
I hope her lips tasted like honeysuckle and soursobs  
I hope her skin tasted like warm milk and cinnamon  
I hope her cunt tasted like chilli and dark chocolate  
Because you tasted cold Baileys on my lips and sandalwood oil on my skin  
But you'll never taste me now  
Not again*

I confess I revelled in the touch of my lover's hands on my skin. I confess that I long for them still. But it's with a gentle sadness that I think of him; he was the first man who had the balls to actually care for me as I am, not for what he wanted me to be, or who he thought I was. I will carry with me the memory of him driving all the way to see me one night when I was drunk and hysterically crying. He picked me up of the sofa and tucked me in bed. He turned down sex with me because he didn't want to take advantage of me in that state. He whispered against my hair that I was beautiful and brilliant and loved, then kissed me once and went home.

*I smelled your perfume on every woman I saw,  
He said.  
It's Hot Couture by Givenchy,  
\$79.90 per 30 mL  
Go buy a bottle and spray it on the next woman you fuck  
Close your eyes  
And pretend it's me.*

**Lavinia Emmett-Grey**

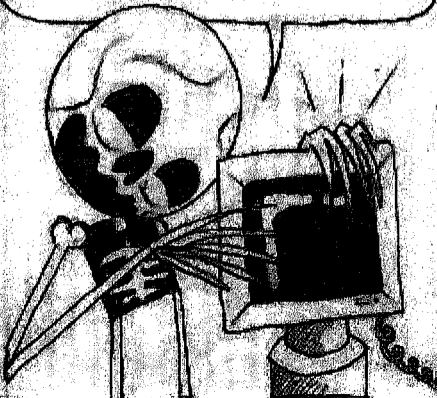


...The biting reality

The sublime dream...

## skulduggery by oz

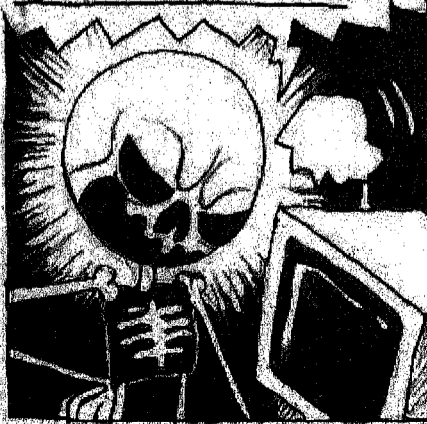
WITH THIS COMPUTER I WILL MEET WOMEN!



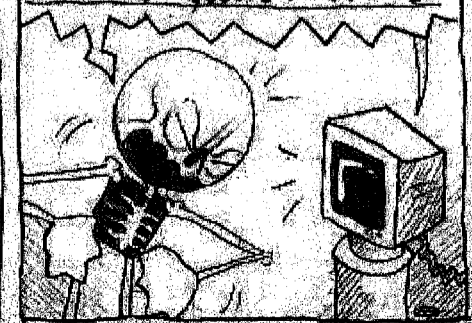
HEY THERE JIGGLES WANT TO MEET MY FRIEND HERE?



YOU IDIOT YOU CAME ON TOO STRONG!!



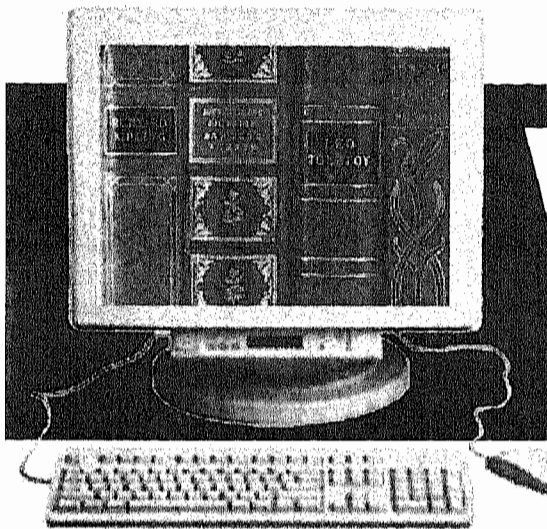
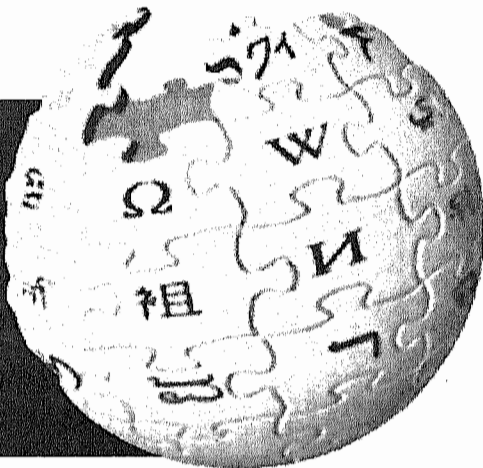
WHAT, YOU'RE GONNA BEAT ME AGAIN?  
OH DON'T PUSH ME HERE CHRISTOPHER





# Wikipedia

First the geeks get the information, then they get the power, and then they get the women.



It goes without saying that geeks come in a huge variety of, well, varieties - in hobbies, obsessions, tastes, and oh, yes, smells. Your humble columnist's particular weakness is proofreading. I cannot stand to see a spelling or grammar error on the printed page, which drives my non-native-English-speaking partner absolutely insane. Not because I correct her, but because I've been known to download exceptionally frustrating web pages I've been browsing and correct the mistakes in Word myself, one by one. For some reason, she thinks this is a colossal waste of time.

And then one day, I found a particularly bad example, except it had an "edit this page" link in boldface right on the top. In a state of shock — after all, it's not every day you get your most secret desire served up to you without even asking — I clicked it, fixed most of the more shall we say unique spellings, and then hit the button marked "Save changes" at the bottom. The page reloaded, and lo! The mistakes were fixed.

Well, shit. If only the Liberal Party's web site had a link like that, all it'd have taken would've been a bit of creative writing on Mandy Vanstone's page and we could have had the kids out of detention months ago. Of course it's only a few sites that do it — they're called wikis (from the Hawaiian wiki wiki, "quick") and the largest is an encyclopaedia called, wittily enough, the Wikipedia.

Odds are you've visited that one, if you've ever tried looked up anything besides porn or Duran Duran MP3s on Google. It's invariably in the first page or two of results, mostly because if you can think of it to look up, there's probably an article on Wikipedia about it. At this writing, there's well over 650,000 articles in English alone, roughly two

DVDs' worth of text, plus God only knows how many images and sound files to make it all look pretty. Its pages brag that it is probably the most complete collection of information that has ever been put together. And this by literally anybody with internet access who can be bothered to click that little "edit this page" link up top.

Mind you, they're editing pages on what interests them. And they're people with regular internet access and the spare time to take advantage — geeks, in other words. Net result: there are 3,000-word accounts of single Doctor Who episodes while Indian languages spoken by 31 million people and literatures going back

further than most European cities get three paragraphs. Then there's the little matter of accuracy. Proponents of Wikipedia argue that, should factual errors crop up, say because the creator of an article has more enthusiasm for than knowledge of the topic, they'll be fixed sooner or later by a more knowledgeable reader dropping by, and the more people visiting a page the quicker this will be. Of course, this doesn't help all the clueless and now misinformed readers who turned up before the error gets fixed...

Oh, but it's all published under the same kind of copyright as most open-source software, so apart from your internet bills and the digital equivalent of a charity collection tin being rattled in your face every now and then you're never going to need to even think about paying for it. Great for the student budget, not to mention for those of people in poorer countries who wouldn't see the money

Britannica charges for its editions in ten lifetimes; the idea is often mooted for books or CD-ROMs of selections of Wikipedia content to be printed up and distributed in the Third World.

So, ready to tackle that article on the Liberal Party? Add in what you really think of them? Complete with F-words? And maybe a few facts which rather lack evidence but "everyone knows" anyway? And, ooh, that's a nice photo of Hitler there... Okay. Go wild. Then come back in an hour or three. It'll all be gone, back to the previous version, maybe give or take a paragraph or rephrasing here or there. You can edit however you want and see the changes go live online (and can be banned from editing if your bullshit is too repugnant) but so can the Young Liberals, and they're naturally keeping a close eye on articles close to their hearts.

There are policies in place to prevent the site from descending into the otherwise inevitable all-out war, though enforcement can sometimes be politely described as idiosyncratic. Among them are the idea that articles should be written in the style of an encyclopaedia, unbiased and representing all points of view on a topic worth mentioning fairly; discussion pages separate from the articles are there to let people hash out expansive or controversial changes.

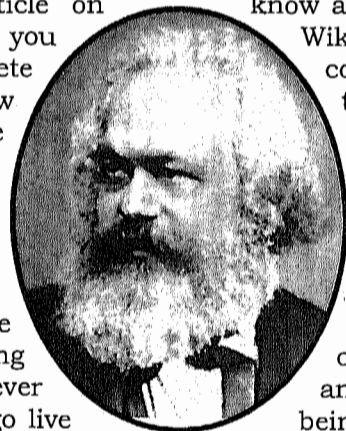
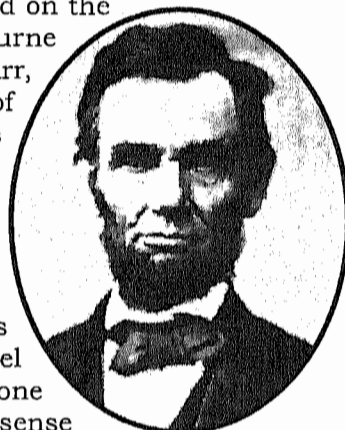
Sometimes this works. The article on abortion manages to split the difference between the mindless shouts of "misogynist!" and "murderer!" remarkably well, producing an entirely reasonable document that explains each side's views without endorsing or contradicting either — you couldn't ask for more from an encyclopaedia article. And sometimes it just doesn't. The article on the Khmer Rouge, for example, currently

alternates between two versions, one of which is distinctly less harsh in its descriptions of Pol Pot's mob — except when someone's thrown up their hands and blocked the article from being edited entirely in the vain hope that the dispute might be settled on the discussion page. Melbourne historian Dr Adam Carr, the author of some of the encyclopaedia's best content has been involved in the conflict for so long he can't remember how it started. He points this out as a major weakness in the Wikipedia's model of editing. Unless someone is posting absolute nonsense or calling someone names, they can't be easily voted off the island, so polite but firm (or even impolite and bloody-minded) editors with lunatic ideas can badly skew the encyclopaedia's content. He encourages uni students to get involved, since hopefully we're smart enough to avoid such bias.

