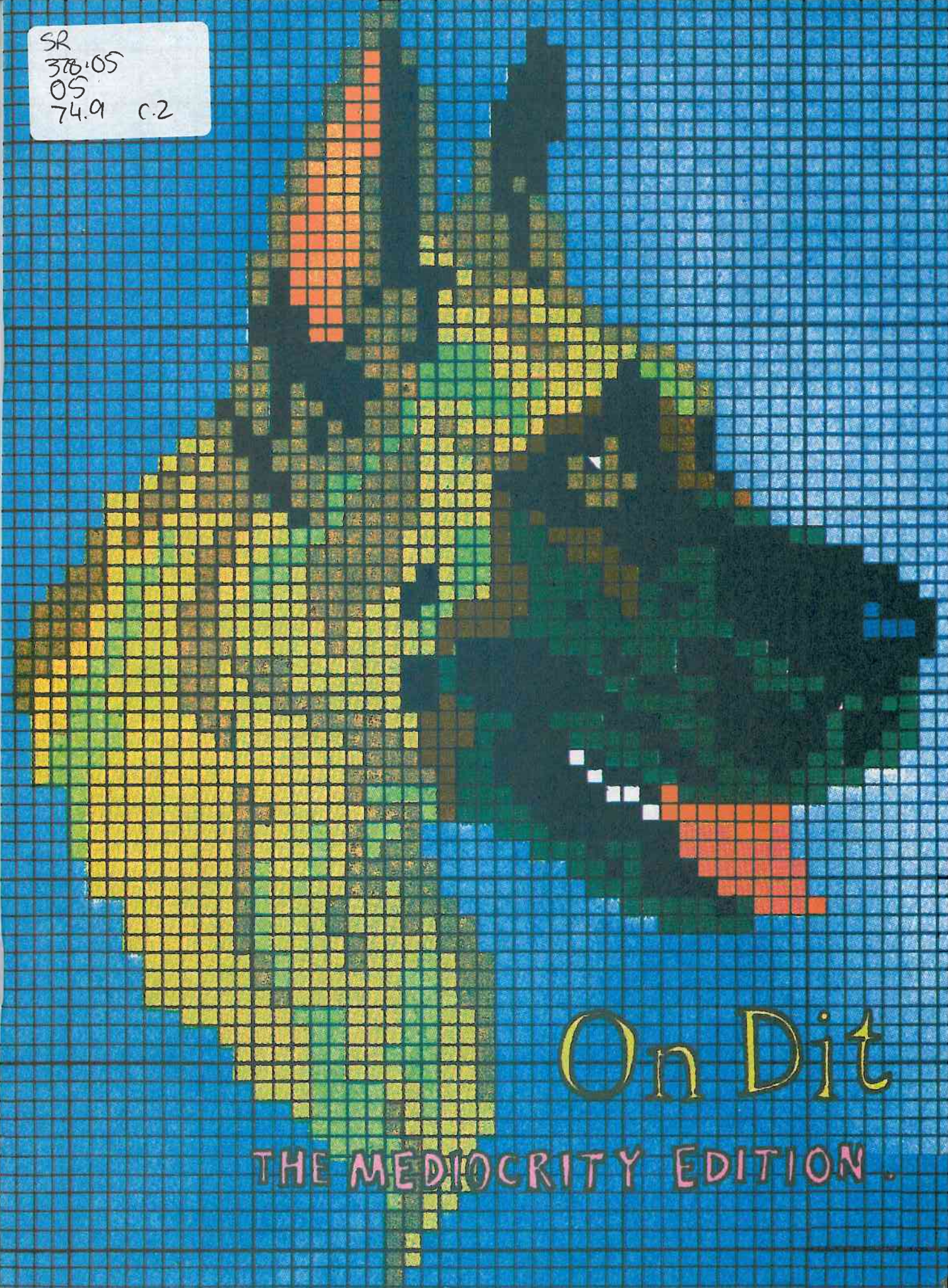


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On Dit

THE MEDIOCRITY EDITION.

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EDITORIAL

I am so high. I can hear heaven.
I am so high. I can hear heaven.
Oh but heaven, no heaven dont hear me.
And they say that a hero can save us.
Im not gonna stand here and wait.
I'll hold onto the wings of the eagles.
Watch as we all fly away.
Someone told me love will ALL save us.
But how can that be, look what love gave us.
A world full of killing, and blood-spilling
That world never came.
And they say that a hero can save us.
Im not gonna stand here and wait.
I'll hold onto the wings of the eagles.
Watch as we all fly away.
Now that the world isnt ending, its love that Im sending to you.
It isnt the love of a hero, and thats why I fear it wont do.
And they say that a hero can save us.
Im not gonna stand here and wait.
I'll hold onto the wings of the eagles.
Watch as we all fly away.

*Anna
and Steph*

About the Cover:

Gunilla's cross-stitch of a lovely German Shepherd.

Next Edition: The Sexuality Edition. Tee hee!

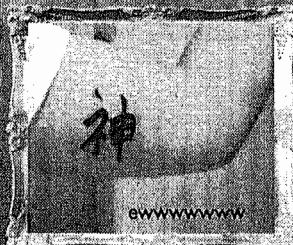
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Published: Monday 28th August

Think On Dit is mediocre? Bite us. Sit there bitching about how the articles are too long and the print rubs off on your hands. Betcha you own at least two Linkin Park CDs. For a more constructive university experience, send your pearls of wisdom in to ondit@adelaide.edu.au or call 8303 5404. Remember the Bomfunk MC's and their colossal hit of 2001 'Freestyler'? Man that follow up single was a bit shit. Like Gravox.

On Dit is the publication of the Students' Association of the University of Adelaide.

The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the editors or the University or the Students' Association. Or bad 90s tattoos of Chinese characters that loosely translate to love, happiness etc. Like this.



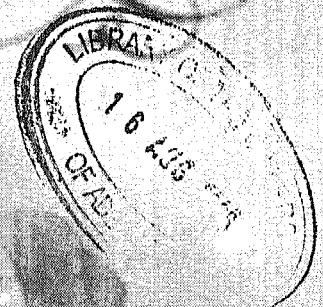
THANKS

Big hugs to: Stan-ny! Stan-ny! Dazz and Toby "Docking" Riddy, Karlie + Sunni, Purvie Wurvie, our not mediocre sub-eds, Ben Henschke and Claire Wald wooso, Respekt to the Central Planning Committee, Plsces-licious Laura and Evan the proofing machine, Dan J, Dorothy, Leo G is fabulous, Hannah Frank, Sophie for the free consultation, Naomi as always, Re:Pete, Potter is dreamy, Cadillac Printing for puttin' up with our switcheroos, everyone at CMAX who's gonna make us wealthy one day soon, Matthew 'Not Murali K. Tharullil' Salleh, Baron Schuppan, Jess for approving our shite layout and the Time Out, Dairy Bell, Serge, Marie Topsecret (shh), D-bag, Jean-Benoit and the Singapore Massive for the lovely laksa. Whyd'you have to close the sausage sizzle early Dr. Love?



On Dit

The Mediocrity Edition Volume 74 Edition 9



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- Amber**
1. ABBA
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- Heidi**
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- Michael**
1. The Beach Boys
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- Paul**
1. Hanson
 2. Emo ear tunnels
 3. The Uni SA Whyalla campus
 4. Try-hard



1. What is the most mediocre band that you secretly like and are embarrassed to tell anyone about?
2. What is the most mediocre fashion trend?
3. Where would be the most mediocre place to do a student exchange to?
4. Describe the average Uni SA student.

- Michael**
1. Alanis Morissette
 2. Cardigans and/or vests
 3. Canada
 4. Sober and straight



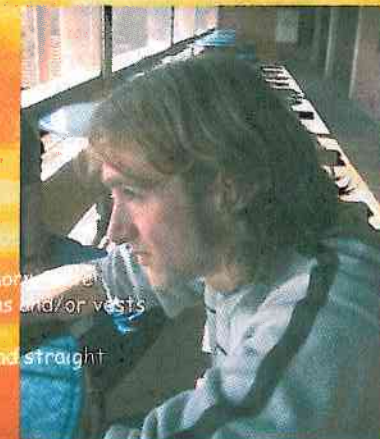
- Alana**
1. Backstreet Boys
 2. Tattoo necklaces
 3. Mt. Barker
 4. A super TAFE, TAFE with HECS



- Jade**
1. Hanson
 2. The emo look
 3. Perth, it's a hole
 4. No comment

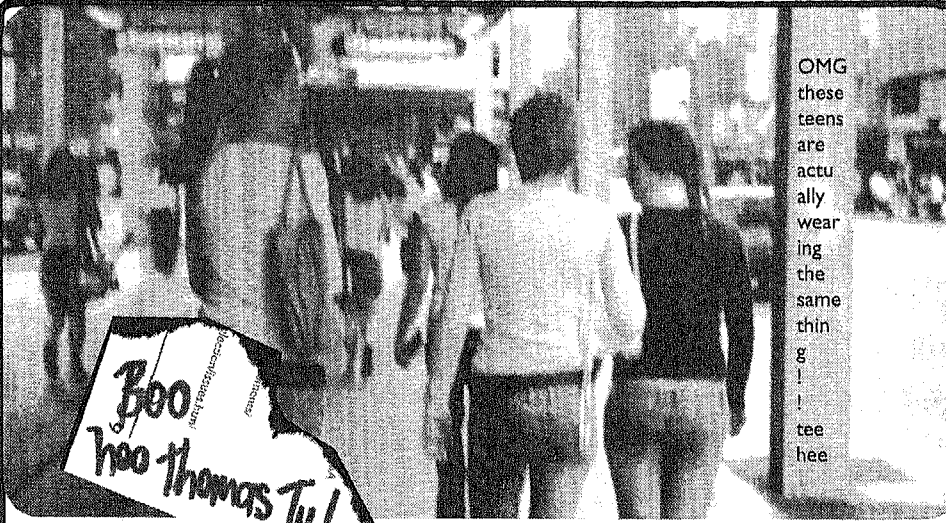


- Steve**
1. Backstreet Boys
 2. Emo
 3. Moonta Bay
 4. Below mediocre



- Vair**
1. Spice Girls
 2. Double demin
 3. Unley
 4. Boring and well dressed

Vox Pop would like to thank the lovely people at Microsoft Office for creating WordArt and helping every high school student pretty-up their computing assignments. Those 3D, pixellated letters are just so rad! We would also like to extend a special mention to the folks at Google Image for the wonderful background picture titled "Christian Sunset". Thanks heaps guys!



OMG these teens are actually wearing the same thing ! tee hee

LETTERS

WRITE US! WE LIKE!

de is the Bronx of Australia"

Send your bitch fests to
ORITCADLAIDE@UTM.UTM
or face the wrath of (more) average filer

No, you are truly



Dear On:Dit,

I am especial friend of your University publication. Enjoying the printed form of expression is my own personal enjoyment and I especial enjoy On Dee.

Your portraits of language are perfectly coy and there is much to be gained from enjoying them read type. Especial is to enjoy the amusing punctuations of late 'eighties' cultural diversions as this is relevant to our current longing, "Hot diggidee" to be exacting.

I am watching the two girls who autonomous are leaders of publication. They are of sexual standard to which approval is much given. Especial the girl with the glasses and much taste in retrospective stylistics. Bravo! Her at muchly delicious to admire! Am also behaved Irresponsibly towards on girl at blonde hair! To bet!

When it is published I am admire to benefit from your approval,

You are truly,
Lucan.

Are't you cle'ver?

Dear Editor

The US president has loosened himself in the Middle East much as if he were a bull running loosely in a china shop. Why is it that he is falling so singularly to accomplish peace in his "New Middle East"? Is it because his disposition is not sufficiently Sunni? Or is it because so abundantly he has Shi'te for brains?

Sincerely
Bill Priest

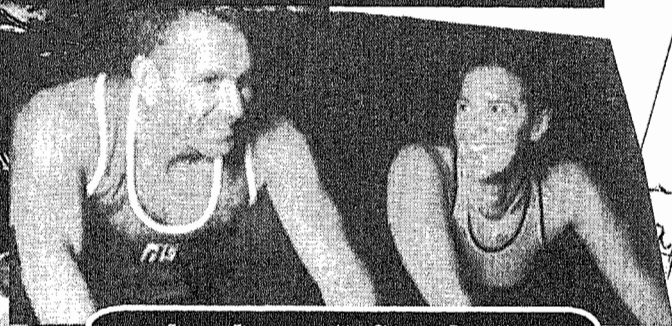
Dear On Dit,

I would like to first of all sate my support for two of the points raised in Thomas Tu's letter (On Dit Vol. 74.8): "that selfishness is the crux of every environmental act" and 2: "stop supporting stupid ideas because it saves a certain cute of cuddly creature. Instead, be practical and think of the future of our existence in practical terms." This is excellent advice, and certainly some sort of starting point for coherent thinking about the ecological challenges that face us. I choose to interpret Tu's rather ranting article's message to be that the final question in terms of the damage done to the environment is the way this effects the quality of human existence and the possibility of a human future. Tu basically states the uniform motive for environmental action is the issue of human survival, it is not going to be possible for life to completely eradicated for humanity or for the human race to be annihilated (these may be debatable points, Thomas and I might disagree on what our capacities in advanced industrialised society are). Thomas argues incoherently that there is no real difference between an ecosystem that can support fish, plants, micro-organisms, all the way up to whales and an ecosystem that only supports an algae bloom. Indeed, all he actually states is that it is still an ecosystem, that no ecosystem has been destroyed. And that it is primarily a human value judgemental to state that the previous ecosystem represented anything better or worse, what is more it an example of human arrogance to feel that death on such a massive scale is in anyway regrettable, because the event of extinction is continually recurring throughout natural history. To feel any compassion would fundamentally be an act of selfishness, argues Tu. Fundamentally, Tu seems to be arguing for some sort of primal innocence on the part of humans, there is no difference worth considering between the extinction caused by some unlikely viral epidemic and the extinction caused by habitat loss or the introduction of feral species, just as there is no difference between your mother, yourself, and Thomas and a bunch of bacteria. No difference that is except that a common instinct for survival and an instinct, more importantly for the survival of one's genes, compels you to feel that Thomas is more valuable than a virus and that taking responsibility for causing death to a living thing (altruistic feeling

being merely a survival strategy for social organisms). Basically, we are part of nature, nature is vicious, to the winner the spoils. However, the letter also seems to suggest that the winners will ultimately bacteria and other micro-organism which an clean up our mess and, revitalize the decay and start again. Hey maybe we're just here to strip things clean again. Tu would argue that to think otherwise implies a soul or some other mysticism, and because no extra-physical soul exists, the feelings and sensibilities that a spiritual attitude reveals are illusions, or worse, survival instincts that have been perverted by an illusion and allow basically selfish entities to purport to be otherwise. Is it selfish, however, to be concerned for human survival? It would seem to imply a desire to ethically connect to and shape something fundamentally beyond oneself in the forms of the lives of future generations. It would also suggest a desire to contribute something to the quality of those lives. Primarily the very solution, a concern for human survival, that Thomas suggest can only exist once the self purely and simply considered is put to onside and the idea of the self as power for shaping is taken into consideration. Is the decision to preserve natural beauty (what Thomas sneeringly derides as cute) based on the selfishness of imposing one's mere preference? Or, in fact does the very recognition of aesthetic value involve recognising a value beyond one's self, one which affirms life in its fullest? If we are to think of ourselves as nature, not a special segregation thereof, it seems we have to accept that a certain altruism is also part of our instinct complex, and that withering this away by refusing to accept that our Intelligence makes us more responsible, more capable of creating one or the other form of human survival (misery or flourishing), and ecological richness (misery or flourishing) means that since "we can only make it (nature) better or worse for ourselves" we would have already chosen deny everything which would make it better. By the way Thomas, it is not selfishness not to kill an animal because it makes you cry. It is selfishness to overcome and eliminate the compassion that makes you cry in order to kill an animal. This ethical death you seem to exult by insinuation would also seem to be the source of the "mental partition between humans and nature" which you so rightly hate.