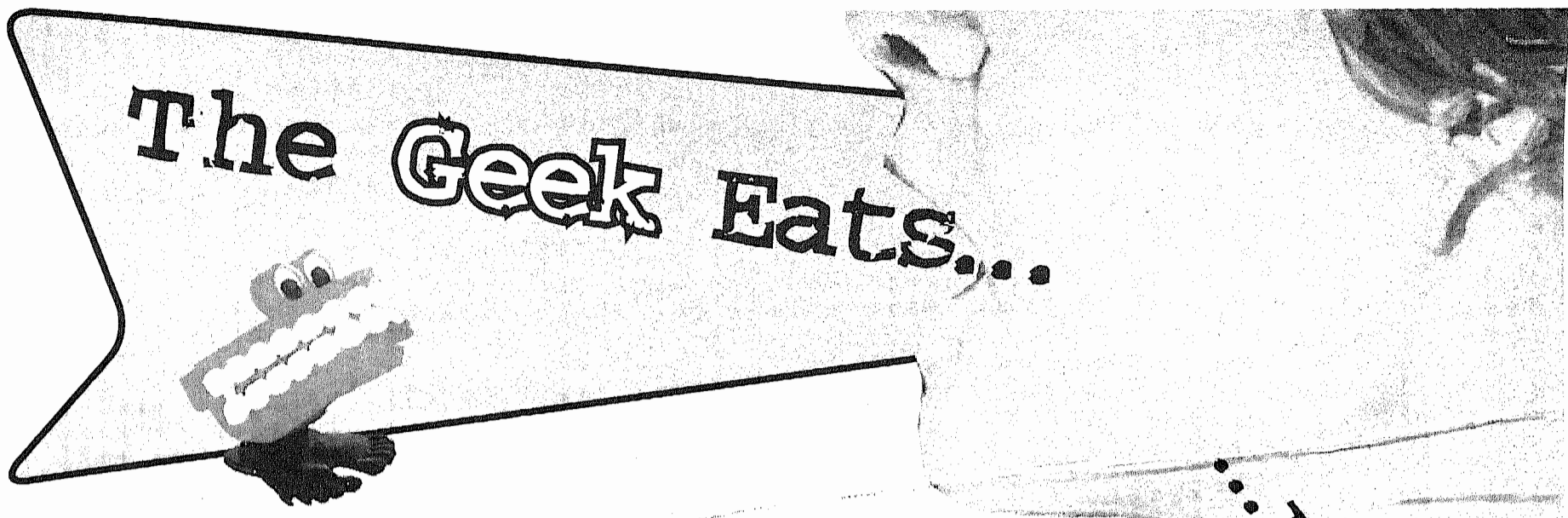
Regardless, these problems do not fall equally over the whole project; in general, besides having more than you could ever want to know about science fiction TV series, the Wikipedia's coverage of mathematics, computer science, chemistry and the like tends to be very good, while politics and history are much patchier, less stable and less reliable. You'd be an idiot to cite the article on the Soviet Union in your Russian History essay, and not just because many lecturers specifically forbid citing encyclopaedias in general and Wikipedia in particular as not being proper research. But recent

events are better covered than in other encyclopaedias, for the obvious reason that they don't have to wait to be printed after being written... or even put under the eye of an editor. Wikipedia scooped every major newspaper in the world by hours on reporting the death of intellectual Susan Sontag late last year, simply because someone on a feminist mailing list where it was first announced also happened to know how to edit. And it's good for getting a bit more background than in the average TV report on the latest catastrophes. (Tsunami in Aceh? Where's that? And what's this about an insurgency? Oh, okay. Hang on, there's a typo here, let me just...)

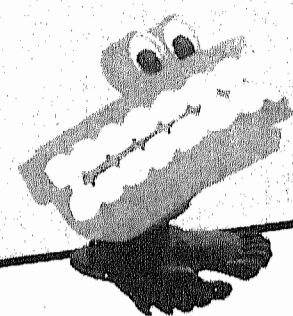
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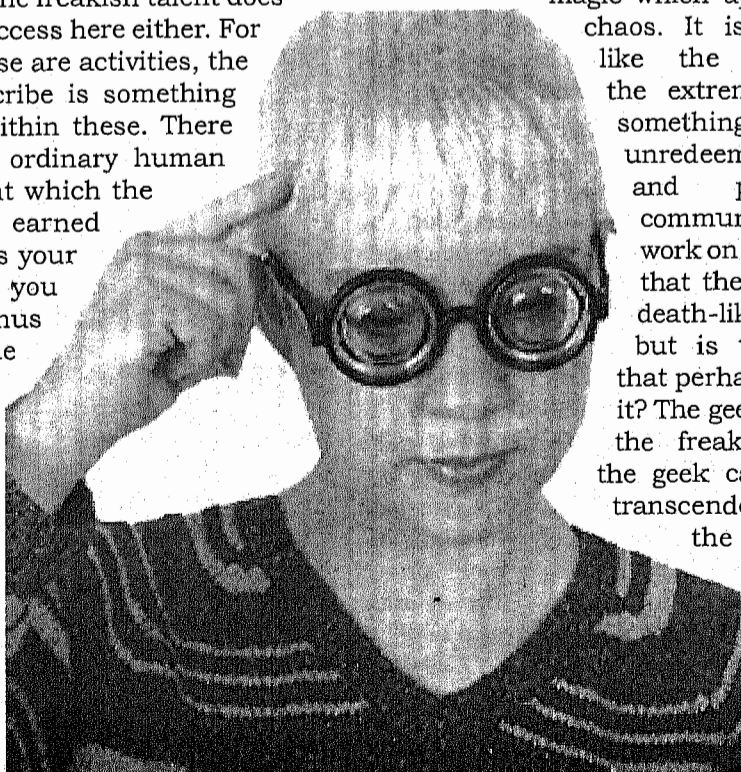


# The Geek Eats...



...ITS WORDS

The geek eats its words. The entire entity of the geek is embodied in the way its body opens itself to other bodies (speaking, displaying, eating and all conjunctive acts of being), we are all aware of it as a certain incoherence of the body which cannot present itself comfortably within any area touched by the aura of the healthy body. The implication of the mouth as symbolic point of geekhood is again to emphasise, the opening and closing of the body, the unfortunate disclosure of the mouth agape or inarticulate of the weakness of the body, in which the overlap between the embarrassment of a secret un-sharable body and the body which registers itself in a symbolic sense. The basic fact is that the geek cannot hide something in terms of the normal codes whereby the healthy hide themselves. There is an over-expenditure of the energies with mark, so that the mark is not discreet. The geek is not merely a social phenomena of exclusion and incompatibility, nor of the failure to be articulate and interesting in communication. Those upon whom we wish to offload the verbal power of the word "geek", those who always speak the banal and unnecessary, those who insult unwittingly and without grace, those who make great show of having qualities they obviously do not have and so forth. The geek is no more than that which is captured in the overuse of the term geek, its reclamation and appropriation as mark of the authentic and untouched by fashionable codes. Even as we execute the deliberate overuse of the term that we might neutralise its specificity and make it open to use a mark of the Authentic, to claim it is as a positive reversal of itself: "geek power", "geek chic", we miss it and we miss its real power and charge of the positive. The geek as the expression of the freakish talent does not begin to give us access here either. For these are people, these are activities, the thing I wish to describe is something which occurs and within these. There is no "geek" in the ordinary human realm, at the point at which the incoherence that earned you the title becomes your humanity totally you are lost forever: thus its usefulness in the primitive discipline of the schoolyard, the threat of total excommunication from all articulate human activities which it carries. Indeed children build geeks onto others, relating to them as that which cannot be related to, always



prefiguring their interactions with a reference to the stigma and therefore permanently marking the child with the idea of the geek, a permanent place of incommunication. The entity of the geek truly consists in not being able to miss such cues innocently, in always carrying the blame for the inadequacy of social codings to really map the territory of the body and its patches of incoherence. How to eat a live animal in a freak-show escapade? (These are they who won the name geek and its onomatopoeic power of unease) the thing you gotta do is unhinge from any frame of coherence. The very fact that language had to bend itself so violently in order to encompass the geek, "Geek!", demonstrates its opposition to codings. It is the absolute extreme of social death. The geeky, the geekish, the geek-inflected are not part of it anymore, there are moments of it within them, but integrated into social whole, articulated as jokes, but the geek which is the ideal object of schoolyard pun is incapable of humour also. They are to remain permanently silent within a mime that cannot be watched, cannot be moved through, is only the jerking motions of a thing struggling not to embody death and the death-like absence of connection and being with. So why have I accepted the hell which is constructed by those who damage and inflict this image upon the geek? Why do I accept the bully's expression? Because it is within that framework that we can see the way in which the social works to isolate and prevent the occurrence of those messages which would cause it to become another code altogether. The geek is stolen from each of our nightmares and our personal hideosities. It is a manifestation of the incomprehensible, very much a demon, a witch or a summoner of the magic which appears as pure chaos. It is another site, like the schizophrenic, the extremist, at which something is apparently unredeemable, inhuman and passed from communication. We work on the assumption that the geek is agony, death-like, the tortured, but is this something that perhaps we inflict on it? The geek can pass into the freakishly talented; the geek can become the transcendence of itself, the self-referential joke of the affably geeky. Can the geek be resolved however, the exposure of the uncoded?

Obviously the pure geek is already *Eraserhead*. The question of the whole exercise is, however, how much does the incoherence of the geek AS FEARED AND EXORCISED BY ITS NAMERS AND ACCUSERS really demonstrate something of meaningful content? The un-processed is also the geek. The destroyed by over-processing is also the geek. The word itself is an emergency, it indicates at once the too alive and the already dead while erasing the middle ground from which it is called, because the caller cannot themselves be coherent or meaningful in their call, they too are a geek of hate, a geek of violence. The geek is an extreme potentiality it marks the fact of a society confrontation with the inability of our social archetypes to provide meaningful constitutions of being, and the spontaneous erasure of all of these. The geek as ideal is the full expression of both social violence and the persistence of unlivability. Improvise from here. Those who have truly been geeks and have retained there intelligence and there will to live know a secret. I love you all. StaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStaticStatic

**Breandan De Paor Moore**





# Short Opinions on Geekiness

**"The only real currency in this bankrupt world is what we share with each other when we're being uncool."**

-Lester Bangs (Philip Seymour Hoffman)

When attending high school, geeks are kept in check by the cool kids and constantly reminded that they are geeks. This is a good thing, and it creates a solid social structure within secondary schooling. When geeks leave high school they are no longer subjected to intimidation from cooler kids and thrive and bloom into confident people whilst at uni. This is not a good thing. Geeks begin to think that it is OK to be a geek, but it's not. For this reason I believe it is important to have "fraternity" type jock groups at uni so geeks will always be reminded that it is not OK to be a geek.

**Frank T.**

People don't assume that I'm a geek. But I am. I'm smart. I know rare facts about trivial matters. By my definition a penchant for all things 'gaming' leaves precious little room for an alternate characterisation. I suppose I escape such assumptions because I have social skills, which begs the question: "Are geekdom and socially adequate behaviour

mutually exclusive?" I think the suppression of geek-behaviour is a further attempt to reify ignorance in our culture. Ok ok, so top level skills in World of Warcraft is hardly key contribution to the collective social consciousness, but you know what I mean. I like that being a geek is part of my personality, and I refuse to be subjugated.

**Eskimo Jesus**

I live in a little wood cabin somewhere between the kingdom of cool and the valley of geek. For me to define geek, I also need to define cool. Lots of people think they're cool but are actually twats. For example - all those kids that raced out to buy skinny leg black jeans and studded belts so they could appear dark and brooding with each other are complete dorks. They pretend to be separate from society, thus creating a kind of geekdom, but secretly think they're an enormous block of dry ice, symbiotically burning hot and cold. This makes them not only geeky in the bad, undesirable kind of way,

but also wankers. I have more respect for true geeks like the guy that used to walk around uni in 2001 wearing tracksuit pants pulled up to his bosoms, and the one I overheard in Tandy's the other day asking about a problem he was having with *Quake*.

**Clementine**

With our educational institutions so riddled by vocationalism where will those modern day geniuses of the old schools come from?

Geeks even share to some extent the personalities of those idiosyncratic and even misanthropic scholars, having been moulded by years of taunting into malformed creatures of occasionally unpleasant social bitterness. With their distaste for and distance from the majority world (crucial for original ideas) and their compulsive pedantry for all manner of undervalued but indispensible subjects it can only be from the mould of the Geek that the modern brother of the ancient Greek is cast.

**Idiomachen**

## THE GEEKY GAMES

### Engies tug med, BUT no climax!

#### The Tug

About 50 years ago, it wasn't uncommon to see the engies and the medical students tugging at a huge rope spread across the Torrens for bragging rights as the strongest faculty. On Tuesday last week, after over 40 years of abstinence, they were at it again with their pride (and probably health) on the line.

The engies were seen training and yanking their ropes early in the week, and with a pack weight of over 800kgs, it was with no surprise that they went into the tug 'heavy' favourites. The feeble med kids, with a pack weight of just over 600kgs and no understanding of static friction, leverage, and gravity seemed likely to end up in the drink.

The crowd jostled for position on the banks and across the bridge as boats were launched. Songs were sung and spirits were high in the med camp on the waters edge, but nothing could prevent what was about to happen. The age-old game of rock-paper-scissors between the captains decided which side each faculty would get. When the engies won the first two in a best of three competition, things looked ominous for the med kids.

Although managing to put up a valiant effort in the first tug (by finding a loop hole in the rules and regulations,) the med kids were eventually overcome by the pure power of the engies. The crowd got more than they bargained for when the shorts of the engies' anchor began to show what could only be described as a bloody big crack. To the crowd's disappointment, the med tuggers took the soft option and dropped the rope at the last moment instead of taking the plunge.

By swapping sides the med team won the second round and realised how important the subject of dynamics was in a tug. But with a change of ends for the last and final round, the engies theories and calculations had proven correct and the results showed that the rock-paper-scissors had played a crucial part in determining the winner as both teams lost on the uni side of the Torrens. The upsetting result, no matter who won, was that the massive crowd that attended the event

did not get to see one person be pulled into the river. One staff member who had come over during her lunch break to see someone be pulled into the Torrens commented, "the softness by both faculties was appalling". But then again who could blame someone for not wanting to get vomiting, fever, diarrhoea, headaches and rash from the algae!

However, in the end there was no real winner as both faculties lost respect on this fateful day.

#### The Sköll

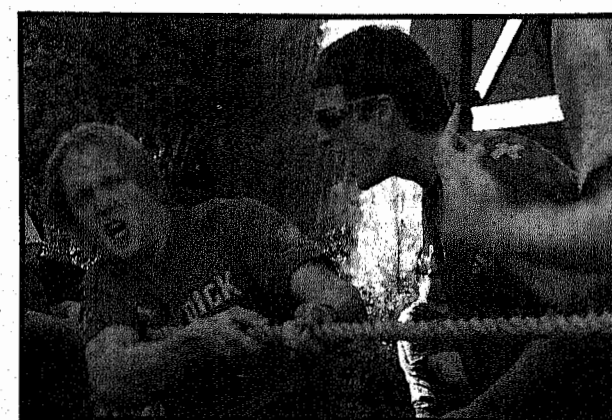
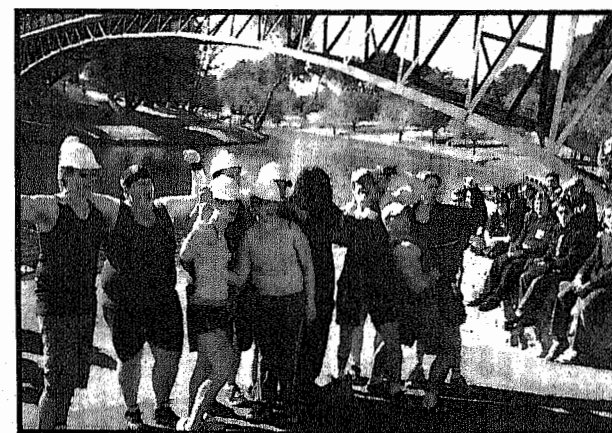
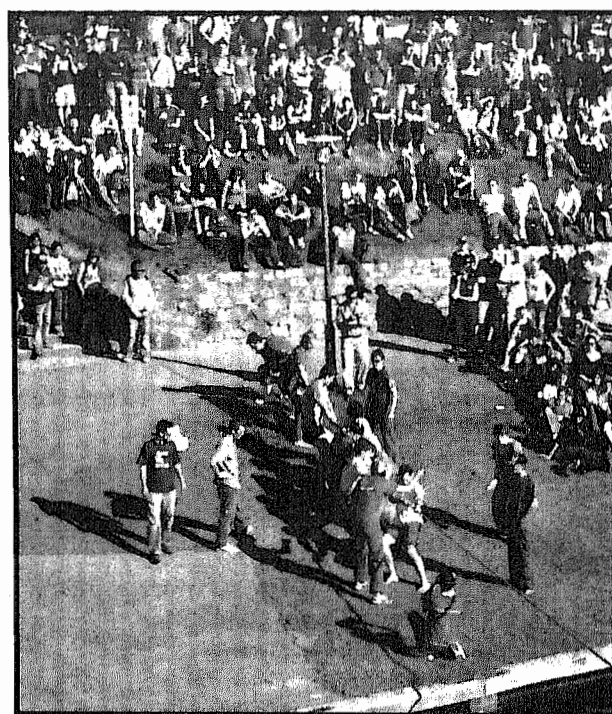
After losing the tug, a skölling challenge was issued and accepted. The med kids, with an intimate knowledge of anatomy and physiology, finally had the advantage on the engies.

Rumour has it that the med skölling team had just come back from a national skölling competition where they had won their third consecutive trophy. Their song of Jinglebells quickly got the engies fired up and it could be seen that a battle was about to unfold. The engies, with the reputation as having the biggest pubcrawl and being damn hard drinkers, would not let the med team take the skölling competition easily.

Although skölling Dark Ale, the match ended up being a whitewash with the med team (apparently known as the Cascade team on the national circuit) convincingly beating the engies by more than two sköllers. Even the female starter for the med kids (the president of the Adelaide Medical Students' Society) beat her male counterpart! Rumour has it that skölling is a prerequisite for the medical presidency.

During the second race there were calls from both sides for breaking and spillage but unfortunately no beer was left. The word on the street is that the engies are now planning to steal from the med kids their most prized possession... the Skullduggery Cup at next years Skullduggery. We wish them the best.

**Ross Roberts-Thomson**





# Cinema Nirvana

Has anybody been to the Greater Union cinemas in Norwood recently and noticed how the cinemas along the end use curved screens? Methinks that the capitalist bastards are using some sort of cheap short-throw lenses on the projectors so that they can achieve larger images, and are compensating for the inherent chromatic aberrations in these lenses by curving the edges of the screen. Surely this half-arsed counter-measure produces the most inauthentic filmgoing experience in all of Adelaide. I know the ongoing quest for a larger screen is seductive, but surely we don't need to compensate for our physical inadequacies to such a disastrous extent. Luckily all the films I've seen at Greater Union Norwood were only projected at the Academic Flat ratio (1.85:1). My mind shudders at the thought of watching something in Cinemascope there. This is not the only cinema to reduce me to tears over the last few years. I was overjoyed to hear, almost two years ago to the day, that Greater Union Marion was going to play classic Hollywood films as part of their rotation of however many thousand piece-of-shit movies they show at any one time. Excited, I carried my cold and sorry arse out to that sterile and lifeless cinema to enjoy a bit of Jimmy Dean in *East of Eden*. My eyes lit up with excitement when I saw they were using an ORIGINAL 35MM PRINT! Unfortunately this moment of supreme enlightenment was promptly shattered when the film started jumping all over the place, continuously cutting more than ten seconds out of the film at a time. The result was perhaps the most horrible experience of my entire life.

Oh, and their print of *Casablanca* was cropped at 1.85 instead of being projected at its correct 1.37. Nuff said.

To stop myself from ranting uncontrollably, I've collated the rest of my observations into dot points.

-The Academy still only has Dolby Stereo. My parent's TV does better.

-Palace / Nova have the volume too low on their films. Nova especially.

-Trak cinema uses a screen whose perforations are too large for a screen so small. The result is that 35mm prints almost have a pixilated look. It was the one thing that tainted an otherwise perfect viewing of the restored print of Visconti's *The Leopard*.

-The Windsor at Lockleys - worst cinema ever. Even Eisenstein's silent films projected in Russian factories in the '20s had better quality sound. I reckon they're still on mono optical! Either that or their speaker wiring is made out of string.

-Nobody checks the prints for the Adelaide Film Festival. In the first festival I had two films that broke on me, one repeatedly, and apparently the Fellini doco caught on fire. Only Fellini would have been pleased at that. Admittedly though, I think they started getting their act together for the second attempt.

However despite all my complaints, that elusive Cinema-Nirvana can still be obtained, even in this little town of ours. I must admit that seeing a restored 35mm print of Fellini's *8 1/2* at Palace was, by far, the most joyous and sublime two and a half hours of my entire life. It was as if God himself was changing the reels. Remember, perfect cinema viewing is merely a matter of infinite hope.

Look, I know there are those of you who go to the movies because it creates the only dating situation where you're not going to run out of things to say. I know you don't care, and frankly, I don't want you to care. You scum know who you are, you spend more time watching how far away your date's hand is from your own instead of watching the fucking film. Stop trying to edge closer to them and pay attention. And for those who *do* give a shit about these important issues, demand that your date takes you to a cinema that will project its films properly. Any girlfriend-to-be of mine take note, you better be up to scratch on this (and you also better get to the cinema on time - I've stood up girls for less).

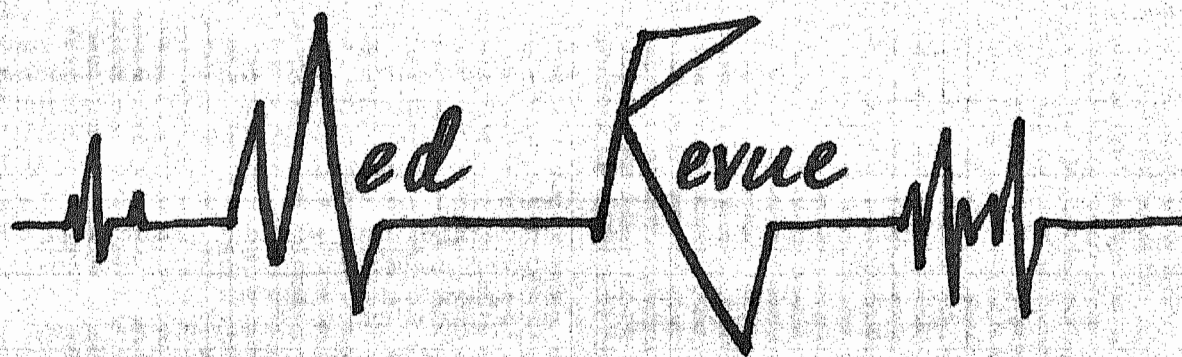
I know it sounds like I've lost all hope, but I do know that a better life is possible. It quivers on the horizon. When the Mercury can get a silent film from the 1912 to run faultlessly whilst simultaneously playing a second soundtrack, I know where the bar should be set. But we have to work together. Filmgoers of Adelaide, let your protests be heard! Stand up against these renegade projectionists and fascist cinema operators. Your cries will not go unnoticed. Be like Jean-Pierre Leaud in Godard's *Masculin-Feminin* and demand that your cinemas adhere to their own projection standards. Revolt in the aisles where necessary. Soon we will be going digital, the final nail will be in the coffin, and before the reel marks and film grain are removed from our consciousness for all eternity, let us cast this final cry into the night.