Brendan De Paor-Moore

Fitness First



Fitness First...more like, Shitness First. Ahem.

MEDIOCRITY
RULEZ

...according to Walter Plinge

Magic Happens Bumper Stickers

MAGIC happens

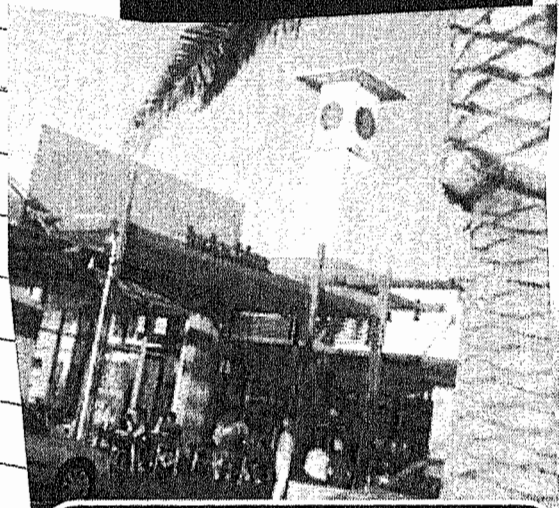
I like to tie dye purple silk scarves and cultivate moss from Balhannah to make a soothing chai. I also design moonstone jewelry on demand and secretly harbour dreams of swimming with dolphins. Do you really care about people's feelings anymore? Don't pretend to understand me.

Orange British Tourists



It's not the tourists themselves that are particularly mediocre. I'm sure they have nice souls and everything. It's their goddamn sandals that teeter on the average side of things. Who wants to see a pasty buff mole lugging all of Essex around Glenelg playing Frisbee with Miss Chav-tastic 2006 desperate for the next hit of sweet Ozone Melanin? Not I.

Mawson Lakes



Mawson Lakes is crap because it is too beige and too underdeveloped and when I tried to take money out at the ATM, it said I was 10,000 dollars in debt when I wasn't. The streets are hard to navigate, the people all have large hands and the pasties are real bad. Having said that, there's a planetarium around the corner from the shopping centre which kinda redeems Mawson Lakes. A bit. Not really.

Shitty Kids Movies that aren't Disney/Pixar



Sigh. Why bother Dreamworks. Why freaking bother. You can't possibly compete with the juggernaut Shrek franchise. Or Finding Nemo. Or Cars. Or anything that wasn't cutesy horseys frolicking around for an hour, feeling human emotion for the first time and learning leadership qualities and all that stuff. Horses dont talk, they don't have feelings and they certainly aren't affiliated with the studio that made Shark Tale. Horses don't know how to love, Hollywood. Get over it.

NEWSBYTES *by Soph*

Qana raid intensifies calls for peace

Israel has suspended air strikes in southern Lebanon after a bombing raid in the village of Qana which left at least 54 civilians, including 37 children, dead. The victims had taken refuge in a basement when a bomb hit the building, killing many outright and leaving others trapped under rubble and debris. Only one child survived. Israel has stated that they did not believe civilians would be present in the building they targeted. The attack heightened international demands for a ceasefire, and resulted in Israel agreeing to a 48 hour suspension of hostilities in the region. The raid also caused the Lebanese government to call off talks with Condoleezza Rice, who was informed that she will not be welcome in the country until a ceasefire has been implemented. Israeli bombardment of the rest of Lebanon continues, as does Hezbollah's rocket attacks against Israel. Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah have been at war with each other for three weeks, during which time 51 Israelis and at least 545 Lebanese have been killed.

Braveheart arrested for speeding

Mel Gibson is in a heck of a lot of trouble after blurting out what is being referred to as an anti-Semitic tirade. Gibson was pulled over by police after he was clocked doing 87mph (140kph) in a 45mph (70kph) zone. Apparently it's not the first time our Mel has been caught speeding, with at least three similar incidents in the past few months. On all three occasions, no charges were brought against him. This time, however, Gibson became abusive towards police, threatened one of the officers and tried to run away. Unfortunately for him, a blood alcohol level of 0.12 (which is a lot for someone that age) meant that he didn't get very far. Gibson has released a statement apologising for his behaviour, and faces criminal charges.

The Hoff staggers into the spotlight

David Hasselhoff was apparently prevented from getting on a flight from Heathrow to Los Angeles, as airline staff thought he was too drunk to fly. The Hoff's publicist responded by stating that he was in fact suffering adverse effects after taking antibiotics. Apparently having trouble remaining upright is one of the side effects. Hasselhoff is also in the process of suing an English newspaper which printed a story claiming that he had to be ejected from the Wimbledon tennis championships after he tried to force his way into the players' bar while drunk. Just when you thought it couldn't get any wackier, last month the Hoff managed to slice four tendons and cut an artery in a tragic... shaving accident.

Violence escalates before Congo election

For the first time in over 40 years, people are about to go to the polls in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Although the United Nations is hopeful that the election will be peaceful and fair, violence has been escalating. Eight people were killed in a shooting match with the security guards of President Joseph Kabila, and supporters of Kabila's main opposition, former warlord Jean-Pierre Bemba, became violent during a rally, and ended up setting fire to a church. The UN hopes that the election will prove to be a turning point for the nation, and bring an end to the violence which has left at least 4 million people dead in the past ten years. However, it is feared that the elections will only serve to throw the country into even greater conflict. As one observer noted, 'There will be winners and losers, and many of the losers have guns'.

Could bananas be Howard's kryptonite?

Interest rates are apparently set to rise again, due to the rapid rate of inflation. Soaring petrol prices and the high cost of stuff like bananas have caused the annual rate of inflation to increase to 4%, and anyone who has ever done any economics will know that governments don't like anything higher than 3%. If rates do rise, it will be the third time since the last election. As Howard promised that if elected, he would keep interest rates down at all costs, many are wondering how he is going to wriggle out of this one. The man himself doesn't appear to be worried, and has confirmed that he will remain Liberal leader for the foreseeable future.

Beware falling canine...

The last thing you would expect as you walk down the street would be to have a Saint Bernard fall on you from a great height. But that's exactly what happened to an unsuspecting Polish man last week, after Oskar the dog had been thrown out of the second storey window by his drunken owner. Luckily for him, the man, whose name has not been released, broke his fall. Both man and dog escaped with only bruises and scratches.

Shakespeare got it wrong

Denmark is the happiest country in the world, according to Adrian White. The social psychologist compiled a 'happiness report' based on data from 178 countries and 100 other global studies. Iraq wasn't included in the study, along with other nations involved in armed conflicts. After Denmark came Switzerland, Austria, Iceland and the Bahamas. Burundi was the most unhappy country in the world, and for those of you wondering, the United States came 23rd and Australia 26th. At last, absolute proof that in fact nothing is rotten in the state of Denmark...

JIM BEAM
NATIONAL
Campus band comp

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
vodafone

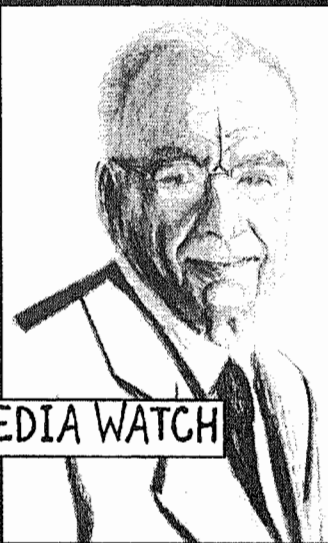
NATIONAL CAMPUS BAND COMPETITION NATIONAL CAMPUS BAND COMPETITION

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MEDIA WATCH

Media-ocracy: A Brief History

Who's to say the media doesn't provide us with credible, unbiased information and quality entertainment? We look back at a few of the events that make the media what they are today...

1962

Television news broadcasts change from fifteen-minute segments to a half-hour format, resulting in the need for more "filler" material to make up the additional time. Decades later, this trend is repeated with the emergence of twenty-four hour news networks. Despite the additional broadcast time, direct information in the form of interviews and soundbites gradually decreases over the years. In 1968, news soundbites record an average length of

forty-two seconds. In 1988 this becomes ten seconds, and in 2000 a study by the Centre for Media and Public Affairs in the US identifies the average news soundbite as lasting just seven seconds!

1969

Rupert Murdoch takes over Britain's *The Sun* newspaper, introduces the Page Three Girl and, by all accounts, moves the newspaper's content considerably downmarket. *The Sun* eventually achieves the highest circulation of any English-language newspaper in the world. The Page Three Girl becomes an unwitting player in reinforcing the newspaper's political agenda – whether it be through her views on Britain's invasion of Iraq ("Our boys are doing a fantastic job peacekeeping. To give in to a minority of extremists would be an insult to the brave soldiers who lost their lives fighting to free Iraq from its evil regime" – Page Three Girl Natasha, 21), or settling the "Bigger is Better" argument once and for all ("It's not size that's important, it's what you do with it. And Enrique has got a nice bum and nice body so that makes up for it. Even if he has a small willy, it wouldn't put me off him in any way" – Page Three Girl Katie, 19.)²

1990

Naomi Robson begins her illustrious career as a newsreader for Channel Seven in Sydney. This year she celebrates her tenth anniversary as presenter of *Today Tonight* in the eastern states. Although we in Adelaide do not have the privilege of witnessing Naomi's work first-hand, her inadequacy as a presenter and her self-obsession are legendary. Allegedly incapable of conducting interviews herself, Robson's role consists solely of top-and-tailing stories about shonky builders and wonder diet pills on-air, while slagging off her audience,

swearing profusely and talking repeatedly about herself off-air.³

1992

MTV's *The Real World* begins in the US, one of the earliest examples of the reality television formula in which everyday people are placed in an artificial environment and their actions and interactions are documented on camera. Almost ten years later *Big Brother* becomes an international phenomenon, creating short-lived fame for unremarkable people around the world. Five years later, Australia becomes the only country subjected to Hotdogs' *Up Late Game Show*.

2005

"Colourful" Adelaide radio personality and *Media Watch* fave Bob Francis has an eventful year, using his high-profile timeslot to verbally abuse an 80-year old listener on-air (while simultaneously bringing the term "dick brain" to public attention). Several months later he again makes national headlines following some ill-informed comments regarding the Australian legal system. A public apology is unable to save Francis from a considerable decrease in his show's ratings, the ire of his employers SAA, and court proceedings which result in the station having to pay \$110,000 in defamation damages. In Francis' defense, his lawyer Dick Whittington describes him as possessing a "distinctive manner of expression which is colourful and... not necessarily intended to be taken literally."⁴

(Footnotes)

¹ Source: Larsen, Jonathan Z. 'On the Rollercoaster'. In Columbia Journalism Review, Nov-Dec 2001.

² Source: www.bloggerheads.com

³ Source: Mcade, Amanda. 'Tabloid Queen a Hauteur Property'. In The Australian, August 3, 2006.

⁴ Source: McGarry, Andrew. 'Jail for Bob the Broadcaster?'. In The Australian, August 3, 2006.

Centre for Water Research



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M E D I O C R E A R G U M E N T S

The conflict in Lebanon has thrown out some new, mediocre, arguments, which I will call 'mongrel arguments'. This is an insult to dogs. These arguments are being run more and more. Left wing activists argue that these arguments have been fostered by John Howard, with his pandering towards the Australian racist attitude. There is, of course, no way to decide whether Mr Howard's actions have brought about a proliferation of this attitude, or merely made the publication of such attitudes more acceptable.

There have been a number of examples of mongrel arguments. The following [exhibit A] comes from the letters page of *The Age*, Monday July 24 2006.

We are constantly told by the Government that if you cannot afford travel insurance, you cannot afford to travel. Now the Government is going to pay the repatriation expenses of all Australians fleeing Lebanon who do not have travel insurance. This is tantamount to rewarding foolhardiness. Yet many of these same people accuse the Government of treating them as second class citizens. An odd way to show your gratitude.

(Name not supplied).

Other examples have focused on the fact that a large number of Australians trapped in Lebanon have dual citizenships. [Exhibit B] In a letter (again in *The Age*) on Friday July 21, a correspondent complained that these dual nationals wanted to live in the pre-war idyllic Lebanon but as soon as the bombs started landing cried out for Australia to help them. These spongers didn't want to live in Australia, but wanted the benefits of being Australian, and other 'God only knows benefits', such as pensions etc. Another correspondent [exhibit C] in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Wednesday 26 July 2006, thinks that dual citizens can blame problems in one country on the inability of the other (Australia) to help them. When there are no problems, the citizen can live in their preferred country and reap the rewards of the social security of Australia. Then there is the call from some that these dual nationalities should first be helped by Lebanon, who are in the best position to help them.

We need to look at the ability to reason demonstrated here. It must be noted that these correspondents are merely expressing an opinion so we should not expect a close detailed analysis. Nor should they be criticised for not providing one. Having said that, however, the attitude they are expressing needs some careful reflection and it's a pity that they did not do this themselves. But I guess war does strange things to people.

In exhibit A the correspondent makes a simple categorical mistake. This should be familiar to all the recent graduates (and previous graduates) of Argument and Critical Thinking. The author assumes that the same people being funded by the Government are the same people complaining about the Government treating them as second-class citizens. A simple mistake we can demonstrate as follows;

Some As are Bs (A: people without travel insurance, B: people being rescued by the government)

Some Bs is a Cs (B: people being rescued by the government; C: people criticising the Government for treating them as second class citizens)

So Some A is a C.

This is the form of the argument, but to write it out in detail; some people without travel insurance are being rescued by the Government; some people being rescued by the Government are criticizing the Government for treating them like second-class citizens; therefore, some people without travel insurance are criticizing the Government for treating them like second class citizens. Well, let's replace A, B and C with other categories to show, by analogy, that the argument is flawed. If we take A to be Cats, B, to be animals with fur and C to be Dogs we end up with the following argument.

Some Cats (A) are animals with fur (B) [True, since there are hairless cats]

Some animals with fur (B) are Dogs [true]

So some Cats are Dogs. [false]

In exhibit B, the correspondent calls on God's knowledge as evidence that his claims are correct. I suspect this is because he is making it up. If he had evidence that these people actually were drawing Australian pensions he should present that rather than rely upon the knowledge of the almighty! A theme developed in Exhibit C, who thinks that holding two nationalities is 'sitting on the fence'. Whether pointing this out to people in Melbourne and Sydney from the pages of a student newspaper in Adelaide does more than demonstrate how good I am at developing arguments by analogy I don't know. I suspect it does no more than that, to be honest.

I said that I would address the attitudes of these correspondents, when all

I've really done is attack their arguments. Arguments I said we should allow them to make. It is time, I think to state what exactly I mean by 'mongrel'. I think a mongrel attitude is demonstrated in situations where people are caught up in disasters, whether they be natural (such as tsunamis) or man made (such as wars) when instead of considering the suffering of those involved the individual thinks of one or more of the following:

1. Mongrels first calculate the burden on the taxpayer when thinking about a person in distress.

2. Mongrels find any excuse to blame individuals for their situation, or consider that they contributed to their situation by leaving it to chance that they would survive.

3. Blame other nations for the situation.

4. Find any excuse to think that those affected should be helped first by someone else.

5. Think that people owe allegiance to their nations and that nations owe nothing to their citizens.

At least one of these attributes has been demonstrated by correspondents and commentators about those trapped in Lebanon. Is this sufficient to make them a mongrel, or do we require more than a single characteristic before we label a person a mongrel? Well, consider the people who complain that Lebanese Australians should not expect help from Australia because they chose to live in the Lebanon, rather than Australia. Here no thought is given to the suffering of those involved. Only towards the victim's role in their own situation. This is called "blaming the victim" and it is sufficient to indicate that the proponent of such a view is a mongrel.

Then we have the criticism that these Lebanese Australians have dual citizenship. What this last claim is supposed to mean I have no idea. Should the fact that a person can carry two passports mean that both nations have a reduced burden towards that individual? Oh yes, nations carry no burden towards citizens. Perhaps having dual nationality means that you can only rely on reduced support in times of need.

Here's an odd idea. As a citizen of Australia, an individual votes for the particular candidate s/he wishes, based on that candidate's fit with their politics. The successful MP then represents all members of her/his electorate in Parliament. As such, the MP acts on behalf of all members of their electorate. The party with a majority forms a Government and runs Australia in accordance with its own policies (as put forward in the election [though this gets forgotten within two weeks]). This Government in turn represents all electorates, not just the ones voting for it (This too has been forgotten). If so, then the Government works for the good of the electorate, which means that nations do owe something to citizens; nations do bear a burden to look after citizens abroad, even when that citizen has not taken out holiday insurance. To claim that individuals should take out holiday insurance because the Government has no burden to assist citizens in a disaster zone is just a mistake.

But what of citizens living abroad who do not participate in any election? Is the worry that these people claim an obligation from society when they do not fulfil their own to society? This has some legs but who has the power here to change the situation? Not the individual.

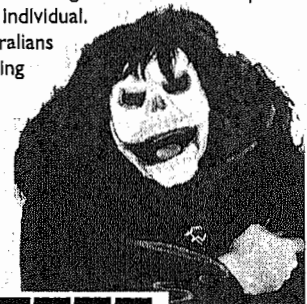
Until we make it compulsory for all Australians

to vote, no matter where they are, focusing

on the individual seems again to be

blaming the victim.

Andrew J Turner

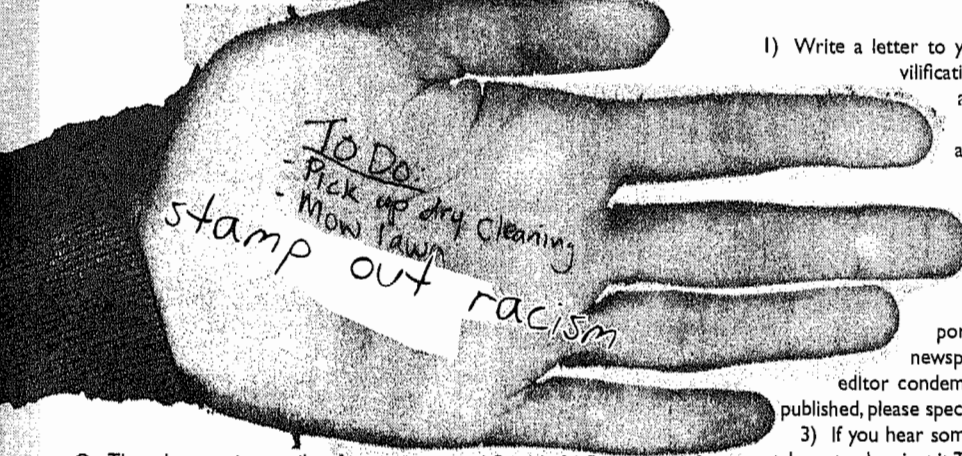


W H A T T H E F . . .

John Howard wants to increase the participation rates of younger Australians in politics.

The Federal Liberal Government introduced legislation that closes voter registration on the day that elections are called. A practise known to be particularly disadvantageous to first-time voters; i.e. the young!

The Australian 'Keeping the Nation Informed' (?????) (This probably qualifies as abuse, but what the fuck!)



On Thursday evening, a pile of anonymous anti-Semitic leaflets were left outside the Barr Smith library, propagandising against the so-called 'Jewish problem'. These leaflets claimed that, 'No force in recent times has been a larger threat to peace than [sic] that of a small group of anarchists: the Jews', then alleged how the troubles of the Middle East region could be 'attributed directly or indirectly to Jewish influence'. The equation with the actions of the Israeli government with that of all Jewish people and the propagation of the claim that the Jews are a destructive force at the centre of the world's problems are traditional anti-Semitic themes that have been claimed by racists and fascists for many years and in the advent of the current Israeli invasion of Lebanon, look likely to flare up yet again. However one must realise that there is a difference between criticism of the Israeli government for its military and domestic aggression and that of the inherently racist persecution of Jews. This becomes just another issue for the organised far right and the populist racists here, and overseas, to exploit to create fear, distrust and hatred against a minority.

This brief article is not going to go into the details of anti-Semitism and the long-standing argument over Israel, exploited by racists and fascists to harass Jews. What concerns the author is the general rise of racist sentiment in Australia and the fact that any form of racial hatred or bigotry, which anti-Semitism inherently is, has been allowed to ferment in a society that hypocritically prides itself on its 'multiculturalism'. In recent years, racist attitudes and claims have been made by various aspects of mainstream Australian society against various people who have come to or lived in Australia - Muslims, refugees, Lebanese youth, Indonesians, indigenous peoples - to name but a few, although other immigrants and ethnic minorities have not escaped harassment or racial slurs. In the first years of the twenty-first century, Australian society, through state institutions, the mainstream media and public opinion, have explicitly, as well as implicitly, demonised various racial, national and ethnic groups and a push has been made by the same accusers for the construction of some kind of 'national identity' or 'Australianess', which would look to enforce integration or exclusion from the structures of Australian society.

There must be resistance to this push for national hegemony as advocated by the racists and the populists. The term 'un-Australian' must be disowned and universal human rights must not be appropriated as 'core Australian values' that disregard cultural plurality for what the white, Christian and male institutional leaders have deemed as favourable to integration into Australian society. All forms of racial discrimination or vilification at any level must be opposed - in government, in the media, in the workplace, in public, everywhere.

This is not an argument for mere tolerance. It is more than just sloganeering that we all belong to one race and therefore must get along in a humanistic fashion. Arguments of tolerance are blindly pushed by some, but appeals to human kindness will not change the mind of a steadfast racist. It is also not an argument over numbers of immigrants or assimilation into white Australian society. This inherently blames the immigrant for the problems of society. The struggle against racism is to be democratic, liberal and humane, but at its very essence is also against the capitalist and patriarchal structures of society that depend on divisions within society and reproduce the racist opinions for its own continuation. Modern capitalist society is not the only catalyst for the continuing spread of racism, but it does inherently benefit from it. One cannot promote the ideal of reforming or modifying capitalism and then assume that racism will disappear. The struggle against racism is an *immediate* struggle that affects everybody and not just those who come from a differing racial, national or ethnic background. Anti-racism begins with the individual, but we must work as a society to destroy it.

This may sound like a distant and unreachable ideal, but there are some immediate steps to counter racism, however small they may seem.

1) Write a letter to your MP and state to them your opinion on the vilification of the current Liberal government of migrants and minorities. State that you are in favour of a multi-cultural Australia that does not tolerate any forms of racial discrimination. If your MP is not a Liberal member (or one of its coalition parties), demand that their party put forward a stance of anti-racism, acceptance of cultural diversity and humane treatment of all those who wish to migrate to Australia.

2) If you see something overtly racist or portraying a minority in a negative light in a newspaper or other publication, write a letter to the editor condemning this racism. If you do not want your letter published, please specify this in the letter.

3) If you hear something racist in the classroom, lecture or tutorial, take a stand against it. The promotion of racist ideas is not for the learning environment, which should promote a stand against racism, sexism and homophobia.

4) If you see or hear any form of racial discrimination or harassment in the workplace, please report it. If you are employed somewhere where there are migrants or other minorities, encourage them to join their union. If you have not joined your union, please do so. Union reps should be there to take issues like this in the workplace.

5) If you see racist graffiti, take the time to make it unreadable. If there are racist stickers or flyers posted, attempt to take them down.

6) Join organisations such as Amnesty International. Volunteer to help out with anti-racist campaigns or take part in the next demonstration against racism, such as those against the detention of refugees.

These are merely a few things that you can do to help in the struggle against racism in Australian society. It is not a definitive guide by any means. Look on the internet for other campaigns and organisations that are involved in the anti-racist struggle. Anti-racism starts with you.

"Once again racialism is back. It is growing where it is not challenged. And challenged it must be. For when racialists rule, millions die"

-Temporary Hoarding, September 1977

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ISRAEL v THE MIDDLE-EASTERN STATES: the Never-ending Story?

It's a miserable tale, the Middle East-Israeli conflict. It is a never-ending war that began literally in 'Biblical' times and will probably come to an end when human civilisation does. To me this situation is one of the saddest examples of the failing of human nature; when we encounter a wall, we smash against it with our fists rather than climbing it or going around. It's hard to write about this without taking a side; almost every single publication I have ever read has either sided with the Israelis or with the various Arab groups involved. I'll attempt to sum up my view of the current situation without blaming a single group because personally I believe that the situation is one in which the participants are both blameless and universally culpable; I'll explain that later.

This latest upset between Israel and Lebanon has come about because Hezbollah, a Shi'ite Islamist movement ostensibly set up to protect Arab land from Israeli invasion, reportedly captured two Israeli soldiers to use as hostages in an effort to force a prisoner swap¹ - Israeli jails currently hold thousands of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners, including roughly 100 women and 300 children, some being denied trial for years.² It is difficult to say whether Hezbollah wished to simply free some of its own militants from Israeli jails or whether it meant to free civilian prisoners. Shortly after Hezbollah captured the Israeli soldiers, Ehud Olmert, the Prime Minister of Israel, declared that this abduction was an 'act of war',³ and sent ground troops into Lebanon. The situation has escalated to the extent that Australian political figures (who are generally sympathetic towards Israel) such as Tim Fischer have accused the Israeli military of targeting civilian infrastructure, such as ambulances and even the civilians themselves.⁴ The UN is desperately pushing for a ceasefire to prevent the civilian casualties from rising even further. There are also allegations, shocking if true, that Israel deliberately targeted a UN outpost, killing four UN observers.⁵ Various media outlets including the BBC and Al-Jazeera reported that Kofi Annan mentioned the attacks as being "apparently deliberate".⁶ A UN official also proclaimed that the Israeli offensive may be in violation of international law,⁷ giving rise to comparisons with illegal terrorist action.

Looks pretty bad for Israel so far doesn't it? However, before one unilaterally condemns them for their actions, it should be said that a country does have the right to defend itself against attacks under international law, as long as the defence is proportionate to the attack, and does not target civilians⁸ - Israel has argued that Hezbollah uses civilian housing as weaponry depositories, and this negates the damage done to civilian infrastructure.⁹ The problem Israel faces and appears to have dealt with poorly, is that Hezbollah is not an established 'military' as such, but rather a militia based military/political/religious hybrid, having both a loyal army, a religious mission and a political wing (in a similar set up to the IRA without the Marxist background). It is also true that Hezbollah and other similar militias employ tactics that can be construed as tactically endangering civilians to further their aims, such as storing weaponry in civilian housing to force Israel to target such areas.¹⁰ Hezbollah is accused by Israel and the US of hiding behind its civilians.¹¹ It has been reported that Hezbollah actions in the past have involved suicide attacks targeting civilians by men, women and even children, although it has supposedly moved away from these tactics since the early 1990's.¹² Israel has also been pamphlet dropping to warn civilians of their strikes in advance; indicating that the country has taken some small measures (which have proved woefully inadequate) to limit civilian casualties. Hezbollah does, however, provide schools and hospitals for the Lebanese civilian population.¹³ The fact remains, however, that both Hezbollah and Israel are tit-for-tat recklessly causing the deaths of civilians. Hezbollah, much like many Arab military/political/religious hybrid militias in the area, is founded on a belief in supposedly Islamic fundamentalist principles. Likewise, the State of Israel holds much importance for many orthodox Jews (as well as more secular Jews) because it is the epicentre of their religion, a nation gifted to them by God. The big problem with governing bodies that run along such fanatical theocratic lines is that generally these groups will not put much stock in international law or multilateral condemnation unless it suits them; after all, the nature of fundamentalism gives paramount obedience to their God's law, which is considered supreme to any other.