**Matthew Salleh**

*wishes he was watching 8 1/2 with that girl he has a crush on right now.*

or,  
8 1/2

Reasons to Riot  
in the Aisles



*'Dad always thought laughter was the best medicine, which I guess is why several of us died of tuberculosis.'*

Jack Handey, "Deep Thoughts," Saturday Night Live

A collection of skits performed by the Medical Students of ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY

Directed by Heidi Beadnall and Duncan George

7.30pm, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2005

Capri Theatre

141 Goodwood Road, GOODWOOD

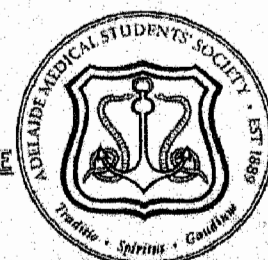
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by AMSS

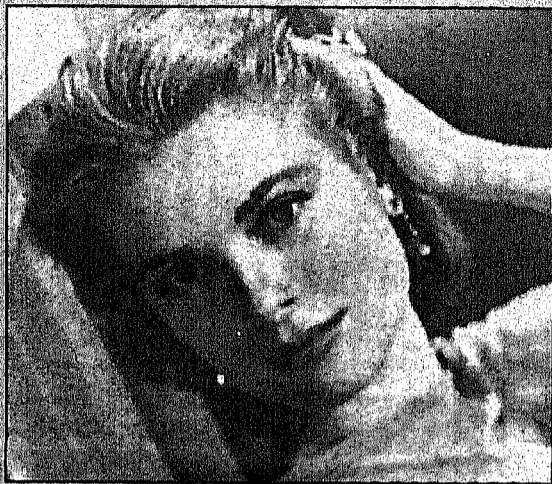


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REVIEWER PROFILE

Hélène Sobolewski



**Fave Film:** *Amélie*

**Most Hated Films:** *Troy, The Crop*

**Fave Genres:** 'Arthouse', French New Wave, Noir, Comedy, Action

**Least Liked Genre:** Zombie

**Fave Actor:** Jean-Paul Belmondo



THE ISLAND

**Director:** Michael Bay  
**Starring:** Scarlett Johansson & Ewan McGregor

In the future Scarlett Johansson, as naive Jordan Two-Delta, impatiently waits in her regulated environment for her chance to win the nightly drawn lottery ticket to 'the island' where salvation supposedly lies. Ewan McGregor as Lincoln Six-Echo has a more inquisitive mind and ponders the validity of this island and whether there is more to life than his white Puma sneakers, tracksuit, tofu and regimented routine. Lincoln does some sleuthing and realizes the danger they're in if they go to 'the island'. The island doesn't offer the utopian dream Jordan has been conditioned to believe. It is true that on 'the island' there is more to life than Puma; there is Nokia, Bud Beer, Tag Heuer, Speedo, CK and more. Michael Bay directs his film like a very loud and bright commercial made to win you over in 30 seconds. It insults with its mind numbing stupidity, over the top product placement, nonsensical violence and action scenes that make up the last half of the film. He must see his audience as moths easily attracted to light. That must have been the cause for Scarlett's white wardrobe. Bay uses her extraordinary looks, totally ignoring her acting talent. *The Island* sets up the ethical debate of human cloning as a commodity. Cloned humans are mass-produced to ensure that humans in the real world are ensured a longer, healthier life. One clone to each well

paying human guarantees whatever organ is necessary in the time of need. The clones are brainwashed into believing they lived the same life as their mirroring humans. This becomes a problem when they realize that they were decanted, not born and don't have a past. In a twist on our reality of commercials, Scarlett's Jordan sees the real Scarlett Johansson in her ad for CK's Eternity Moment perfume. An interesting debate could arise from this content but *The Island* keeps interesting characters, smooth editing, developed ideas and thus an engaged viewer at Bay.



Hélène Sobolewski



HOUSE OF WAX

**Director:** Jaume Collet-Serra  
**Starring:** Elisha Cuthbert, Chad Michael Murray, Brian Van Holt & Paris Hilton

The 1953 *House of Wax* starred sullen voiced Vincent Price; master of deranged roles and frightening pretty ladies. The deranged sibling in 2005's *House of Wax* is called Vincent (Brian Van Holt) but doesn't make the film his as Price does with the 1953 version.

A group of college friends go on a road trip to an important football game. They share one brain cell. Pretty Carly Jones (Elisha Cuthbert) has it for most of the film, but still uses it sparingly. Taking a wrong turn which leads them to nowhere, they decide to camp out in the spooky, spooky forest. Unfortunately a rotten funk wafts their way. They follow it and meet a toothless yokel; the first of the neighbouring town's unpredictable

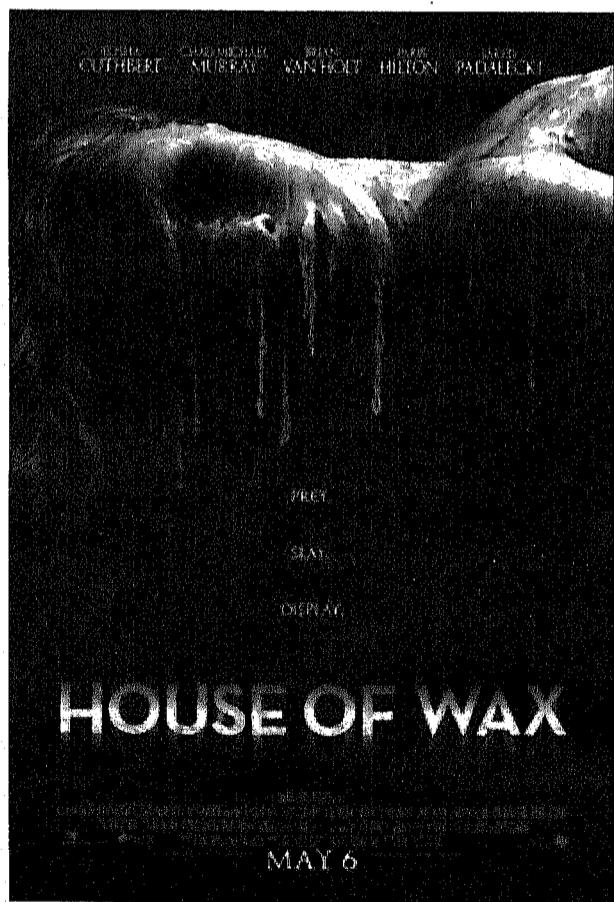
characters. As expected tempers boil and gossip simmers, the group set up camp. The next day they quarrel a bit and go their separate ways for help. One by one they will inevitably meet with their horrific fate. Then it's just a matter of waiting to see how ingenious their death will be. Their one-dimensional tepid personalities and stupidity create a barrier between audience and character that makes you welcome their end.

Excessively cringe worthy scenes make up the rest of the film. The deranged siblings in charge of their mother's House of Wax find cunning ways of inflicting pain on their victims. To keep Carly from crying out for help her kidnapper replaces the commonly used household double tape over the mouth with extra strength super glue. Never has superglue brought out such a merchandisable flame red shade on the lips.

The climax doesn't come in the usual narrative sense but with the death of a minor character. The director could cheaply build tension on the premise that the audience is gleefully awaiting Paris Hilton's gruesome death. (Get your t-shirt 'See Paris die' now!) Poor waxen flaxen haired Paris died to this audience's cheering and clapping. With numerous references made to her short film, Paris' minor role is the one most talked about.



Hélène Sobolewski





# A GOOD WOMAN

**Director:** Mike Barker  
**Starring:** Helen Hunt, Scarlett Johansson, Tom Wilkinson & Stephen Campbell Moore

Adapted from Oscar Wilde's play *Lady Windermere's Fan*, this twisted little romantic comedy is packed with witty observations on love and marriage, and features some fine performances and a nicely off handed production style, even if it all feels a bit dull.

It's the 1930s on the Amalfi coast, where Mrs Erlynne (Hunt) has escaped vicious Manhattan gossipmongers while she looks for a new man. She sets her sights on the young Robert Windermere (Umbers), whose naive wife Meg (Johansson) can't even begin to suspect his unfaithfulness. But tongues start wagging in the expat community, and a young lord (Moore) steps in to take advantage of the situation, while an older gentleman (Wilkinson) sets his eyes on Mrs Erlynne.

Wilde's wry and astute observations pepper the dialog from start to finish, and it's interesting that they're almost throwaway lines in Himelstein's script, even as they slice through the air with delightful precision. The director, Mike Barker, keeps everything impeccably mellow and, eventually, melodramatic. The sentiments Wilde perhaps meant to convey in his play are not present in the film. It doesn't really matter though; Helen Hunt and Scarlett Johanson fill any emotional gaps in the screenplay with

more than capable, sly performances. Tom Wilkinson is great at capturing the inner spark of a character and the rest of the cast fill in the edges very nicely indeed.

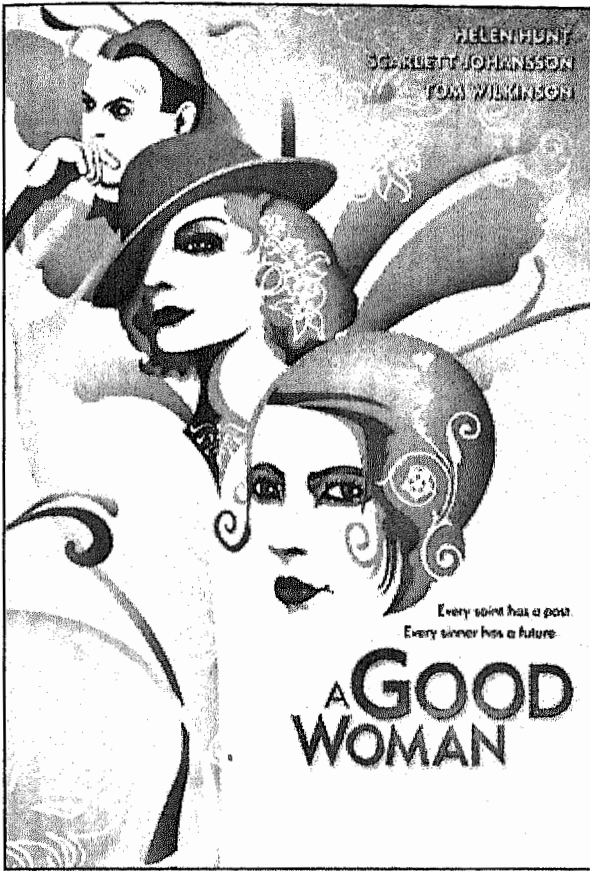
This is a terrific story, with plot strands that intersect in all kinds of intriguing ways to examine issues of commitment and fidelity, while challenging accepted opinions and forcing us to look at ourselves honestly. The film drags badly at the end, taking ages to reach its final conclusion by way of a series of misunderstandings and red herrings, as well as lots and lots of dialog. And despite Wilde's provocative approach, Barker and Himelstein have made a surprisingly tame, rather too-nice little movie for the PG crowd.

"If we're always guided by other people's thoughts, what's the point of having our own", indeed.

The film is solid and engaging, supported by high production values. I just wish that extra provocative edge, present in Wilde's original story, could have been added.



Harry Black



# ME AND MY SISTER

**Director:** Alexandra Leclere  
**Starring:** Isabelle Huppert, Catherine Frot, Francois Berleand & Brigitte Catillon

There are very few films that I *really* don't like but *Les Soeurs Fachees* has surfaced to the top as my most disliked film of 2005. Set in Paris we get to see two sisters with very different lives come together - in the sense of proximity not sisterhood.

Louise (Catherine Frot) and Martine (Isabelle Huppert) both grew up in the French countryside of Le Mans. Martine moved to the city to live a bourgeois lifestyle. Financially supported by her husband, she also has a nanny and a maid, which has rendered her bored and bitter with no evident talents or interests. Louise on the other hand stayed in Le Mans and is passionate, in love and excited about life. Wide-eyed she travels to Paris to meet a publisher for her first book and to stay with her sister.

Martine is icy, bitter, aggressive and depressed. Her nastiness towards her sister, nanny, maid, husband and friends is cringe-worthy. While the film is supposedly a

comedy they throw in some darker issues of alcoholism, depression and adultery. Further to this is a rape scene between Martine and her husband Pierre (Francois Berleand). While rape definitely has its place in cinema I resent it unnecessarily being thrown in between laughs and then not further developed. Perhaps this scene was included to illustrate how common and unspoken about rape is, but to be honest, it appeared more like a husband's right than a violent violation.

The film is not all bad news. Frot and Huppert were excellent as Louise and Martine. Their portrayal of siblings was at times right on the mark as they illustrated their stark differences and also the bond of sisterhood that unites them. There are beautiful Parisian scenes and Louise's child-like innocence is charming as she revels in life's little pleasures. All in all, the film came across quite disjointed with no grand finale to leave you feeling tingly the way that comedies usually do.