Violence perpetuates violence. This is an observation justified by history. World War I begat World War II, the Crusades gave theocratic religious fanatics ammunition to brainwash their followers in the modern age, the Coalition's invasion of Iraq lit the fuse for the stick of dynamite that is the overt religious schism in that country, and whether you consider it justified

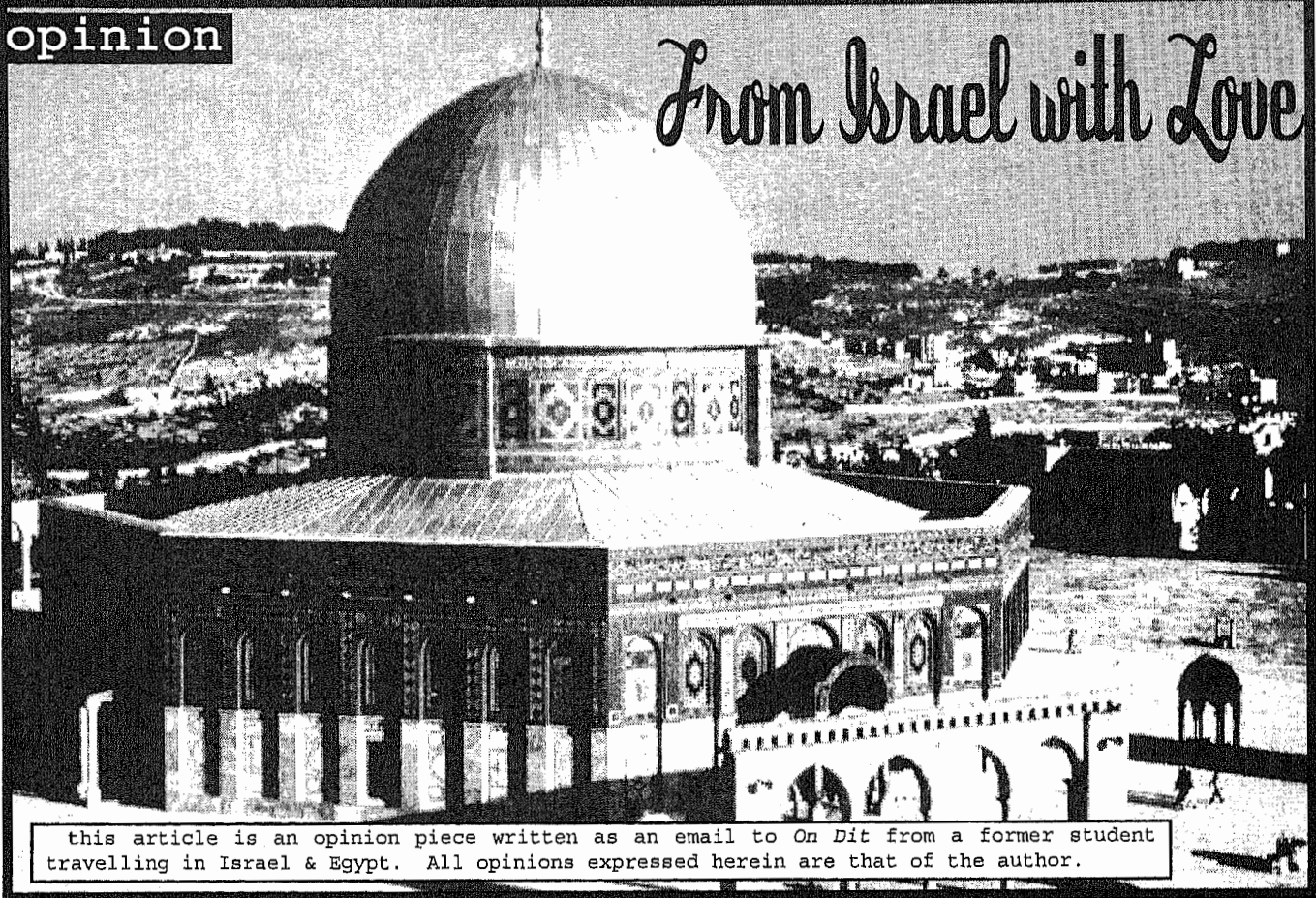
or not, the creation of the modern State of Israel post World War II gave the surrounding Arab nations an excuse to want the Israelis 'pushed into the sea', as the saying goes. The Israelis and the Palestinians both have a historical claim to the area currently known as Israel. Israel is supported by the USA and the Palestinians and Lebanese are supported by groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and various other political militia groups that are in turn sponsored by governments including Syria and Iran. So both groups have powerful allies. The battleground between Israeli and the various Arab groups has historically taken place in Lebanon, Palestine and Israel itself. Both sides have killed civilians, both sides are motivated by religious convictions, and both sides are at the mercy of the propaganda systems of their respective elites.

To me, there is no sense in arguing that 'Israel was there first' or 'the Arabs were there first', firstly because there is no practical application; neither the Israelis nor the Arabs are going to pack up and leave through the force of any argument, rational or otherwise. As well as this, argument along these lines dehumanises a particular race or group as 'the bad guys', who have inferior rights to the 'good guys', which is a sure-fire way to piss people off. It's an argument that can't be won, because it can't really be sold to the opposition. They're both there, move on. Saying that 'all Israelis as a people are land-grabbers who are responsible for the dead Palestinian children' or 'all Palestinians as a people are responsible for anti-Semitism and the murder of Israeli civilians' is a degrading, pointless generalisation which better serves political grandstanding rather than a real solution. If one were to blame the political elites (I include Hezbollah in this term) for the killings, I would be more sympathetic; political elites can influence how the general population perceives events (Hello "queue jumpers"!). However you cannot blame one government for the killings without blaming the other, because both governments have similar motivation, have arguably committed war crimes, and are equally complicit in perpetuating hatred. Removing or replacing either of these dominant political groups would likely solve nothing; sure Israel could occupy and dominate Hezbollah (I have no doubt that, if put in a dominant position, Hezbollah's backers would do exactly the same thing, if not worse, than a public-opinion conscious Israel is now) but the people's hatred would still be there, because it's developed like a snowball rolling down a hill; a single push 4000 or so years ago has become an unstoppable cultural juggernaut that annihilates reason and sense. This dynamic can be seen in all aspects of human behaviour; the 'herd mentality', present in peer pressure, fashion, political beliefs, music, basically all aspects of human culture. Only if the respective governments and political groups involved begin 're-educating' their people to accept each other will there be any real lasting peace. This, however, would require an abandonment of the 'manifest destiny' political and religious mentality of both sides; an unlikely thing in the current climate.

There are obviously semantic distinctions that can be made of the differences between the religious beliefs of the two sides, but the real issue is that the oligarchic elite (the governments and the educated) of the Arab states and Israel are clashing because of their similar mindsets, the major feature of which is the desire for the complete subjugation or annihilation of the other. As a result, civilians are caught up in the hatred and recrimination that ensues. And the cycle perpetuates itself. It goes further though; even the politicians are victims of the fanatical hatred that is built up over thousands of years of persecution and conflict. After all, politicians are taken from the general public; therefore they are victims of cultural norms just as much as anyone else. Like I said before, it's a snowball. This is why I say this conflict is both universally blameworthy and blameless, because the people are perpetuating the conflict yet the conflict is perpetuated by no individual, conscious action. Much like capitalism, the nation-state, religion, our criminal justice system and various other artificial social machinery, cultural influence operates so that even the main players are still subject to the machine. This can be both a wonderful and terrible process; a happy, egalitarian, productive society that is trained in the need for intelligent consideration of issues is the utopian ideal of human success over our animal instincts, but a weakness of modern hierarchal political structure is exposed through the failure of reason to overcome cultural pressure in situations such as these.¹⁴

If the vast civilian majority of both groups somehow manage to resist the cultural imprint of thousands of years of hatred and warfare and use reason to compromise then a peaceful resolution has a chance. I get the feeling, however, that there are dominant political groups on both sides who

From Israel with Love



this article is an opinion piece written as an email to On Dit from a former student travelling in Israel & Egypt. All opinions expressed herein are that of the author.

I am going to write this email to let you know that perhaps what you see in the media and what you have heard about the war in Lebanon and Israel is not always accurate. While some of this may sound like my opinion, most of what I am going to write is just the truth, as I have experienced while visiting Israel during what has now escalated into a war. I flew to Israel nine days ago, more or less a week after the firing began between the two countries.

Flying to Israel during this time was perhaps the best decision I have made in a long time. It put a lot of things into perspective and made me realise what we see on the television represents nothing of what life is like for the citizens of Israel. More or less life goes on. I went to the beach, partied in Tel Aviv, walked around Jerusalem, floated in the Dead Sea. The people here are kind and friendly, have a great sense of humour and extend themselves in any way possible. They act just like my friends do at home, drinking, smoking, wondering what to do with their life. At first glance, there is no difference between the people of Israel and Australia. However, an Israeli cannot go peacefully to many places in their own country, such as parts of Jerusalem, for fear of terrorism and even though Egypt is their neighbouring country, few Israelis will travel here because there is a constant chance they may be kidnapped. As for the other countries they border, such as Syria, Lebanon, and any other country with Muslim faith the option is completely out of the question.

Not only that, but when they travel outside their territory, in Europe, Asia, South America, I have seen many times an Israeli searched and treated badly simply because of their nationality. As an Australian, that is welcomed in any part of the world with happy curiosity and without prejudice, I cannot help but feel bad for the young people of Israel that are persecuted everyday, even though more or less we have the same values and upbringing, are of the same age and share the same easy going outlook on life.

Further, Israel accepts that it will probably never generate income from tourism like other countries can, despite the fact it has a unique beauty not found in other parts of the world. The mystic Dead Sea, its lovely beaches on the Mediterranean coast, the quaint city of Jerusalem with its historical significance, Eilat on the Red Sea, a town buried in the desert and perfect place to scuba dive, and the beauty of the North suggest there could be huge potential for tourism. But Israeli people know that any promotion of tourism will be met with fear and apprehension and therefore they must finance their infrastructure and economy themselves. Further, while every other Western

first and second world country bids for Olympics, the World Cup, etc, despite the fact Israel participates in all these events, it would be out of the question for their country to even consider hosting such events, and the people here don't begrudge this, they just accept it.

Yet the people of Israel are not terrorists. They are not even religious fundamentalists that want everyone to convert to Judaism. The majority of people living in Tel Aviv, Eilat and other places in Israel, even Jerusalem, do not necessarily consider themselves Jewish. They are peaceful people and most of their food is Arabic, many words they use are Arabic and in general, Arabic people are welcome in Israel, and live comfortably. The question is why then, does the rest of the world blame Israel for what is happening right now?

I realised that Australians cannot really appreciate what a war begins. We are an island nation and the risk of invasion remains low, because to fire missiles you need close range, unless you have powerful weapons. Obviously any boats firing at Australia would stand little chance, and as for the chance of ground forces moving in, they need to land somewhere to begin such an attack.

However, Israel is a small country, the only non-Muslim country buried in the Middle East. Nineteen days ago, Hezbollah kidnapped two soldiers and fired missiles into Northern Israel. I ask what Australia would do, if two of our soldiers were kidnapped and missiles fired from Indonesia into Darwin, for example. Would the public sit back and let it happen? No. Israel had no chance but to respond and defend their country, and their people.

Luckily Israel has a strong army, because all young people here must go to the army, boys for three years, girls for two. Unfortunately, given their geographic location they have no choice but to prepare in case of war. Instead of being able to invest money into infrastructure they are forced to spend money on training armies, and the new but basic apartments, office buildings, shopping malls and sporadic development within the large cities, demonstrate the result of this burden, even though Israel is more or less a first world nation. They do not have an army with the intention of training troops to invade other countries, only for purposes of defence. Everyday Israelis must defend themselves against suicide bombers, terrorism and it is constantly fighting Palestine and in the West Bank, for its right to live in peace. I won't comment further about the fighting in Gaza and the West Bank mainly due to my lack of knowledge, except to mention that

operations there are usually designed to capture known or suspected terrorists, and while the Palestinian people suffer, it is like Lebanon now, the people there are suffering due to Hezbollah and their terrorist efforts, not because Israel wants to destroy the Lebanese people.

Further, the focus has been on how Israel is destroying Lebanon. Little has been mentioned about the destruction in Northern Israel, how I have met several people forced to flee their homes, due to the constant rain of missiles. While Hezbollah missiles may not be as destructive, they have still caused life to cease in these areas, business is closed, children can't go to school, and those left have not fled South to Tel Aviv or Eilat have to sit in bomb shelters as more missiles come. Obviously, Israel wants to restore peace in the North, and the only way to do this is to locate and destroy Hezbollah's missile launching sites, many of which happen to be in suburban areas.

Remember, Israel is fighting a war on terrorism, for its country, but also for the whole world. There is no denying Australia, America and all other Western nations live in fear of terrorism and are united in their fight against it. But instead of realising Israel is doing work for them, they are meekly criticising their efforts which ultimately will leave us in a better position. Unfortunately Israel did kill 4 UN workers. However, claims that this was intentional are somewhat ridiculous. As my Israeli friend said, 'I think Israel has enough problems at the moment without having to intentionally kill 4 UN workers'. I mean, does anyone see why Israel would have cause to do this? Further, you can ask any Israeli and I guarantee they will not say a bad thing about the Lebanese people. They also feel sorry for their position that Hezbollah forced them in to.

Israel and its people have been persecuted for years, dating back to biblical times, the history alone shows how the people were banished twice from their home land before finally returning after World War II. And, ironically this return was only instigated as a result to one of the worst genocide in history, the Holocaust and attempted destruction of Jewish people.

Yet during and even after the war, little effort was made to help the Jewish people, so they found their own place in Israel, following their religious beliefs. I also remember the Gulf War. Actually I was ten, and I remember (embarrassingly) being upset that my cartoons weren't on TV because of the constant news coverage. I was reminded just yesterday how different my life has been to a young Israeli. One of my Israeli friends asked me what the 1990s meant to me.

I said fluorescent clothing and poofy boys' hairstyles. They said the Gulf War. For those that don't know or remember, because Iraq wanted to get even with America, but couldn't fire missiles that far, they decided to invade America's allies, Israel. Israel did nothing to warrant such an attack and as a result America fought this war for them. However, Tel Aviv was bombed and these Israeli boys my age remember being ten, and waiting with friends and family in bomb shelters every time another raid was announced. I found it hard to believe in such modern times we could have led such different lives while growing up.

Yet, the Israeli people have a good sense of humour. They told me stories that during the Gulf War, when Iraq announced they might also send chemical bombs to Israel, all adults and children were issued with a protective mask.

They had to carry it to school, everywhere they went, usually in a box. One day, two people told me this separately, for school craft, they got to decorate their mask boxes to take home and show their parents. Later, marketing took over and your mask carrying bag became a fashion accessory and ones of various colours could be purchased if you wanted to look 'extra cool'. The sheer ludicrousness of this recount made us fall about laughing, but still deep down I was glad I never had to encounter any of this when I was growing up.

Finally the worst part. Israel is strong, but Hezbollah is clever and firing missiles to stop them is not enough. The only way to top Hezbollah, with as few civilian casualties as possible is to send in Israeli ground forces. Hezbollah knows this and as a result has booby trapped all entrances. Three days ago, already 12 young Israelis soldiers were killed. Again I ask, why now, in this day and age why are young people still dying as a result of war? I watched the Israeli Minister of Defence address the nation and say that the soldiers did not die in vain, but will be remembered in history. Sadly, I think they will not and yet, it will not end here. Israel has to call its reserve soldiers, and announced that it will be conducting a national draft. My Israeli friend Michael is 22, as are many of his friends from the army I met, and the right now they wait every day for a letter or phone call, which will surely come, due to their age, and level of training to say it's their turn to go fight and to sit next to him and watch him, while he sees the news and watches as twelve Israeli soldier his age have just died, and that there is some good

chance he or his friends might be next is surreal. Such an idea is incomprehensible to me, I can't imagine any of my Australian guy friends between 20-30 waiting to see if they will have to throw away their studies, their jobs, their travel plans and their weekends of drinking and partying to risk their lives in a war that they did not even start.