Anna Svedberg



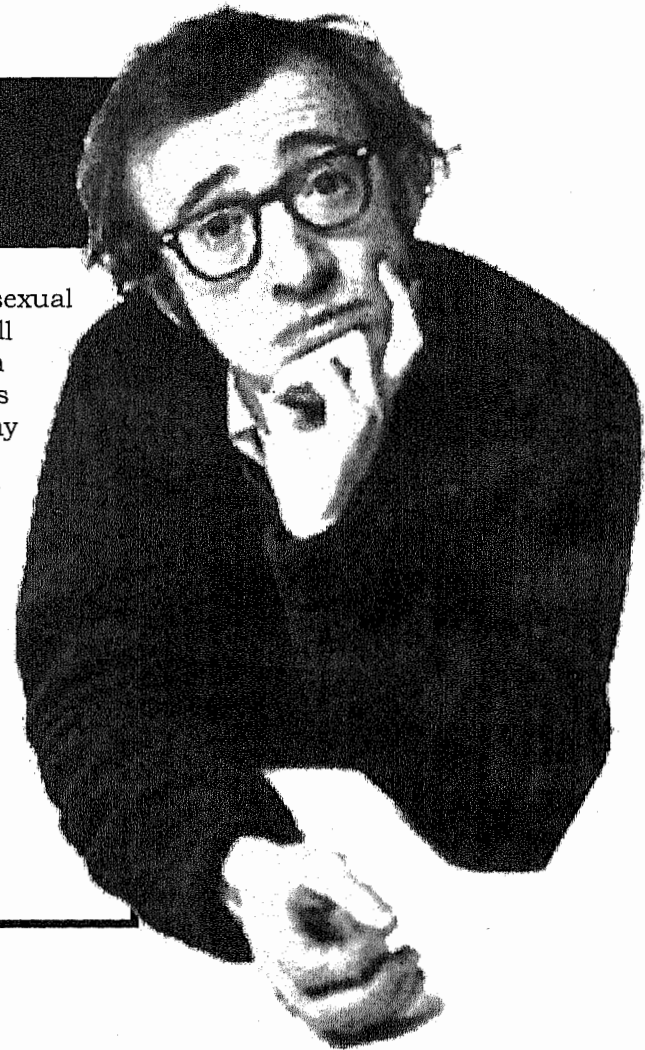
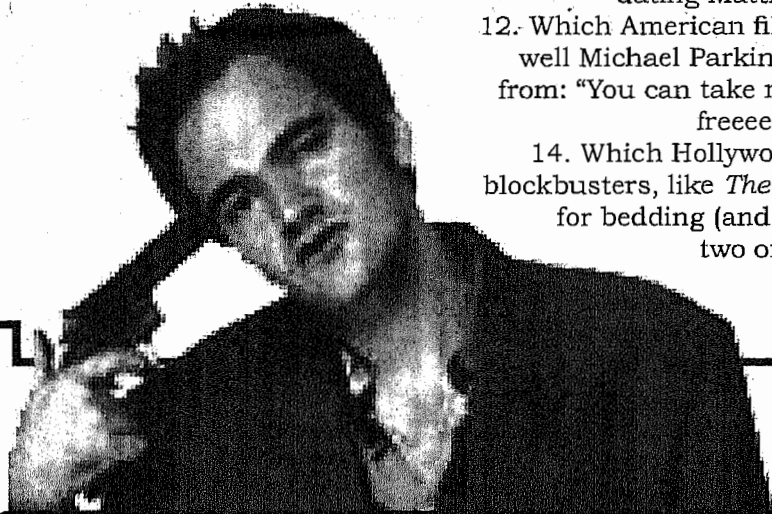


How much of a film geek are you? Take Soph's

# Movie Mastermind Quiz

and see if you can out geek Tarantino

1. Which object travelled the world in the film *Amelie*?
2. Lieutenant Einhorn was an evil transsexual police woman in which film?
3. Who played the little girl in *ET*?
4. Which famous director will be imprisoned if he returns to America?
5. In which film did Woody Allen first star?
6. Which psychopath married Uncle Fester in *The Addams Family Values*?
7. *The Royal Tenebaums* was directed by which 'up-and-coming' young director?
8. Who won Best Actress at the last Academy Awards?
9. What did the leader of the wild pigs in *A Muppet's Treasure Island* say when his group were confronted by people with guns?
10. Which well-known film director starred in her very well-known film director father's most famous film?
11. Which lucky bi-atch is currently dating Matthew McConaughey?
12. Which American film actress did not get along very well Michael Parkinson?
13. Which film is this line from: "You can take my life, but you can never take my freeeeeddddooommm!"?
14. Which Hollywood director is famous for crappy blockbusters, like *The Island*?
15. Which director is famous for bedding (and usually marrying) his leading ladies, two of which are/were Linda Hamilton and Suzie Amis?



## CULT BLAST FROM THE PAST

# Revenge of the Nerds (1984)

**Director:** Jeff Kanew

**Starring:** Robert Carradine, Anthony Edwards, Curtis Armstrong

"All jocks think about is sports, all we ever think about is sex"

What a classic! Gilbert and Lewis are off to college with high hopes to study computers, meet hot chicks, make new friends. However, they soon discover the segregation they felt in high school is still thriving in college. Those damn jocks! So the nerds decide to fight back - no more oppression!

When released, *Revenge of the Nerds*, was one of many mid-eighties T & A ( Tits and Ass, for those in the dark) films to do the rounds. Luckily for all of us, it touched a chord in many a nerd around the world, lifting it from stock-standard 80's trash to cult masterpiece.

This has much to do with Carradine's charming performance as the eternally optimistic and obviously nerdy Lewis, but also the kooky support cast, especially Curtis Armstrong as Booger, the dude who can out-burp anyone. The script is surprisingly witty and relevant, of course with a side of filth, but what can you expect from "hair pie" obsessed nerds? It is filled with college film clichés: jocks, sororities, fraternities, the token overly camp gay dude, the Japanese exchange student, but as it was one of the originals you must embrace the clichés and appreciate them for their originality. If you want. If not, just watch it for a guilt-free giggle. Fun without the brain power. It's definitely needed on occasion, and *Revenge of the Nerds* is ideal. And if you shed a tear at Lewis's final speech, as 'We are the Champions' begins to play, you will be forgiven.

Lucky L.



1. GARDEN GNOME 2. ACE VENTURA PET DETECTIVE 3. DREW BARRYMORE 4. ROMAN POLANSKI 5. WHAT'S NEW PUSSYCAT 6. DEB-BIE JALINSKI 7. WES ANDERSON 8. HILARY SWANK (Million Dollar Baby) 9. "THEY HAVE MAGIC BOOM BOOM STICKS! RETREAT!" 10. SOPHIA COPPOLA 11. PENELOPE CRUZ 12. MEG RYAN 13. BRAVE HEART 14. MICHAEL BAY 15. JAMES CAMERON

## ANSWERS



## QUOTH THE RAVEN

"I'm not your friend palooka"

If you know what film this quote is from let us know and you'll be ushered into the afterlife to receive forty dark eyed virgins... or some movie tickets. Congratulations to past winner Mitchell Waters from the Hollywood edition for *Jurassic Park*.



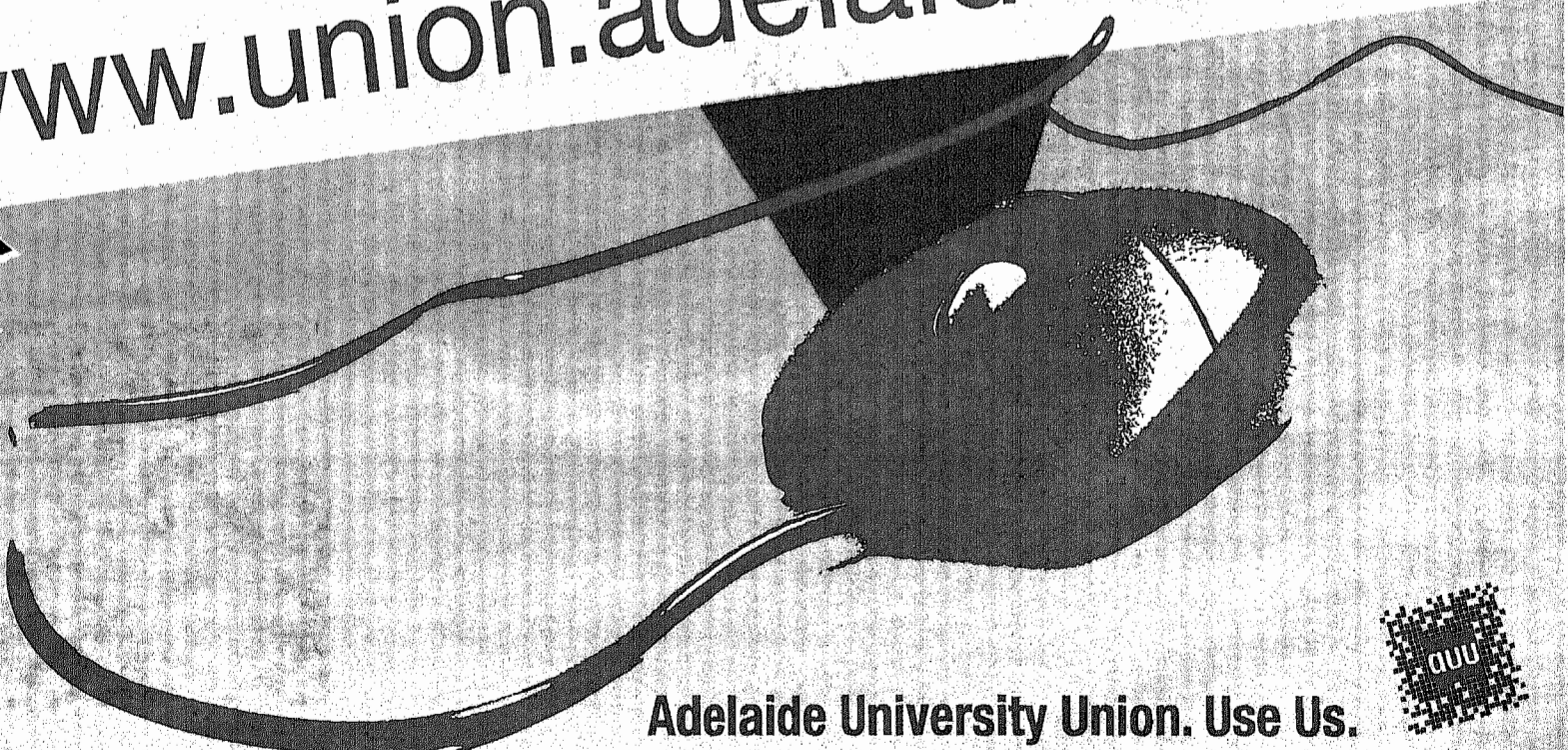
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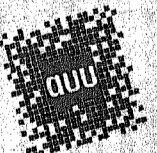
24-hour computer suite  
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# Unesay Time Travel

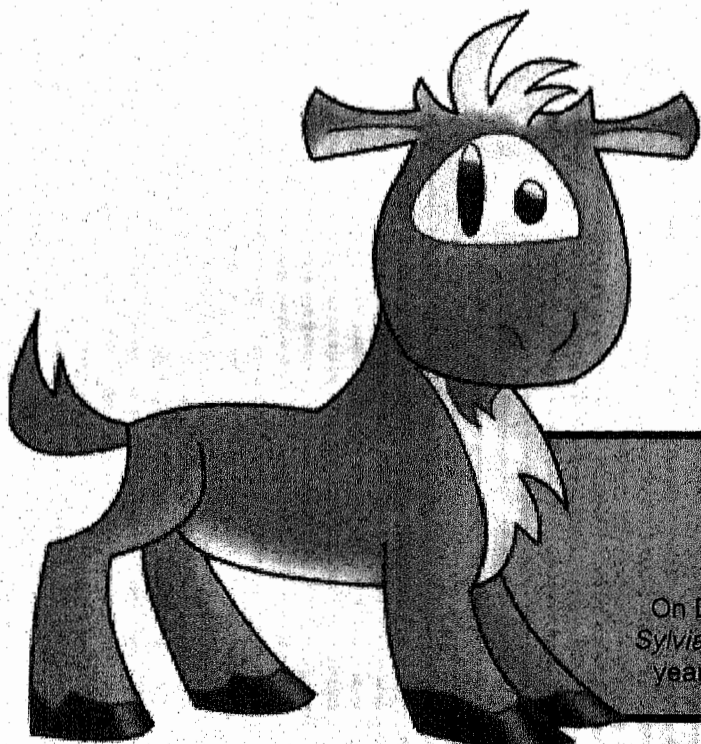
**'Classic Marsalis'**  
**Adelaide Symphony Orchestra**  
**Adelaide Town Hall**  
**July 28-30**

In what was rather obviously a grab for a share of the growing jazz audience in Adelaide, the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra booked virtuoso saxophonist Branford Marsalis as the star of its eighth Master Series concert for the year. Despite Marsalis' impressive talent and extensive knowledge – the interview included in the program notes demonstrated the latter – he was let down by the choice of works.