I lived with Michael's family for only a week and met countless other families and people through him. Israelis are warm, friendly and down to earth. They watch sadly as yet again their country is under fire, not only from Hezbollah, but the majority of the outside world through condemnation of their actions. Again they know, when peace had been so close, they have been set back once again. But they don't want pity. They accept their fate, and think about it, can you recall an Israeli hating you for your thoughts or opinions. I don't remember ever meeting an Israeli person who openly retaliates against people's view. Israeli people train in the army, then they travel, they study, they try to live normal lives despite even now when their country is at war. They love their families, they love dogs, their ancestors are a mixture of Polish, Russian, Italian, Turkish, Ethiopian, German, French etc, and the Israeli people are more than accepting as a result. They pulled out of Lebanon once, 8 or so years ago, and now they have been forced to go back and now people my age face a horrible reality that makes me question once again whether we ever learn anything, whether peace is only a beautiful illusion, and how many times must history repeat itself before we realise that warfare and terrorism is not black and white and also that casting dispersions can be misguided and dangerous.

Perhaps you see this as propaganda and think I have been brainwashed by Israeli people. But I wrote this myself, happily and hope that the friends I am sending this to will trust and believe what I saw and wrote, more than what might be reported on *National Nine News* in Australia. I won't pretend Israel is perfect, I mean you can't get a Cheeseburger at McDonalds (OK you have to ask for cheese, it's not Kosher to mix meat with milk products), I was stung by a jellyfish and sometimes watching war planes and helicopters fly over every five minutes while sitting on the beach slightly interrupted my tanning. Anyway, I think you get my point! Let's just hope a cease fire comes soon, for the Lebanese and the Israeli people.

Rhiannon Monks



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A little bit of anecdotal anthropology: someone, a very acute and even startling observer of the human condition, and, therefore, a valuable agent against mediocrity, once told me this: that images are the purest form of unrequited love. No, not that to be in love with an image is the purest form of unrequited love, but that images are the purest form of unrequited love. After all if one is in love with an image, a 'matinee icon' or a photograph or a painting, it absorbs that psychic relationship into itself, the love becomes the image, the image becomes the love, as though it was through the pain of love without answer that you perceived the image. Because the image is the answer to the call that is love, the image is also the image of the absence that provokes the call as well as being that which is love. It is love that is no longer yours, yet which never leaves the realm of your own mind, your own love absent from itself, alienated from its creator. We create our own love, in collaboration, always, but from the uniqueness of that which we all share (and paradox, since paradox cannot be imagined, since it breaks the image, does paradox show us a model of how to release ourselves from this Romantic *cul-de-sac*?). What do her words provoke then? The idea that the relationship between images and our deepest selves, the selves which we consider to be the source of love is the always one of a love that is alienated and, self-reflexive to the extreme, has no content. What is an image? Doesn't it have something to do with identifying ourselves through negation? We are not the image but that which imagines, we are not the image of ourselves but that which invents, provokes, wears and ultimately has the power to reject it. We are the blackhole in every image (if you imagine blackness, then what you see is your brain without activity, or only in its activity of being present) - so an image is an arrangement on the fringes of our ourselves, that which we identify ourselves not with, but through.

Images and the attempt to understand their workings are somehow the opposite of any scientific understanding of the brain. They are too intimate to your identity to be identified with flesh, yet they the primary structure, I believe, in which we exist. They are impressions, often burning brands, in the flesh, and generally they are composed from residues of some kind of actual contact (a photograph is chemical residue of the contact of light, the image of a lover's face is much the same). They are evidence of our ability to touch the world, yet touch and contact remains strangely absent from them, they are present to us because the effect of contact lingers on. An image is a certain firing of neurons, a specific array thereof, a lingering image is the repeated firing thereof, an image is the electric flesh of the mind repeating the same form again and again. An image is always on the screen that is the brain, only the brain has any relationship to images, a

television has no relationship to the images which come through it as signals, only by triggering certain functions of the human brain can any form of mediation operate. The distinctive reaction of physical sensory apparatus to the impulses of a given medium is the basic nature of that medium, that is, the distinctive reality of electronic media is that they process sensation and the actual tissue of sensation in a specific form (I'm paraphrasing Marshall McLuhan). Yet in the end, we appreciate the experience only as the reception of particular sensation from which we further extract image from sound and so on. Therefore images a particular extraction from a flow of sensation which has a reality of force which the image itself seems purified of. Any specific image, as it stands in relation to our own sense of identity is an abstraction from a flow of forces.

The preceding indicates that the image is to be alienated on two counts: one, it produces a sense of a self by its creating a sense of distance between the image and this self, the self as something absent from the image. Two, there are a constant flow of forces (that blackness with which you can fill your mind in place of an image is also you brain in a naked state of force) which the image can only occur once they condense and once we cease to experience them directly and once we cease to consider this as the actuality.

If we think in terms of a flow of images themselves, a dream, a daydream, etc. this is irrelevant, the images are active and alive, it is only when a specific image is considered in a relationship to the self (a wounding image, or an image of perfection) and stands before us, when we a specific imagining ceases to be active and instead becomes something inescapable, that the question of the loss, the alienation, the lack of requite, becomes at issue. We can imagine more than images. We are struck by images, what we imagine are the flows connecting them

Images are particular crystallisations of sensation. The image is the product of the imagination, it is the movements within sensation, the life of the nerves, removed from this movement and life and taken as an object.

The object is what happened, is happening, will happen. The object itself is that which shatters imagining and, especially the image. Because objectively, imagination is a process with determinant causality, results and causes, then objectively the imagination will disrupt and even destroy the image, hence the image is twice removed from the objective. It is necessarily such because for the image, we are the object. We are the shadow of the image which grips us, further, the image is the shadow of a reality which is nonetheless out there. The image's removal from the objective. The object is what has the

ability to destroy. Objective though is nothing else than that thought which is survival related: to think objectively is not to think in terms of "what object is really out there?" because this line of thought has already described itself into an imaginary relationship, the objective thought takes itself as the object and asks instead a tactical thought (a thought in terms of objectives) "what has to be done for such and such a situation to be created, for such a such a desire to be manifested, for such and such an entity to be protected?". It is the kind of thought which addresses our reality, from the question of preventing war or defeating a fascist regime to the question of maintaining a love relationship is the extent (not even the full extent) of objective thought. Hence objective thought is that which uses then imagination to propose a solution and its object is always a problem which it seeks to transform. The image, however, cannot be transformed (to do so would be for it to be taken back into imagination and it would cease to be the image: the image is necessarily static) The image is marks a break with objective thought; here we have a mental relation which takes the forces the imagination to assume the function of an object. Here the imagination makes an image because we cannot relate objectively to our situation for some reason. Objective thought maintains, even nurtures, a flow by creating connections. The image is the residue of a flow than has come through a now dead connection. The image is always full, it lacks nothing, we can neither add nor subtract from it without it becoming a different image. This fullness of being we inevitably yearn for. Hence the image is the source of all Romantic forms of existence. The Romantic form existence occurs at the limits imagination, and takes the image for its absolute, it affirms the yearning which the image produces and undertakes to make this the basis of human existence: to be always yearning. Yet this yearning only occurs when the objective flow of thought has become disrupted. There are always images, yet one only slips into a psychological state where the image is dominant because of disruption of objective thought. The image is, due to its being at the limits of imagination where no new flows are possible, due to its being an abstraction from the productive apparatus of sensation and thought, due to its being a pseudo-object that occurs in the disruption of the relations of objectivity and transformation, always felt to be at the outer limits of one's being, an impossible distance away. This is the basic experience of lack. The image occurs when experience is at the greatest distance from the actual forces which work to produce one's life.

Is the basic idea behind the distaste for vanity true, namely that one most desires to look good when one is in a state of moral despair, when 'the look' is the last possible good?

An essay in 20 Fragments: *Images, Mediation, Mediocrity*

Any ordinary image is alive and breathes with us, its simple beauty energises our senses. However, THE image occurs when we are turned on by our senses, when we are isolated and made the object of imagination. We are fundamentally unimaginable beings (the sum of all experiences, and the bearers of responsibility for our actions). Equally, reality is also the unimaginable, though imagination is our relationship to reality (reality to Imagination: grit to pearl).

The image is expressed in the false problem of subject and object. There is neither fixed subject nor fixed object. However there is a truth about the world external to the mind which is mediated by perception, effects the mind. The relationship between object and subject is truth, yet neither subject nor object are anything but abstractions that must be expressed as images. There is no object 'out-there' and no subject 'in here' yet the idea that there is might be nonetheless has a certain effect, the accuracy of our ideas of the world effect that world and that world cannot be blocked from effecting the mind (even if it is in the form of the panicking mind completely disconnected from the world)

Death is the source of truth. Because we are finite our actions have a definite weight. The degree to which our actions extend beyond our finitude and enter into creations and destructions is the meaning of our actions. Actions sweep through the whole mind and into the unimaginable, that to which the imaginations relates in a relationship of hopeful transformation. The fundamental relationship of our actions is not to ourselves but to some other. The image cannot be acted upon, it absorbs all actions. The image is the opposite of action and occurs where action is suddenly impossible because imagination fails and becomes useless to objectivity. Hence when one enters the unimaginable state of being incapable of any action, when one is frozen and rigid; one sees the image.

To imagine one's self has nothing to do with the image. To imagine oneself on fire or making love is to include oneself in the imagination. The image is always a projection at the limits of oneself. It must involve two things, stasis and distance.

Hysteria: One knows an action must be taken. The knowledge of the object to be acted upon is impossible. The imagination becomes hyper-active yet no image can be produced. The body becomes rigid, a trapped scream drowning in itself. Panic overcomes the nervous system overloads trapped between fight and flight. One is an object, yet has no objective relationship to anything else. All actions are impossible because it is impossible to relate beyond the finitude of oneself. Imagination ceases to simply relate to reality and becomes reality (not because it has

been successful in transforming it, but because it has reached an impasse in this transformation). Hence, it can no longer manifest itself. Hence it shuts down. Hence, the image becomes the object and all to which one can relate. Hence, to give one's self the sense of reality one must evoke the separation between oneself and the image. Hence, this unrequited love. Hence, this stasis. Hence, this continual relapse back into hysteria.

A friend you will never see again. Your image of them slowly closes in on itself, feeds upon itself again and again until there is nothing left, they become a chewed bone of memory.

The design of our world seems to find its ultimate insignia in the invention of headphones. The production of a purely individual realm is the ideal. Reality is being reconfigured to be something aiming at you. In a market, you are a wanderer amongst stalls, you seek out goods, you are on the outside looking in, inspecting, going from one stall to the next. In a shopping complex, the marketplace is turned inwards, you are always at its centre (the deceptive accuracy of the words 'shopping centre') no matter where you are. All advertising contains an address to specific 'you', it aims at a mass of atoms. On a plane you have your separate journey from all the other. The way contemporary discourse works to first of all promote the 'diversity of opinion' as though this in itself were a good whatever the quality of opinions, also turns upon an idea of the individual as fundamentally separate in its relationship to reality. Yet all though is fundamentally connected. All thoughts are unique but they rely upon a milieu of thought and each new thought is modification of an old thought structure, hence the actual truth of thought is the way it relates through a group. The dictatorship of relativism in which we live, in which all opinions are first taken at the subjective level (viewed as the expression of a finite being with all the limitations that prevent any opinion from having a total knowledge of the object at hand) instead of as possible relations of objectivity (viewed as the expression of being whose life vitally connects with others, and whose thoughtforms directly contribute to the construction of reality) tends to discourage the production of meaning. Opinions have no meaning, only actions do. For an informed opinion to become a meaningful action, the objective relationship of that opinion has to be an objective concern.

Amidst meaninglessness, the state in which one's action cannot bound the finitude of one's own death (for we must imagine our lives in terms of a termination; imagined, death turns life itself into a single closed image), all sorts of fantasies, leaps of the imagination, and inventive games are possible, all sorts of joys are possible and all of these has value. Yet they tend to promote

a lack of relation to each other. A thought tends to enforce the conditions of its birth as it spreads and grows. Hence they fail to connect, they fail to become expressive and the lapse into meaninglessness again occurs, provoking a hysterical productivity of the imagination once again. Usually the imagination does finally break though hysteria, yet often at some point hysteria secures its continuance at deep level, so the complete collapse is avoided but the panic of meaninglessness is kept secret inside.

Headphones are not only about isolation, but also connection, the swapping of mixtapes, the transformation of the way one sees one's surroundings, the renewing experience of music by the renewing of its context, the simple possibility of enquiring what someone is listening too, and, did you know, they can also be used as microphones?

We live with certain unimaginable problems: the western world at the apogee of its power both wrathful and weakening in its possibility to transform for the better; climate change and the incredible effects of desertification, massive crop loss, whole cities underwater; death on a massive scale; the failure of democracy to address vital issues from immigration to increasing power of increasingly deregulated corporations; the failure of the social imagination to turn incredible technological break-throughs into applied solutions; all-time disparities in wealth, world-wide and within each nation; a world in a state of constant war. In other words, our world has become unimaginable in its essence, an object, a that, which we cannot useful map, name conceptualise in relation to our own lives. Those fragments we grab onto become fixations, images, the image at the centre of a hysterical whirlwind. We try to think small so that terror does not creep into our genuine human pleasures.

The structure of our imaginations is increasingly dominated by a world-wide image network which resonates through itself image/events such as 9/11, Abu-Grainb, famous corporate Logos, movie-stars. The completion of this world-wide imagination has only recently occurred. It might be said that Vietnam was the first war to occur once the world had gained an imagination and that Iraq II is the first war to have successfully adapted itself to these conditions. What is outside these images will always terrify us. Terrorism is essentially imaginary warfare, a warfare that works by making it imaginable that any moment a strike might occur, something which tends to break the connection between imagination and reality, make the unimaginable core of reality constantly present to mind. In such circumstances images themselves tend to panic.

Brendan De Paor-Moore



sexuality officer

SHOCK HORROR: I HAVE ATTENDED MORE LECTURES IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS THEN I HAVE IN MY ENTIRE UNIVERSITY CAREER!

Impressed, ay?

Is it just me, or is there now an emptiness in the lives of many Australians now that *Big Brother* has come to an end for this year? This void will quickly be filled by *Australian Idol*, 'I-want-to-write-your-name-on-my-t-shirt-right-about-now' and Yasmin 'I'll-scream-at-the-top-of-my-lungs-that-I'm-getting-married-even-though-no-one-really-cares' (except if there is good cake – good cake at a wedding is a sure crowd pleaser!) No more coming home to see how much lower Jamie's pants are or whether David is going to chuck another dummy spit or how much further Krystal can project her chest. It's the highs and lows of the last three months that have captured the attention of a nation – from gay rights, to plastic surgery, to animal welfare and media regulations. Ironically, as Rove put it on Tuesday night, will we have all forgotten them in about a week? What does Gretel do in the 'off-season'?

The reason that I've brought up *Big Brother* in this week's column is because my esteemed colleague Rhiannon Newman, Equity and Welfare Babe, had some interesting things to say about the 'Turkey Slapping' incident, which I feel compelled to challenge. Before I do though, let me just say that I am opposed to sexual harassment and am a passionate believer in the rights and welfare of women. Yet, Rhiannon's argument that Camilla as a victim was not 'believed... listened to, [given] a non-judgemental attitude and to be able to talk about the assault at her own pace' was not present in the episode in question is perhaps not totally accurate. As a fan and follower of *Big Brother*, I would perhaps know the context in which and the environment that this alleged 'assault' occurred. In an environment where there are over 30 cameras covering the entirety of the premise, there certainly wasn't an ability for Camilla to 'talk about the assault at her own pace'. In addition, *Big Brother* made a judgemental decision and thus had an attitude towards the incident by forcing a decision on the housemates without actually consulting those involved. Sure, if Camilla had felt that she had been sexually harassed or assaulted, then by all means remove them from the program. Yet, making a decision based on your own interpretation of the incident without being aware of how Camilla felt didn't provide 'support' or more importantly the chance 'to be in control'. If Newman and other Australians outraged by this incident had followed Newman's advice and "listened to" Camilla, they would have realised that Camilla in no way felt sexually harassed or assaulted. In addition, the "non-judgmental attitude" element of Newman's criteria was not respected by Australians with the top position – a.k.a Prime Minister John Howard.



Instead of judging the incident without actually knowing how the housemates were feeling and calling for the show to be axed. As Camilla quite rightly pointed out, "I don't judge John Howard, why does he have the right to judge me?". What must be remembered is that an extremely unique and special bond occurs when confined in an environment such as the *Big Brother* house that dictates the housemate's interactions. The plausibility to form relationships in a short period of time, to experience a different point of view in a confronting manner, to endure life without connection with reality, and the special interaction with other housemates who share the roller coaster ride of emotions is something which only 100 Australians have been able to achieve.

Furthermore, Newman's questioning of "at which point is it acceptable by law and the ethos of the show for BB to intervene in a situation" again highlights someone who has not been familiar with the format of the show or the regulations surrounding it. I point to the investigation demanded by Senator the Hon Helen Coonan – Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts and Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate, which found that Channel Ten had not breached any of the strict media regulations imposed on media networks in Australia. I also point to the number of support mechanisms in place for housemates to ensure that women are not put into dangerous situations for the enjoyment of others as assumed by Newman. While Newman mocks the rules of *Big Brother*, as it seems to supercede the law, the rules are there for a reason – to protect the housemate's safety. In addition, housemates have the opportunity to speak to professionals in mental health, and psychologists are on stand by, if needed, to assist with housemates dealing with the experience, which is *Big Brother*. I feel that, while I agree with Newman that this incident was handled inappropriately, it is perhaps for the wrong reasons – that it was handled inappropriately because it was an over-exaggeration imposed on the housemates without actually clarifying whether harassment had occurred or not – harassment is something which somebody feels uncomfortable about. If people don't seek clarification as to whether someone has actually felt harassed, then it is not our place to impose to someone how they felt. Otherwise this simply opens the floodgates for every single misinterpreted action to be considered harassment and individuals will never be allowed to interact with one another – for fear of it being deemed harassment.

David Wilkins
Male Sexuality Officer
d.wilkins@student.adelaide.edu.au



equity babe

Heya! Hope you are all settling into classes and not skipping too many lectures! This semester is bound to be fun, what with the 'excitement and intrigue' of student election week, PROSH and all sorts of other craz-i things to keep you entertained! For my own amusement and because I think everyone should want to be involved in their Union I present...

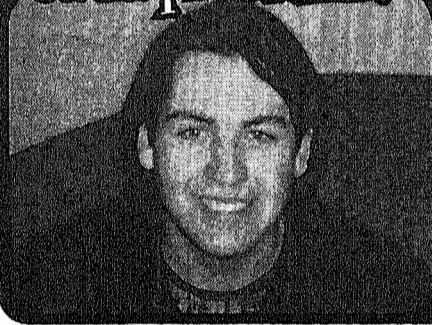
10 Simple Steps to Running Independently in Student Elections

1. Join the Union (you can't run without membership!)
2. Don't join a faction, these are the root of all evil and people are far more valid candidates without exterior forces pushing them- plus the era of student politicians and factions is over at Adelaide and you CAN GET ELECTED BY YOURSELF!
3. Find some non-aligned friends to help you hand out tickets, paint banners and wear a shirt emblazoned with your name! Don't screw over people in the process. It's just not cool, you can't get away with this shit in the real world so that's no reason to think you can here.
4. Nominate! Get your form from the AUU reception (nominations close on the 11th of August at 4 sharp.)
5. Read the elections regs (and stick to them,) make sure you attend the compulsory briefing session at either 1pm on the 14th of August or 5pm on the 16th.
6. Don't forget why you want to be involved- its not about the power trip, ego stroking or perception of greatness. There is nothing lamer than people hyped up on their own sense of self-importance.
7. In election week don't impersonate other candidates (Kate Walsh) or act immorally (i.e. don't do anything David Wilkins did- which includes not actually getting elected)
8. Make sure you eat, drink water and most importantly SLEEP during election week- otherwise you may find yourself waking up on the freezing cold concrete to a huge crowd of concerned student politician wannabees because you passed out. Believe me you don't want to be known as 'the girl who passed out in election week' its not so good for the reputation.
9. Play nice- bitchiness, violence and smear campaigns are just completely uncool- remember we can all have to get along in the same crayon box or some shit. At any rate bad behaviour only reflects badly on you.
10. Do some research and know what you're talking about. Don't promise anything you can't deliver and endeavour to keep your promises. Integrity, knowledge, passion and hard work will get you further than smooth talking any day.

Let the games begin. Hope to see you out there!

Rhiannon Newman
Equity and Welfare Officer

saua president



Hi everyone!
 Have you joined the AUU yet? It's only by joining that we can bring you the student paper you're reading, as well as many other great services, activities and representation. It's easy to join, just go to www.access.adelaide.edu.au.

In this edition, I'd like to pose a question to you all. What is representation to you? Student representatives do many things that can be called 'representation', but what do you think a student representative should do to represent you? Is it making submissions to government inquiries? Is

it sitting on university committees? Is it making comment in the media about student issues? Or maybe it's running awareness campaigns. Or more likely, it's some mixture of all of the above, plus a bit more. Whatever you think, I'd like to know, so email john.pezy@adelaide.edu.au and let me know what we should be doing for you.

Cheers,
John Pezy
 SAUA President
john.pezy@adelaide.edu.au

SAUA Office Bearer Columns

where fuzzy animals and student activism unite!

enviro officer



As most of you probably know, Reece Kinnane has gone on a study exchange to Chile and thus had to resign as Enviro Officer. I've taken on the position to carry on the awesome work he's been doing in the last six months, as well to make sure that the Student's Association - particularly the Enviro Department - continues to be active and effective as a representative and advocacy body on campus. I've been working with Reece on a whole heap of issues this year and am also part of the eco.students environment collective that began last year as a network of environment activists focusing on on-campus issues such as recycled paper and clean energy. Off campus, I've been involved in environmental activism for nearly three years, from getting postcards signed with the Wilderness Society to building fortresses and blockading in Tassie forests. I've also got stacks of resources and information on everything

from DIY and culture jamming to permaculture gardening and alternative energy, so feel free to drop by the enviro office in the SAUA (ground floor, Lady Symon building) if you're feeling a little frustrated by the bleak futures offered by global capitalism and want to talk about some alternative visions. Y'all best remember that democracy isn't a spectator sport. Now more than ever, it's time to quit talking about how screwed the world is and start changing things for ourselves. Fight the power, and all that. Anyways, if you're keen on the idea of making Adelaide Uni a more sustainable and environmentally friendly institution, or just want to meet up with a group of passionate, environmentally focussed students, then please come along to the weekly meetings of eco.students, Adelaide's very own student environment collective. Meetings are held on Tuesdays at 4pm on the Barr Smith Lawns, all welcome. We'll be lobbying the university for several key commitments towards sustainability this semester, as well as holding the usual array of shared dinners, outings, actions and film screenings. Let the fun begin...

Matt Allen
 Environment Officer
matthew.allen@student.adelaide.edu.au

women's vp



Are you passionate about women's issues?
 Do you want to meet other women students?
 Does the current government's attitude towards women really piss you off?
 Are you sick of sexist and degrading advertising in the media?
 Do you feel political activism on-campus needs revamping?
 Are you a creative person and want to make change through creative channels?
 Do you want to create life-long networks throughout the wider community?

If you answered 'yes' to any of the above questions then you should join the **Women's Action Group (WAG)**. This group will be a forum for women students to meet, chat and plan campaigns and events on campus and off.

Contact me if you want any more information or are interested in joining!

Tara Bates
 Women's Vice-President
 ph: 8303 3898
womens.saua@adelaide.edu.au



Adventure, eh. Excitement, eh. A Maltese Terrier crave not these things.

Notice of 2006 annual student elections

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

A copy of the Student Election Broadsheet outlining all candidates and policy statements will be available in hard copy during election week, and online after August 18th at www.union.adelaide.edu.au/student/elections/index.html

**Election week for the 2006 Annual SAUA & AUU Elections shall be:
Monday, 28th August until Friday, 1st September 2006.**

All University of Adelaide students are encouraged to vote during the following Polling stations and times:

Monday 28th August

Hughes Plaza	9.00am - 4.30pm
Barr Smith Lawns	9.00am - 4.30pm
Waite Campus (WISA Offices)	11.00am - 3.00pm
Roseworthy Student Union	11.00am - 3.00pm
Medical School	10.00am - 3.00pm

Tuesday 29th August

Hughes Plaza	9.00am - 4.30pm
Barr Smith Lawns	9.00am - 4.30pm
Airport Lounge	4.30pm - 7.30pm
Roseworthy Student Union	11.00am - 3.00pm
Waite Campus (WISA Offices)	11.00am - 3.00pm
Medical School	10.00am - 3.00pm

Wednesday 30th August

Hughes Plaza	9.00am - 3.00pm
Barr Smith Lawns	9.00am - 3.00pm
Airport Lounge	4.30pm - 7.30pm
Roseworthy Student Union	11.00am - 3.00pm
Waite Campus (WISA Offices)	11.00am - 3.00pm

Thursday 31st August

Hughes Plaza	9.00am - 3.00pm
Barr Smith Lawns	9.00am - 3.00pm
Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music	11.00am - 3.00pm

Friday 1st September

Hughes Plaza	9.00am - 4.30pm
Barr Smith Lawns	9.00am - 4.30pm



UNION
PRESENTS

JIM BEAM
NATIONAL
Campus band comp

COMPETITION NATIONAL CAMPUS BAND COMPETITION NATIONAL

CAMPUS FINAL

Friday August 18th

UniBar, level 5, 6:30pm

FREE ENTRY! Keep visiting:

www.union.adelaide.edu.au for the lineup!

MEDIOCRITY AND SPORT:

The Shane Woewodin Story

Mediocre: to be average or do something to an average or below average way. Mediocrity and sport are terms that are not often heard together as, generally, those involved in elite sports are already proven to be good at that chosen sport. However, in some sports, such as AFL, rugby league and other sports where there are lots of people involved, we see players that never quite make the mark that they were supposed to on the game.

One example of this un-fulfillment of potential is the story of Shane Woewodin. Woewodin was drafted to Melbourne from Western Australia in 1997 and after his debut made it 100 games consecutively. In 2000, Woewodin won the Brownlow Medal for the best and fairest player in the AFL and also took part in that year's grand final, playing on the losing team. At the end of 2000, Woewodin signed a three-year deal for a significant figure sealing his future at the Demons until at least the end of 2003, however in 2001, Woewodin suffered from the 'Brownlow Blues' and had trouble hitting peak form and struggled with injury. At the end of 2002, after regaining some form, Woewodin went off on holiday with his family, expecting to return to the Demons the next year and try once again to regain top form.

Woewodin was seriously wrong. Stating that they could no longer afford to pay the Brownlow Medalist, Melbourne sought a trade with another club in return for a first round draft pick. Collingwood were interested in this offer and took it up, this all unbeknownst to Woewodin who was still off on holidays. While he was away, he received a call from the Melbourne coach, Neil Daniher, to tell him that he had been traded to Collingwood and that he had played his last game in the Red and Blue. Woewodin was understandably shocked and a massive war of words broke out in the media upon his return to Melbourne.

Woewodin went to Collingwood, and after struggling in his first season in Magpie colours, finished second in their best and fairest in 2004, but it all went pear-shaped for Woewodin in 2005 when he struggled for selection in the senior side and eventually was de-listed from Collingwood and returned to Perth and original Western Australian Football League team East Fremantle. Since that time, Woewodin has struck great form at WAFL level and is now seeking a chance to once again play at AFL level by debating the idea of putting himself into this year's end of year draft.

The story of Woewodin is not isolated, however for a player of Woewodin's calibre to be de-listed only four years after winning the most prestigious award in football was unprecedented. This is a great example of a player simply not living up to the hype that surrounded him, however in this case the player did... he lived up to and exceeded all the expectations, the problem was he could not continue with his wonderful game style. While we'll all have to wait to see what happens in this year's draft and if Woewodin will actually ever get to play AFL football again, this case shows the fickle-ness of sport and of success.

Ashleigh Newton

Big Brothers Big Sisters Project Officer



The YWCA of Adelaide is a not for profit community organisation that influences community and government attitudes on issues facing young women, empowers young women through leadership development and supports young women in need.

Our Big Brothers Big Sisters Program provides vital support to vulnerable and isolated young people through volunteer mentoring services.

We are seeking a passionate, professional Project Officer to join our dedicated team.

You will be responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating our Big Brothers Big Sisters Project in the City of Port Adelaide Enfield.

Ideally you are qualified in Social Work, Psychology or Social Science; possess great skills in working with young people, their families and volunteers and have a sound understanding of child development and family dynamics. You are an exceptional communicator who is well organised and a team player.

The position is offered initially on a fixed term contract of one year at 0.5 FTE (SACS Award level 3-4) with the potential for hours to increase subject to funding.

You can obtain a copy of the job and person specification by phoning us on 8227 0155 or e-mail office@ywca.com.au.