At a glance, the program appeared to be a well-planned exploration of the music of nineteenth and twentieth century Russian composers, featuring pieces by Stravinsky, Liadov and Glazunov. I had forgotten how unexciting Glazunov's *Saxophone concerto* was, but, thankfully, it was brief. Copland's *Clarinet concerto* was out of place in this concert, especially as it was performed on a soprano saxophone. The ASO proudly proclaimed it as a world premiere performance of this arrangement, although one would have to wonder why no one else has attempted such an experiment. The squawking, cheesily-American concerto seemed like a desperate attempt to fit a piece into the program that Marsalis could perform with the orchestra. Surely a Showtime Series concert would have been a better forum to show off Marsalis' skills.

Stravinsky's suite drawn from *The Firebird* was the final item on the program, and what a joy it was from start to finish. Under the baton of guest conductor Andrey Boreyko, the orchestra played as well as one could wish for. Every swell and sigh was perfect, and the usual problem of the orchestra's *fortissimo* being too big for the Town Hall became an advantage in the *Infernal dance of King Kashchei*, which was played in a delightfully demonic manner. Small children were seen to hit the ceiling upon hearing the first blasting chord of the movement – the effect Stravinsky was after, I'm sure. The stunningly beautiful *Berceuse* and the triumphant *Finale* capped off a fantastic performance of the Stravinsky masterpiece.

Edward Joyner



## WIN TICKETS

On Dit is giving away tickets to State Theatre Company's upcoming production, *The Goat or Who is Sylvia*. Be the first to email us with the name of the playwright whose work is being performed and the year that *The Goat* won the Tony Award for the Best Play, and you'll be off for a night at the theatre!

# Rare Opportunity

Current Elder School of Music student Anthony Hunt is set to combine with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra's principal trumpeter, David Elton, in what promises to be a spectacular event at St Peter's Cathedral. This follows their successful collaboration last year when they joined soprano Shu-Cheen Yo for a *Sunday Live* program on ABC Classic FM.

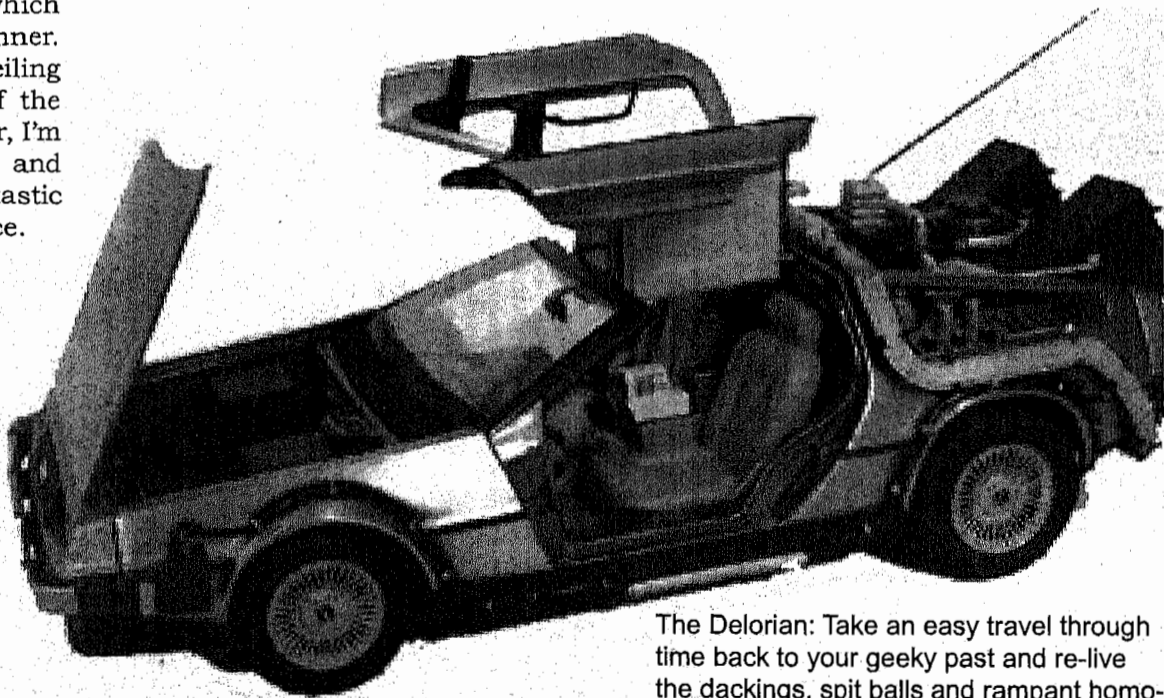
Having been involved in the music program at the Cathedral for most of his life, Hunt is excited about the chance to take centre stage alongside a trumpeter. 'I love nothing better than the sound of brass in the Cathedral,' said Hunt. 'Even the simplicity of *Ave Maria* played on a trumpet with a soft accompaniment is breathtakingly beautiful.'

Elton explained that the idea for this concert is not new. 'Anthony and I have wanted to do this concert for some time,' he said. 'There's so much great music for this combination of instruments, but it's hardly ever performed.'

Works to feature include everything from the Bach/Gounod version of *Ave Maria* to Petr Eben's *Chagall windows* and Vincent Perischetti's *The hollow men* to Duke Ellington standards. The Cathedral choir will join Hunt and Elton for Kenneth Leighton's *Easter sequence* and for a new work by Hunt, entitled *Jubilate*.

The performance 'Trumpet & Organ' takes place at 3pm on August 21 at St Peter's Cathedral. Tickets are \$10 for students and can be booked by phone (8267 4551) or online at <[www.stpeterscathedralchoir.org](http://www.stpeterscathedralchoir.org)>.

Benedict Coxon



The DeLorean: Take an easy travel through time back to your geeky past and re-live the dackings, spit balls and rampant homo-eroticism of early high school



## SAVED BY THE BIRD

'Take Flight'  
Australian String Quartet  
Adelaide Town Hall  
July 25

The Australian String Quartet's third subscription series concert for the year opened with the *String quartet in D major ('The Lark')* by Haydn, an energetic piece, which was very enthusiastically led by first violinist Natsuko Yoshimoto. Although a typical Classical piece, the quartet played it with great intensity and often added some Romantic stylistic features to their playing. The density of the sound was generally quite heavy, though several noticeable shifts in tone were used. These were nicely executed and were met with a warm response from the audience.

The following *Six bagatelles* by Webern caused some unease in the audience, as the contrast between Classical and Second Viennese School music could not have been more clear. However, through its lyrical playing, the ASQ did make it clear that Webern continued and expanded on the tradition of Haydn.

Wolf's *Italian serenade* came next, a piece based on poems by Eichendorff. It was a difficult piece with many interweaving passages, however, the ASQ played with great ease and persuasiveness.

The renowned Australian cellist Li-Wei joined the ASQ for the last work on the program, Schubert's *String quintet in C minor*. All five string players blended together very well, and beautiful interpretations of solo passages were brought to the fore. The piece centres around a massive slow movement, in which the careful and intense playing of each member resulted in a gradual climax.

Andreas Wulf



## BARMAIDS

Dunstan Playhouse July 27-30

If you thought that going to the theatre was a positive alternative to your usual Saturday night booze-hound antics you may have been slightly perturbed by alcohol's inexplicable ability to seek you out.

The play is a week in the life of two middle-aged barmaids Nancy (Valerie Bader) and Val (Genevieve Picot) who have devoted much of their lives to serving drinks. *Barmaids* is set in Aussie pub 'The Arms' and while I don't have first hand patron experience at such a pub, the evening's atmosphere was comically familiar.

Nancy is foul mouthed, ockerish and bitter about her exes new young long-legged lady friend while Val is rigid, straight faced and recently separated from her alcoholic husband. The only things the pair have in common are their age, occupation and the threat that their livelihoods have come under as local establishments have unleashed topless barmaids on the neighbourhood.

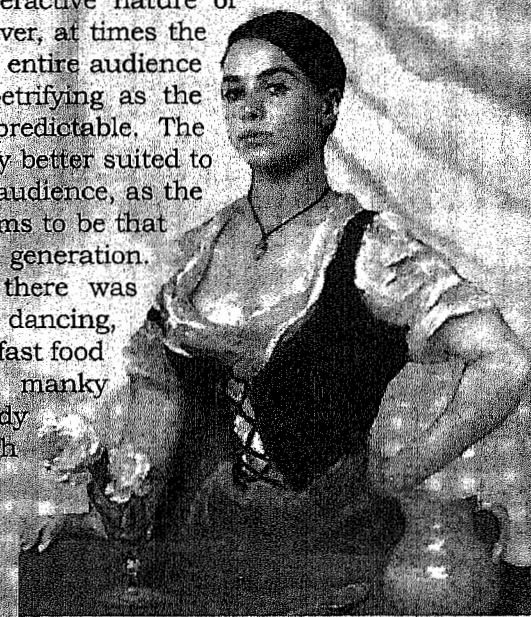
The show is an entertaining mix of mono and duologues as well as audience interaction and participation. Shy folk should have avoided, front rows and fringe seats unless they wanted to be photographed by Nancy and featured on her 'Arsehole of the Week' board. Before the show began while in the foyer, audience members were invited to engage in some onstage karaoke action. Our very own Clementine Ford was valiant and razzle-dazzled the audience in her rendition of Police's 'Every Breath You Take', the other contenders awkwardly side-stepping and muttering yeah uh mmm do the locomotion wi me in her shadow. Bader and Picot rewarded all audience members that participated in any way- and a few who just felt like it - with freshly poured Pale Ale.

While Nancy and Val were the only actors, one became acquainted and familiar with the characters of the regulars, which were essentially dummies, slumped over the bar or propped up in the corner, taking on a life of their own.

There was no real plot to follow but over two hours strong characters emerged highlighting the role of the barmaid as more than she who pours the beer. The Barmaid as represented by Picot and Bader is all encompassing from, social worker, mediator, mind reader and mother, to actor and entertainer.

Bader, Picot, Playwright Katherine Thompson and Director Garry Down have created an entertaining and amusing piece of theatre. I enjoyed the interactive nature of *Barmaids*, however, at times the lights up on the entire audience became quite petrifying as the duo were so unpredictable. The show is probably better suited to a more mature audience, as the pub culture seems to be that of a different generation. All the same, there was enough singing, dancing, witty lines, and fast food eating in the manky toilets for anybody to have a laugh at though.

Anna  
Svedberg







**Avril Lavigne**  
**Under My Skin**  
Arista

At least her idea of punk is somewhat closer than Ashlee Simpson – she doesn't just throw things around and scream

in her little pop star outfits. She does it in punk outfits instead. Not much better is her insistence to follow in the likes of Aguilera and Spears' footsteps by 'maturing through her music' with raunchier outfits blatantly appealing to the male population by putting out and trying to prove that she's grown up.

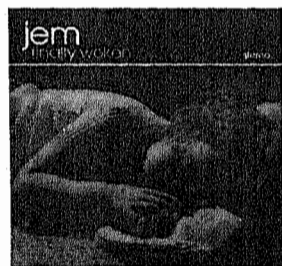
As for the album, well...it's basically an extension of her previous work. It 'speaks' to angsty teenagers with rockier melodic pop that we've come to expect from her.

'How does it feel' attempts her forlorn 'I hate you', but doesn't quite reach it. 'Forgotten' however gets the feeling across a little more potently, but still has the childish idea of running away from problems rather than facing them. So a less dark attitude is adopted throughout. Also it features the (annoying) single releases that seem to hang in your head whether you want them there or not. 'Freak Out' was the closet thing to punk on the album, sounding very much like Sum41 with a female singer. Apart from that, in the end it's all very samey.

The bonus live track's evidence that she has grown, her performance standards risen from those original painful live performances. Yet the sweet almost innocence still remains.

It's another similar offering from Lavigne, so if you enjoyed her original offerings you'll enjoy this, although it's not quite as dark. Plus it seems she's starting to learn how to spell properly.

**Anon**

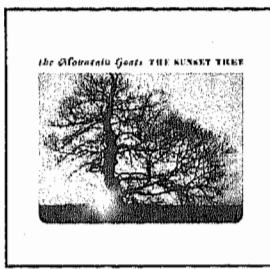


**Jem**  
**Finally Woken**  
Sony BMG

Any kid with an ounce of attention devoted to popular culture should be familiar with Jem: the opening track of

her new album *Finally Woken* has appeared on the OC. Such an achievement has duly helped catapult the Welsh-born singer-songwriter to international fame. These days of course successful marketing can take the place of talent and solid artistic material to back up such fame, but luckily for her Jem's album might be good enough to justify the attention. Nothing competes with the sublime opener "They", but there is a stimulating blend of hip hop beats, intimate melodies and downtempo songs to make the album a satisfying listen for a mildly contemplative afternoon at home. The reediness of Jem's Beth Orton-esque voice makes it an electronic, adult pop rock album a cut above the rest. The lyrics, though not overly confrontational, are at times uplifting. All in all, this album won't change your life, but it will add an interesting dash of colour. That is of course, unless you're a big fan of the OC, in which case buying it will bring you one step closer in any respectable obsessive emulation of Mischa Barton.

**Eskimo Jesus**



**The Mountain Goats**  
**The Sunset Tree**  
4AD

The oral tradition has been intricate in culture from the very beginnings (no not that kind of tradition... that was last week's

edition of On Dit). Narration has held society together passing on tales of life, love, hate and tribulations, and John Darnielle has taken up this gauntlet with his latest release, *The Sunset Tree*, under the guise of The Mountain Goats.

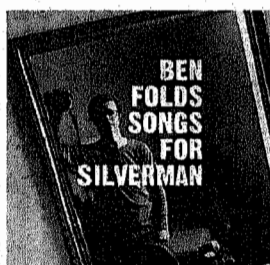
It is an album which at first glance appears a much more perfected recording than ever offered before, and some might say that the thickened textures and rounding in sound deter from the pop-folk charm of rough singing and strumming guitar. And yes in a way they do, but in a way they don't. Without the striking orchestration of 'Dilaudid' the potency of its meaning and urgency would be lost. However, the most memorable tracks are the ones, such as 'Love Love Love' and 'Dance Music' which incorporate the more traditional strumming. However, 'Lion's Teeth' and 'Hast Thou Considered The Tetrapod' are also notable.

The consternation about the backing music becomes a bit of a blur however, when you realise that even the upbeat tracks, such as 'Dance Music', have such deeply rooted fear and abuse in them. This is the beauty of this album. It is one of the most raw, unfeared portrayals of a childhood full fit-full relationships within Darnielle's dysfunctional family, with a special focus on his stepfather. The abuse, confusion, and his overwhelming desire for freedom, and bright hope despite the smiting from the father figure in his life are evident in his emotional, despite squeaky, vocals. Blunt and vivid images of the situations Darnielle found himself in are retold honestly. And yet resolution is found in the final tracks, as the album dies away as did he. 'Love Love Love' and 'Pale Green Things' have such an air of reconciliation about them it is indeed heart-warming. All this that from a surface listen you would never have expected.

So although many listeners will be disappointed by this album's neatness, it still offers an amazing 'confessional' tale cleverly interwoven with music. One could say Darnielle's achievements in this production are beginning to reach the misty heights of Bob Dylan. Evidently The Mountain Goats are certainly not afraid of this challenge.

The Mountain Goats are coming to town in September, playing at Jive on Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> of September, and what better way to hear this musical narrative than in its face value origins?

**jenn**



**Ben Folds**  
**Songs For Silverman**  
Sony BMG

When wondering what it was I wanted to write about Ben Folds - the man and his new

album - a friend told me of a review he wrote once just for the hell of it. Of course I asked, dumbfounded, "Why the hell would you write a review without receiving any perks?", but that's just the kind of guy he is. I will paraphrase what he quoted while hopefully preserving his sentiment similarly.

Every time you buy a Ben Folds album, you

get home and wonder why the hell you bought it. Then you give it an airing and realise that the man is a fucking genius.

"True" I thought with the raising of my brow and opening my eyes in realisation, but then remembered that in order to be the 'ideal critic' I should enter the 'imaginative space' of the CD with a clear and unbiased mind.

Ben Folds' new trio reverts, in no negative sense, to his tried and true formula of bass, drums and piano. It does not create a disappointing result. That I remember the songs 'Bastard, You To Thank', 'Jesusland', 'Landed' and 'Late' from his Thebarton Theatre performance (viewed upon the sponsorship of a friend) is testament to his ability to write pleasantly and grippingly. He uses his music in a beautiful and convincing way to express realistic woe and melancholy. Note that this is not due to any overly depressing lyrical content; it appears inherently in the music itself.

The quality of the personnel Folds is utilising is of closest resemblance to his previous 'Folds Five' band, but there is so much new ground covered here. Harmonies are richer, more plentiful, and are expelled with confidence and sense of purpose. Songs are mature reflections, and often contemplate more than one side of a situation. Folds' songs also present a welcome alternative representation of the married man in music, as someone who still has problems but knows that love will overcome.

Musically it is intense, but unlike *The Mars Volta*, not in a way that becomes unbearable. The songs have been refined so that the best ideas have been kept and built upon, and the 'not so hot' ones omitted. And yes, the fuzz bass is used to its full extent. For these reasons, *Songs For Silverman* is Folds' most consistent and convincing solo work, in my opinion, thus far.

His dedication to the late Elliot Smith, if you have knowledge of the intention of its creation, is a beautiful tribute and generates the greatest sense of loss even for one who is not overly familiar with Smith's work.

Even if you dislike Ben Folds, or are still wondering, "Why were there only three people in Ben Folds Five?", every God fearing, loathing or indifferent man should at least own a copy of his version of 'Get Your Hands Off Of My Woman', originally by The Darkness, available on his *Super D* E.P. It is a vibrant classic cover, which I'm sure any man who's ever had (or wishes he had) a female companion, would agree.

**Tony Marshall**

**Oi!**  
Music meeting  
this Thursday  
in the On Dit  
office at 1pm. Be  
prepared to twist  
for your tunes...



# The *On Dit* Music Quiz for Geeks

by Ben Vistoli, Stone Fox and Secert Geek

1. What's the average length of a Queen song?

2. Which band had a hit with 'Cum on Feel The Noise'?

3. What's a B Bender?

4. Who invented the Pianola?

5. What's the nationality of folk singer Atahualpa Yupanqui?

6. Name the members of Spandau Ballet.

7. What is the time signature of Pink Floyd's 'Money' before it breaks into the inept Gilmore solo in 4/4?

8. Who is Allen Forte?

9. Where and when was the Trips Festival?

10. Which leg did music geek extremo Rivers Cuomo (Weezer) have surgically corrected?

11. Complete this line: "when the first cup of coffee tastes like..."

12. Which artists are heard during the murder scenes of the film *American Psycho*?

13. What is the colour of the C string on most harps?

14. Who said, "The beast in me is caged by trail and fragile bars."

15. Who were the members of The Zit Remedy, from TV's *Degrassi High*, and what instruments did they play?

16. What's the epitaph on Ian Curtis' [Joy Division] tombstone?

17. Who composed 'Arabesque No. 1'?

18. What did Thom Yorke's [Radiohead] father do for a quid?

19. WHO SAID, "FUCK JAZZ, JAZZ IS FUCKING STUPID!"?

20. Which band made an album called *Master of Reality*?

Bring your answer sheet down to the office on Thurs at 1pm and get first pick of the review CDs. What an offer!

## The Top Six Geekiest Album Covers Of All Time!



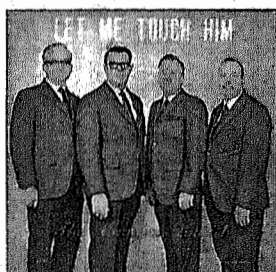
Only twelve top hits? Look at the fun those kids are having! They're really living it up - he looks like he's about to bust out of his pants, that's how excited he is. And don't they all know it too, the handsome devil! Look at their admiring faces! Especially the stripy shirt boy sitting next to Mary Sue on the settee...



This album cover is fucking brilliant on so many levels. Look at the stance of the minstrel on the left, so proud to be singing for his God. And the poppet in the middle is a little shy there, hiding behind the superfluous strumpet who *isn't even in the band*. But my favourite is the dude on the right. He's like a big chubby religious teddy lion with a mane.



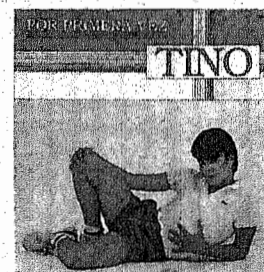
Julie doesn't look like she's having a very good time. Not only is John Bull a total skeeze bag for ruining Julie's sixteenth birthday, but he hasn't even bought her a drink. And really - what kind of person builds an entire album around a perverted crush on jailbait? Let her go Bull - nothing stinks worse than desperation except stale desperation.



I almost feel sorry for The Ministers' Quartet. *Let Me Touch Him* is probably an entirely innocent collection of jovial hymns in praise of Our Father. But it is a fairly uncanny coincidence. I dunno, maybe they were just more open about rampant sexual abuse in the church back then.



After Joyce's enormously successful singing career ground to a halt, she took to teaching in a high school, her heady days as a rock star but a distant memory. Luckily, she'll always have this album cover to remind her. Why does it remind me so much of White Lady Funerals?



Grrr! Tino, you're an Italian Stallion. It doesn't matter that your village chased you away from fear you were about to deflower their daughters! Look at those shorts, that polo shirt, that deliciously saucy glint in your eye...As The Ministers Quartet might say, "Let Me Touch Him"!