Applications close 5pm Friday 18 August 2006

A bruised arm from hockey....Again.
If you've hurt yourself, not in hockey. Send in your pics to ondit@adelaide.edu.au

injury of the week



CHEAP UNI CARD SPECIALS

\$7 JUGS OF COOPERS

\$2.50 Vodka Sunrise

\$3 Tooheys Extra Dry

5-9PM Mon-Sat

\$10 Parmi & Pint

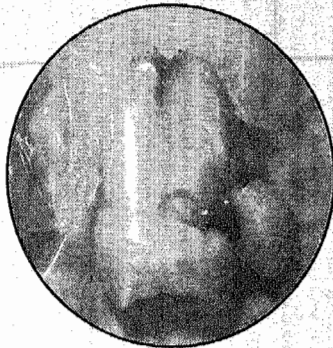
MON - WED LUNCH

CHECK IT OUT NOW!!!

www.londontavern.com.au

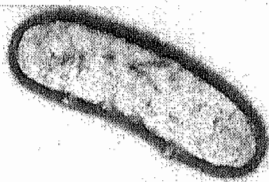
DISEASE OF THE WEEK: The Plague

Words were said, things were done. Let's just forget it all, alright? There. Amnesia is so much fun. Nevertheless, on to the first disease of the second semester: The Plague.



by Thomas Tu*

*who no longer has a mutant tooth residing in his mouth



Genus *Yersinia*
Species *pestis*

(Picture stolen from *Ciencia en la ciencia-ficción - Cromopalsaje* www.bibliopolis.org/cromo/crom0011.htm)

The Black Death

The Plague killed an incredibly significant proportion of people in the middle ages. Approximately 25% - 40% of the population of Europe died during this time (they are approximates because the people who usually did the counting of bodies had died due to the high virulence). It was the first time that human death rate was higher than the birth rate. Blah, blah, blah. I could throw statistics like this at you all day, but they're boring, a waste of time and you already know that Plague killed a lot of people. This article is about teaching you stuff you don't know.

There have actually been three recorded pandemics (an epidemic that is spread over continents) of Plague. Number one started in Egypt in 542 AD, spreading to Europe, Africa and Asia. It killed around 50% of the people that lived around there. It hung around until about 600AD. The second was the better known Black Death in Europe. The third (and still ongoing) pandemic started in 1855 in China and spread to Europe and the USA, where around 10 cases are reported each year. Countless epidemics within continents have also occurred with similar mortality rates.

In modern times, the amount of people reported to be infected by plague each year to the WHO is around 2000, out of which around 200 die. These numbers are probably much lower than the actual number of cases because countries are reluctant to proclaim that they are plague-mongers due to the stigma attached to it. In this way, the world may have been duped into a false sense of security.

Of rats and men

Plague is caused by the bacterium *Yersinia pestis* (named after Alexandre Yersin, who first isolated it in 1894). Humans are an inadvertent host; the natural cycle was from rat to rat transmitted by fleas. However, since evolution teaches us that mice and men are really, really similar (that's right, we scientists don't cut them up just because they're cute; we actually get proper research pertaining to humans out of them due to this similarity), humans could support the bacterium as well.

We'll start the cycle at the rat/flea interface: flea bites infected rat with *Y. pestis* in its blood. In taking in a blood meal, the flea inadvertently sucks up some bacterium too. Now, in the bacterium's frame of reference, it would

really suck if it went straight through to the flea's stomach where it'd get digested and die. So it does something really quite beautiful; it releases an enzyme called coagulase while passing towards the stomach. What this does is form a clot in the flea's oesophagus. This does three things: stops the bacterium from being digested; allows the bacterium to divide in the clot while stealing supplements from any other blood meals the flea digests; and starves the flea, making it more likely to bite more hosts that it can infect. The effect of the starvation is two-fold since, to start getting yummy bits into its stomach, the flea must first regurgitate the clot before another meal. This ensures that the bacteria will be thrown up into the host when enough bacteria have grown in the flea's throat. The act of producing one protein to produce these finely tuned benefits is one of the things that really impress me about bacteria.

Let's say that a human is bitten. The white blood cells see the bacteria as the foreign threats that they are and engulf it. However, *Y. pestis* has a protein on its surface that allows it to escape digestion by white blood cells. Instead, it fashions a home out of the white blood cell (which has now migrated to a lymph node) and replicates in it. This huge number of bacteria makes the lymph node swell up painfully into a large lump called a bubo (which is where we get the name bubonic plague). This lump can turn black because of bruising. This is the most common type of plague with an untreated mortality rate of 40 - 60%, but a treated mortality rate of 1 - 15%.

Treatment comes in the relatively simple form of antibiotics. There are no vaccines available that are effective against *Y. pestis* but those at risk are given a prophylactic dose of antibiotics.

If untreated, however, a huge number of bacteria can escape the lymph nodes into the bloodstream. This can cause septic shock. If you've read previous articles, you will have seen that many other diseases produce death in this way, but I've never actually explained it. Well, today's your lucky day.

In response to foreign particles, there's an automatic response to allow more blood to the place of invasion. It does this by opening up the blood vessels wider and leakier. You will have seen this when you get a splinter and it gets red and puffy. This local response is a good thing because you get more white blood cells at the site and neutralise any unfriendlies before they get out of hand.

However, if you get massive septicaemia (bacteria in the blood), every part of you says there's a foreign particle present, so all the blood vessels widen. This is akin to punching a whole lot of holes in a garden hose. Pressure decreases and blood doesn't get to important organs, such as the kidneys, liver and brain. Sufferers get a graven plaster on their face, receive damage to their organs or have them fall, fall into a coma and die.

Those that aren't treated for septicaemic Plague die, whereas treatment gives them a chance for survival of 60%.

Bacteria in the blood can then progress to the lungs and cause pneumonic Plague. In this form, *Y. pestis* can become aerosolised and be transferred from human to human. Patients cough up infectious sputum and blood. If this form isn't identified and treated within 24 hours, the person will die of either septic shock or pneumonia.

There are worries of bioterrorists using an aerosol version of pneumonic Plague. Having read the symptoms, you will be able to see that it isn't something to be considered lightly. The fact that it is still around infecting people makes it much more accessible and obtainable than, say, smallpox. However, aerosolling the bacteria in a way that doesn't disrupt its delicate structure is a complex task. Do feel safe in knowing that countries have a plan ready for every likely bioterrorism threat... I think.

Thomas Tu now lives in a bomb shelter wearing a gas mask and hazmat gear. He believes that the jars of urine add a masculine nice touch to the lounge area. Any replies to E-mails sent to thomas.tu@student.adelaide.edu.au may be late due to his constant disinfecting of the keyboard and mouse.

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Mesmerised By Mediocrity.

In 1995 Microsoft released the font Comic Sans originally designed for comic book style talk bubbles. Since then, the continual widespread abuse of printed type threatens to erode the very foundations upon which centuries of typographic history have been built. See www.bancomicsans.com for more info - eds

"Everything lost can be found again except for time wasted"

Fresh (1994)

As I type the beginning of this article I'm looking forward to a brief sojourn south, not exactly beach weather and I'm not sure whether I'm going to spend the whole time fuck-eyed inside but there still seems to be a promise of good times. Some pseudo Pixies-meets-Martha and the Muffins electro tinged crossover gear that is post-post Everything is cranked on the stezza. I'll just keep it to myself for now because soon as I tell you about them they will be like so September the tenth (just remember everything that you think is cool I was into like five years ago). Kiwifruit and strawberry incense is filling the room and as I recline on my chair sipping a green tea and pear infusion I can see a large anarchy symbol painted on the wall a fair few years ago to remind me that I'm on the edge... where I need to be (yes I'm one of "those" students). Excuse me for a second, I've got to go practice looking interesting in the mirror.

I'm back and yeah, I have definitely got 'it'. The top corner of the wall has crudely cut stenciled squares of different sizes and three analogous colours sprayed all over the corner and the connecting walls and ceiling. Partly obscuring the symbol it reminds me that nothing is permanent, there is a sense of lawlessness relating to emotion, compassion and empathy in all cultures. I think of it as a reflection of a mirror ball, a breaking wave or spray of snow being pixellated.

Probably won't make it to the snow this year and it is just as well because I hear they are having a bit of a shit season, and I don't want to melt any more snow... so hot right now. Nah seriously its more to do with cash flow. Simply Red's 1985 classic *Money\$ To Tight (To Mention)* loses all its trashy kitsch cred and humour when money actually is too tight to mention. So I'm about to make a trip to the local centre link office, c'mon, the least they can do is hook a brother up with a trip to Hotham or Hamilton Island once a year. Fuck I hate that song. Go fetch yourself some toasties, I've got to walk up the road.

Ok, I'm approaching the local branch as I pass a hottie struggling to balance two lattes and a \$150 dollar bunch of orchards into a Benz and I'm temporarily distracted from the usual breathing and anger management exercises essential to surviving a visit to dero link. Greeted by the usual lines resembling a refugee centre in a war zone (except significantly fatter), I'm appalled to see elderly people having to stand in a separate line. How dare they get special treatment just because they possibly went to war for our country and have paid taxes an entire working life, it is the work ethic these guys created in our culture that makes jerks like me feel guilty.

Make the young dudes stand for sure. Outside of masturbation, playstation and packing bongs it's probably the only exercise these living abortions get but why are the oldies being made to stand in massive lines for? Surely some chairs or an automated numbers system can be organised. So I barge my way to the front of one of the lines to check in so I can take a seat.

Amongst the usual collection of Fubu and body odour I feel a touch sentimental remembering the old office up the road. It seemed so much more welcoming in a dank sort of way: every time I visited I was assured a reunion with some old school mates who graduated to become some of the eastern suburbs' best young businessmen combining thongs, bling, and a great sense of humour with a comical amount of criminal activity. These guys deserved an award; even the staff behind the counter struggled to suppress laughter as they explained why they couldn't work at a supermarket, all the while organising drop-offs on a mobile at the same time. I would make my way through the fake plants to the front of the line relaxed many summers ago, that was then.

Now an interesting fact about Centrelink; some of the really tragic long term unemployed now end up behind the counter; they are usually more sedated and slow witted than the majority of the recipients. I'm greeted by one of the only examples that comes anywhere close to being non-hideously ugly. Although she appears to be the only staff member with teeth anywhere white and eyes somewhere close to normal alignment they are slightly bloodshot and glazed. Her morning wake and bake is obviously still wearing off and takes a painful amount of time to tell me my own name and to take a seat.

"Scar non mofos!" I try to greet some of the young homies; they give me a blank stare and turn away. I was just trying to fit in, geez it's not like I'm asking you to get a job you choker. Go home you're almost on level three and I think I hear your fat girlfriend calling for Snickers. Sitting where some markets were once located in which old people bought bonsai and sausages, the young bright juggling balls and secondhand records the new office seemed more soulless than ever. The site now contains the same generational spread of young mothers, students, artists and old age pensioners but they are now surrounded by a vile attempt at modern interior decoration. Contrasting with the humble shades of the pensioner's strides and cardigans the garish colours and revolting design is condescending, wasteful and offensive.

An oxygen thief with a lanyard came and led me to her desk, told me my own name and that they were having problems with 'the system'. As she mashed the keyboard with her hand I marveled at the shocking attempts at business

dress / corporate attire made by these low end public servants prancing around actually thinking this was real work. Returning my attention to Mrs. "Computer Says No". I realised the same deft touch displayed in her keyboard mashing control of 'the system' didn't really aid her in the application of make up leaving her with a sort of Picasso / disfigured transvestite type look.

The high point in hilarity came when she swivelled the screen and asked me what I "reckon'd" she should select and I'm like; lady I'd hate to take your job and put you through this. Another gem of advice: If I quit uni (with a semester left) I could receive an unemployment benefit which is a "shitload". Centrelink advising tertiary students to become unemployed! What's next, the Centrelink guide to cooking meth and organised crime? It soon became evident that this was one carriage of the gray train that was approaching its final destination. I grabbed a pie and trundled home.

I pen the remainder of this article upon my return from said southern sojourn. As I looked out into a rocky inlet being pounded by waves and contemplated the pending re-juggling of my schedule to accommodate a few extra hours of work a week I thought about the reality show *Bondi Rescue*. Screening earlier in the year it had one of the most intense pieces of footage I've seen as a team made three attempts to revive a dead tourist and succeeded on the third. Was more work or a different job entirely going to provide me some required creative and emotional defibrillation, I doubted it.

I'm the first to admit that I'm one of those students to bitch about the level of mediocrity in relation to campus culture and society as a whole but perhaps has given little thought to how it we come to be complacent with it. It is an obvious reality that the majority of students have to work whilst completing their studies, some adapt using phrases such as: "the more you do the more you do" or maybe put of social engagements because they are "time poor". OK, being tight on time and cash can be a bit harsh on the social life, but how many times have you handed up an average essay, not had time to mix down that piece of music, paint that picture, taken that language or sewing course because of a fraction of time lost.

Whether you're hypnotized by the hypocrisy and repetition of welfare or working to put another designer label on credit now might be the time to get of myspace.com and claw back a bit of your space and time offline. Grab it, own it and discover your real dreams. Earlier in the weekend I went out to the backyard to chop some firewood and I gazed with glazed eyes skyward amazed at how many more stars I could see barely an hour away from the usual routine.

Love Re : Pete

EMPTY IDEOLOGY



Mediocre
Modern
Self

Pseudo-Hippies. Pseudo-Punk. Pseudo-Goth. These 'individuals', along with stress and traffic, are the bane of city living. These people are not interesting, alternative or different. Rather they are proof of the hegemony of capitalism, that capitalism has won. In many ways, I love living in a capitalist country. There are many luxuries that capitalism provides that I would be loath to give up (choice for example... take that communism!). Modern Capitalism is problematic because it is not sustainable... its relationship with the environment limits the length of its existence.

Modern Capitalism is not only destroying the environment, but also twisting and perverting historic counter-culture movements, which were usually in opposition to capitalism, and re-aligning them with consumerism. Counter-culture has consistently been appropriated by advertisers and marketed to consumers as alternative, individual and cool. What people fail to see is that consuming these images aligns them with their arch nemesis: capitalism. Sid Vicious and Jimi Hendrix would turn in their graves to witness what their dreams have become.

Hippy-dom was originally associated with free-love, free-press, vegetarianism, organic farming, alternative energy, communal living and nudism. If you asked any given hippy-chick whether they would give up hot showers, easy food, television and other modern conveniences to go and live naked, in a drippy tent, with 20 other hairy and unwashed individuals in the middle of a veggie patch all of them would say 'no'. Wearing the clothes of a counter culture are not enough to give yourself 'cred', even if the advertisers say it

is. You have to actually go out and do it. At any rate, hippy-style clothes are cost prohibitive these days. To be a hippy these days you have to be rich or have a job, and that defeats the purpose of identifying yourself with the hippy sub-culture. You cannot be a weekend or WOMAD hippy and expect people to take you seriously.