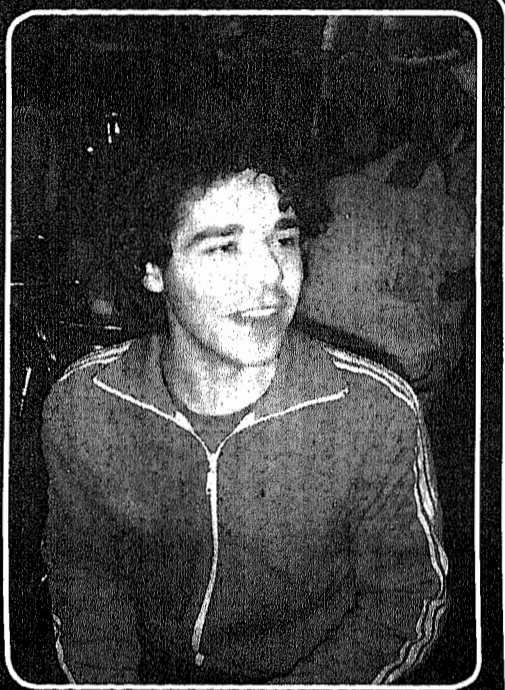


# On Dit uncovers the geeky underbelly of the Unibar...

1. What's your geekiest trait and/or hobby?
2. Are people who pretend they're geeks because they think it's cool as lame as that sounds?
3. Do you find people who dress up as their favourite fictional character fascinating or disturbing?
4. Would you rather be a nerd or give birth to one?
5. Can geeks, by definition, be attractive?

**Brian**

1. I own educational Star Wars role playing game book.
2. Definately. I'm a geek deep down but you know I hide it with a layer of cool.
3. They're creepy.
4. Be a nerd.
5. 80s teen movies have made it possible but it's a tough question.

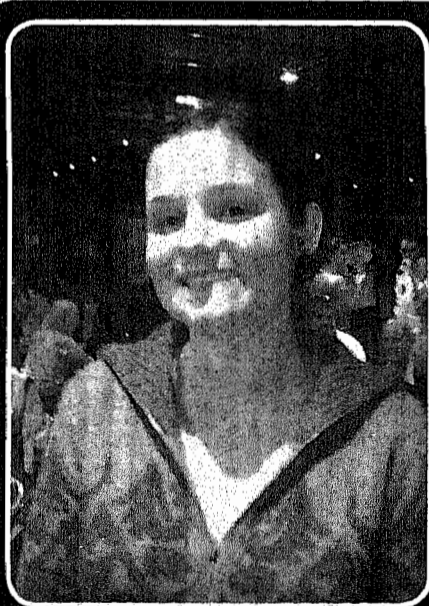


*Geek Chic*



**Daniel & Trish**

1. **D:** I have collector Princess Amadala dolls which I won at a maths quiz.  
**T:** The guy I'm attached to. I guess I'm a geek by proxy.
2. **D:** Why would you want to be unlikable, unless it comes to you naturally.  
**T:** I don't understand.
3. **D:** No.  
**T:** I dressed my toy monkey up for the Star Wars premier, he had a little jedi stick and everything...
4. **D:** Be one.  
**T:** Dito.
5. **D:** No, that's the whole point.  
**T:** I think they can be.



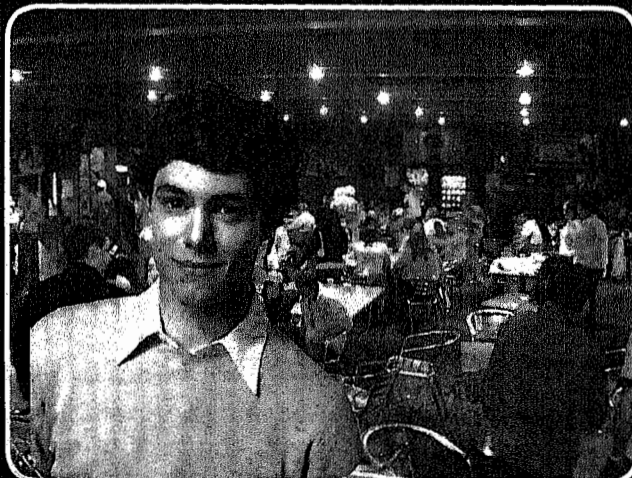
**Larissa**

1. List writing. I love lists.
2. Definately lame. It was cool to be geeky until Seth C made it mainstream.
3. Fascinating.
4. Be one.
5. Definitely - it's in your personailty not your looks.



*Aija from Oz*

1. I'm a scientist.
2. People that wear thick glasses because they think it's cool are lamo.
3. I've got a Dot from Wizard of Oz outfit, so I can't criticise.
4. That's tough. Be one. They still have a laugh. it would be disturbing to give birth to a baby wearing glasses and loafers.
5. Totally, they are hot and I'm one of them.

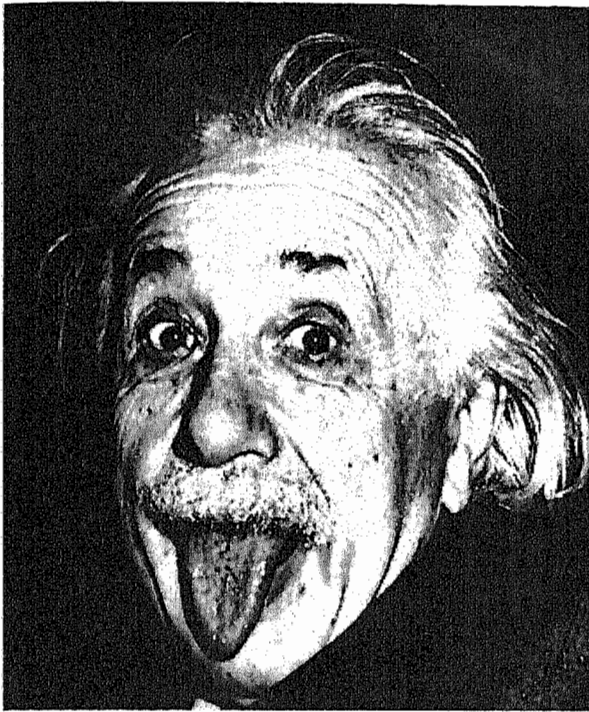


*Oh My God! Seth Cohen is in the Unibar! Go on Suzy, talk to him...*

1. Well, I've got the most awesome collection of Von Dutch caps.
2. I don't know why anyone would want to pretend. It's tough being a geek. Trust me, I know.
3. I think it's quite flattering if people dress up like me.
4. Ooh! Tough one. I suppose the latter means I get to have sex.
5. Jeez I hope so.



# MATHS PUB CRAWL!



**Who:** AUMaSS (Adelaide Uni Maths Students Society)

**Theme:** A pub crawl by any other name would be just as irresponsible...

**Date:** Friday, 12th August

**Time:** From 5pm

**Places:** Start at the Uni Bar and stumble to: The Elephant, PJ O'Brien's, The London Tavern, Mansions and The East End Exchange

**Drinks:** Heaps of drink specials on

beer, house wine, ice cocktails and base spirits

**T-shirts:** \$13 for members and \$15 for non-members (they are bottle green with white writing and art work)

**On sale:** T-shirts will be available every day in Week 3 (from Mon the 8th to Fri the 12th August) between 12:30 and 2 on the Maths Lawns and at the Uni Bar from 5pm on the night

**More info:** email [aumass@gmail.com](mailto:aumass@gmail.com)



MERELY AN EMOTIONAL CRIPPLE,  
GERALD WAS FREQUENTLY TEASED  
BY HIS PEERS...



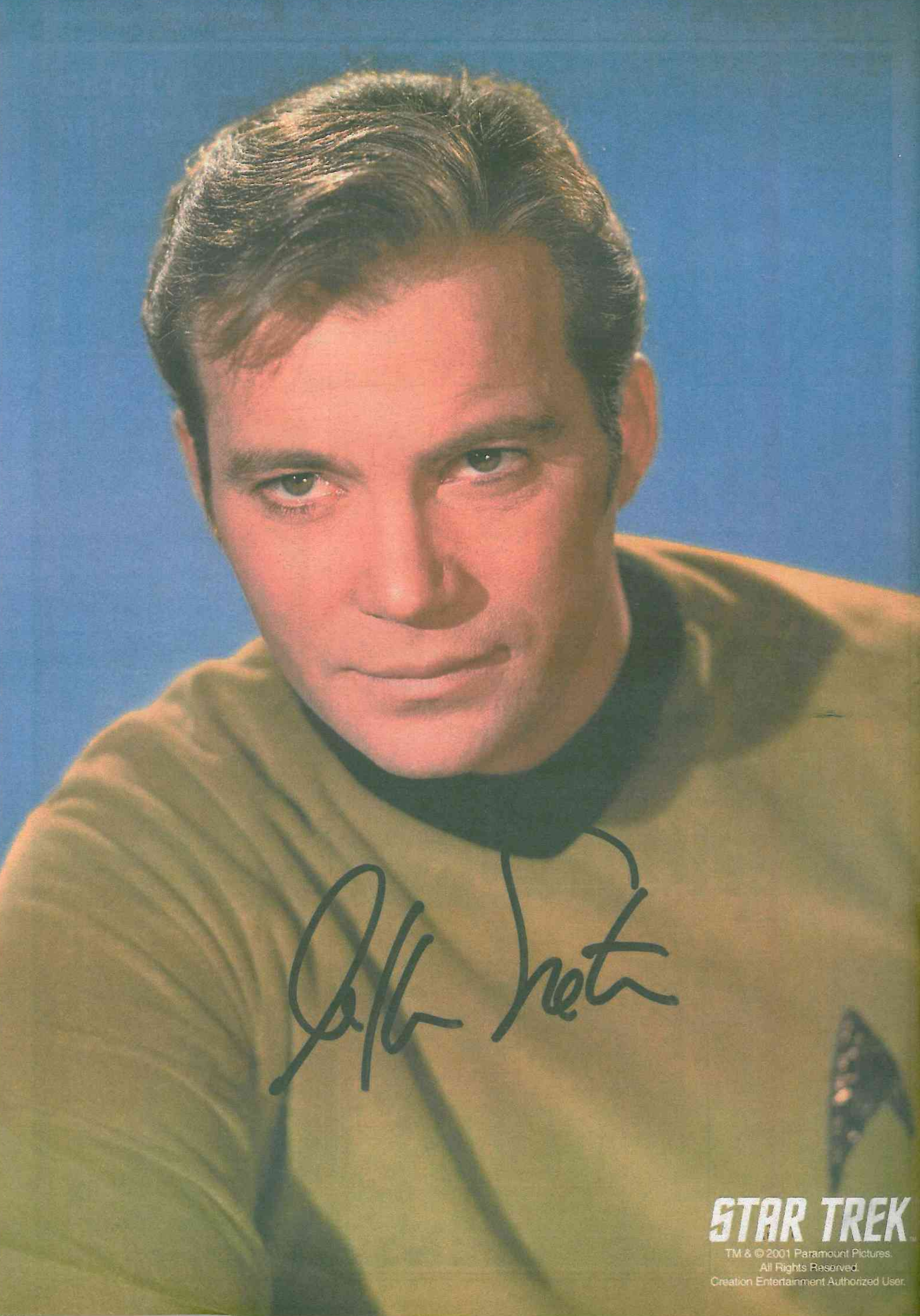
### Spanish Club Movie Series

There will be a series of spanish movies on Tuesday nights from six o'clock in the union cinema. Level five of the Union building, next to the unibar. NO CHARGE. This Tuesday the 9th of August we will be screening *Lucia y el sexo*, another excellent film which is evidence of the liberated nature of post Franco cinema in Spain! (Although perhaps not recommended for the faint hearted) Following films will be: *Los Lunes al Sol* 16th August (an extremely funny film), and *Hector* 23 August (a touching look at a teenager's dilemma). There will be English subtitles in the cinema.

### Spanish club conversation group,

Friday the 12th April, 1:00 in the clubs common room. Directly above the Union Information Office on the West side of the Cloisters. Ask in the info office, ground floor if you can not find it. Third years and native speakers will be there to help out. Write if you can not make it or would like to organise another time at [stuart.brady@student.adelaide.edu.au](mailto:stuart.brady@student.adelaide.edu.au)





Scott Bakula

**STAR TREK**

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