Where has the vibrant violence and anger of punk gone? It certainly doesn't exist in the pseudo-punk of today. Punk was once anarchistic filled with anti-authoritarianism, anti-militarism and anti-capitalism sentiments. If you asked one of the many little punks roaming Rundle Mall when the last time they stuck it to the man was they'd probably look at you blankly and ask 'stuck what to which man?' Sure, there are still a few 'real' punks left out there, but they are heavily out-numbered by the psuedos. The 'Lee Harding' example is a winner, but let's not go there. Let us instead focus on shoes. Green Day is arguably the biggest punk band at the moment. Questions about where their loyalties lie arise when they start selling off Green Day branded shoes. Incidentally, this is not a single freak occurrence. Fashion designers like Jean-Paul Gaultier use elements of punk in their cloths. Originally hand-made punk clothes are now mass produced and common in main stream society. Punk ideology is dead, although punk fashion is still alive and well. But why appropriate the signifiers of punk if they don't mean anything, if they're respectable!? Let punk rest in peace and stop destroying its bad reputation.

Goth is another sub-culture that has increasingly been appropriated by mainstream

society and commercialised. Similar to the punk sub-culture Goth fashion originally had a strong focus on DIY and challenging traditional values of beauty and eroticism, encouraging curvaceous womanly beauty and sexuality. Unfortunately, Goth fashion is increasingly common and commercial and for that reason it is no longer challenging to look at. Modern pseudo-goth has a stale feel to it. The gogan community are particularly guilty of this. A gogan is a peculiarly mix of both goth and bogon. Gogans retain the gothic love of the colour black and combine with it with a love of heavy or death metal, usually advertised on their t-shirts. Surely to brand oneself thusly is in opposition with gothic ideals of individualism and sexuality. The Gothic interest in sexual diversity and sex games is perhaps its saving grace and one which the main stream has yet to commercialise. As a movement Gothic is still fairly underground. Problems only seem to arise when teens appropriate the Gothic look without understanding the values of sexuality, individuality and the appreciation of fine art.

If you're going to dress with an ideological slant, please try to understand the signifiers behind the clothes... If you won't, don't or can't you're a hypocrite. Sure, "you're all individuals" but that's just the point and you seem to be missing it. And take off that Che Guevara t-shirt, it's just not you and trust me, your teen angst won't last forever.

Andrew Love would like to thank Wikipedia for some interesting insights into the various sub-cultures listed in this article.

Concrete: Depths

Paul Chadwick's

This is an interesting hybrid; part super hero, part personal journey. This story follows the adventures of a man who, following mysterious encounters with extra-terrestrials, finds his brain transplanted into a body made of rock. He adopts the name 'Concrete' and sets about trying to find a use for his new powers. It sounds a little dubious, but this is actually one of the best things I've read in ages. The emphasis isn't on superhuman feats or wacky adventures, it's about a guy making the best of a weird situation. Thus it has an unreal premise, but the character remains believably interesting.

One of the things that turns me away from comics, asides from their freakishly high prices, is the tendency of those creating them to assume they can make up for a lack of plot by the inclusion of cliché. Its divergence from this habit is one of the great successes of *Concrete*. Chadwick actually knows how to write a story, and his work would probably work in any format. However, his drawing style, what you'd call 'clear and bold', amplifies his narratives. Running to 208 pages, and with a couple of shorter pieces, including an autobiographical road trip memoir, tacked on the end, this is easily worth the \$25.90 price tag.

Ianto Ware

Comics

available in Pulp Fiction Comics
44a King William Street



WE3

Grant Morrison & Frank Quietly

&

The Ballad of Halo Jones

Alan Moore and Ian Gibson

These are both science fiction comics; part of a long established form of genre fiction and, like all genre fiction, your ability to enjoy them hinges on your ability to stomach the nuances of that genre. And genre fiction always seems a little suspect. In the same way a Mills and Boon novel will always be a Mills and Boon novel, a science fiction comic is always going to be just that; full of melodrama, shallow characters, frustratingly see through plots, cliché and a total absence of subtlety.

That doesn't make it bad, it makes it different. Genre fiction functions on a quality standard that is incompatible with its canonical and institutionalised counterparts, but it has a long history of being justifiable in its badness. Pretty much any novel you read, including the now canonised works of Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, the Bronte Sisters and Jane Austen, was, in its day, considered in the same way these comics are today; trashy but occasionally enjoyable, unrealistic and bound to themes of romance, gothic horror and adventure. They worked in the same way these comics work; turning a fictionalised or melodramatised world into an open metaphor for the existing one.

Thus, the very professional WE3 follows the escapades of a rabbit, a cat and a Labrador who have been turned into domestic pet versions of *Robocop* by the US military as covert weapons against terrorism. At one level, it's kind of schmaltzy, predictable and silly, and it is a little hard to take the idea of a robo-bunny killing machine seriously. But on the other hand, this isn't meant to be read as realism. Underneath the blood, gore and futuristic cyborg stuff this is basically a critique of the no-holes-barred quest for US military dominance, with its emphasis on developing high tech weaponry at the expense of innocence, loyalty and everything else cuddly pets are supposed to embody.

Whether it's worth the \$25.90 price tag comes down to how much you think *Milo and Otis* and *Robocop* should have been blurred together. Personally, there's not enough of a plot to make this something I'd come back to more than once. On the other hand, if you're a big fan of freakishly professional design and drawing, this really does what it does very well.

Less easy to read, scratched out in black and white, but with far greater volume and a much more developed story, Alan Moore's *The Ballad of Halo Jones* is better value for its \$39.90 price tag, at least in that it will take you more than twenty minutes to read. Originally serialised in 2000 A.D. between 1984 and 1986, it follows the adventures of the book's namesake from her origins in a futuristic slum to her adoption of a career in the army as an attempt to escape poverty. It's billed as a "feminist classic". It's not. If you want a feminist classic, try finding something actually written by a woman.

That said, there's none of the usual comic book tit shots and its appeal isn't exclusively limited to teenage boys. With its sense of claustrophobia, themes of cluttered, dead end lives, poorly paid poverty trap jobs and the overwhelming presence of mass media pacification and, again, militarism, it's hard not to take it as a metaphoric critique on the mid eighties conservatism of Thatcher and Reagan. The justifications of military spending whilst employing people on pay so low it didn't even provide self sufficiency still hits home pretty hard twenty years later.

Underneath the layers of sci-fi, *Halo Jones* is, like *WE3*, a criticism of contemporary culture. For my money it's the better of the two, despite its lack of visual glamour. It's better thought out, more entertaining and, depending on your knowledge of Thatcher's Britain, a historically interesting example of the cultural reaction to mid-80s politics. Again, these are both works of science fiction and you'll only like them if you can get past the nuances of the genre and relate to the metaphors it produces but, particularly in the case of *Halo Jones*, these are good examples of their type.

Ianto Ware

2006 End of Winter Fashion Trends

Before the weather warms up bold, block bright colours & tailored lines are evident this season combined with big bags and belts and sexy sleek hair.

Red Hot – It's eye-catching & a little on the wild side!! Wear a bright red jacket or just accessorise with a red belt, boots or beads.

Black is back - no plain black clothing but black with added funk such as beading & sequins or textured black items.

Spunky stripes - stripy tops of all shapes & sizes look great. Add a military jacket to finish the look off.

Snug skinny jeans - can't go wrong tucked into boots or with cute little flats.

Funky frocks - retro printed frocks and pencil lined skirts with a waistband giving you a flirty feminine look - just don't overdo the frills!!

Leggings - Under shorts, dresses or skirts leggings add a funky appearance! Get a pair now!

Luke

Who is your style icon?

'Maria Phuong - unique Oz fashion designer'

Favourite item of clothing?

'7Up t-shirt'

Where do you unwind & have a weekend drink?

'Zhivagos or Sugar'

Lisa

Who is your style icon?

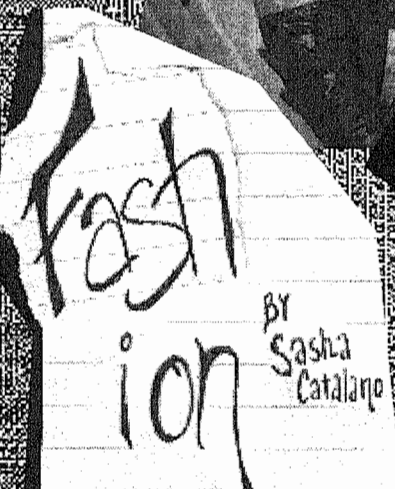
'individual style- style on the street!'

Favourite item of clothing?

'red scarf'

Where do you unwind & have a weekend drink?

'The Exeter'



*Fashion Tip- Don't Forget To Accessorise!



Lauren

Who is your style icon?

'Think OC- Seth meets Anna!'

Favourite item of clothing?

'Black Jeans & my checked slip-on shoes'

Where do you unwind & have a weekend drink?

'The Austral for a beer or Supermild for a cocktail'

Chelsea

Who is your style icon?

'Kate Moss always has a great look & I love'

'Sienna Miller's boots!'

Favourite item of clothing?

'My black Buffalo biker boots'

Where do you unwind & have a weekend drink?

'Rocket'

The Infernal Optimist

Linda Jalvin, 2006

Jalvin's Zeki tells an horrific story in the way that some outlandish Ali G – Pizza hybrid would tell it, laced with irreverent humour and simple insight that always allows the reader to appreciate the injustice of his position.

Jalvin's name is associated with erotica in various forms. Her previous works include *Dead Sexy* (a murder mystery with a sex columnist in the lead role), *Rock'n'Roll Babes from Outer Space* (aliens land in Sydney in search of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll), 1998's self-explanatory *Eat Me* and her autobiographical collection *Confessions of an S&M Virgin*. The product of many visits to the Villawood Immigration Detention Centre since 2001, *The Infernal Optimist*, in which the undescribed sex is relegated to a peripheral, mostly comedic, role, constitutes a bold literary departure for the author.

Despite the number of writers who have identified publicly with programs such as A Just Australia: Australians for Just Refugee Programs, there are surprisingly few novels that tackle Australia's regime of mandatory detention of 'unlawful non-citizens'. Tom Keneally's *The Tyrant's Novel* (2003) placed its main character inside a detention centre, having escaped an oppressive dictatorship which could only have been Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Morris Gleitzman's children's novels *Boy Overboard* (2002) and *Girl Underground* (2004) each told fictional stories of great escapes, throughout which the detention regime figured prominently in the experiences of the protagonists. (While Phillip Ruddock largely ignored any popular culture references to refugee policy, his successor as Minister for Immigration, Amanda Vanstone, accused Gleitzman in 2004 of peddling political propaganda, saying without any apparent hint of irony that 'one of the greatest things we can give kids is a childhood. Let them have a childhood as long as they can without burdening them with some of the difficult decisions that have to be made later in life. There's no political gain to be had here. Kids don't vote. Why ruin their childhood?')

Jalvin's Zeki was born in Turkey, but arrived in Australia at the age of six months. He neglected to properly follow through with his naturalisation; now in his twenties, and as a permanent resident rather than a citizen, he's fallen foul of section 501 of the *Migration Act*, which allows the Minister to revoke a person's visa if s/he spends more than 12 months in jail.² Zeki's habit of stealing, which he views as evidence of 'Australianness' given this nation's convict history, lands him initially in prison for 13 months and then in Villawood indefinitely. There, he awaits deportation to Turkey, where he won't even know the language.

Through his ignorance and foolish confidence, Zeki manages to stay positive for most of his time inside Villawood IDC, even as those around him sink into chronic depression (and worse). Presumably, Jalvin wrote the cheeky and untroubled Zeki to appeal to as wide an audience as possible; through him, she manages to recount many of the major IDC incidents that occurred across Australia between 2001 and 2005 without seeming too preachy or political. While in Villawood, Zeki endures a fictional version of the riots, protests, escapes and hunger strikes that dogged Woomera between 2000 and 2002. The Bakhtiyari children, who escaped Woomera in June 2002 and resurfaced in Melbourne, resurface again in Zeki's Villawood, as did the forty asylum seekers who escaped Villawood in 2001. The accounts of detained children recall the sad case of Shayan Badraie who, after arriving as a five-year-old by boat with his parents in March 2000, developed severe psychological trauma after witnessing hunger strikes and suicide attempts, was separated from his parents for periods and was continuously detained despite pleas by medical professionals.³ The accounts of severe chronic depression are consistent with the work of psychologists Zachary Steel and Derrick Silove and Iraqi medical practitioner Dr Aamer Sultan, who identified that people in IDCs for more than 3-6 months would invariably develop lasting psychological disorders similar to post-traumatic stress disorder.⁴

All writing is political, in the sense that it is based on the assumptions and biases of its authors, and privileges a particular world-view.

The Infernal Optimist is more overtly political than most novels, in the sense that it takes a principled stance against current government policy. Its package is somewhat eclectic; its intended audience is obviously wider than the 'converted' to whom, say, Bob Brown preaches in his *Memo for a Saner World* (2004), and so its aim is to challenge and influence, rather than to merely confirm. Published by HarperCollins' 'independent' Fourth Estate imprint (ultimately owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation since 1990), its cover reveals little of its 'controversial' content, as if it somehow hopes to entice readers who wouldn't otherwise be attracted to a 'political' story. The voice of Zeki is ostensibly 'neutral' and 'apolitical', giving the reader the opportunity to grow into political awareness with him.

There is a nagging inauthenticity to this approach. Jalvin is clearly passionate, and occasionally drops Zeki's first-person voice to make points Zeki never would. And even if the book's 'apolitical' presentation and Zeki's 'neutrality' were to somehow attract 'unconverted' readers, there is the very real chance that the flawed nature of Zeki's character will make him an object of judgement ('he's a criminal! He deserves all the punishment he gets') rather than the bridge to compassion for asylum seekers, visa overstayers and 'unlawful non-citizens' detained in IDCs. (Those who were unable to identify with Amir in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* – and there were many – will not empathise with Zeki.)

The presentation of *The Infernal Optimist* is in stark contrast with that of Miles Franklin Award-winner Andrew McGahan's next novel, *Underground* (due out in October). Set in approximately 2020, with the Liberal Party still in power, the War on Terror has assumed gigantic proportions, and is being used to justify a constant State of Emergency whereby Parliament has been disbanded and the Prime Minister has assumed the functions of all three powers of government. Despite its 'airport novel' tone, its publisher, Allen & Unwin, is unashamedly targeting the 'converted' with a huge 'guerrilla marketing campaign' directed at that half of Australians who have been waiting for just such a book.

So *The Infernal Optimist* isn't for everyone. Indeed, Zeki's distinctive and improper vernacular, full of 'me' instead of 'my', 'a' instead of 'of', and the consistent misuse of particular words ('me and me boy had a conversational with Mrs Palmer'; 'I'm virtuously outta here'; 'me snoring made it hard for the others to mediterrate'), may put as many readers off as it charms.

I, for one, was charmed by Zeki's innocence, his unique colloquialisms, and his plight. But then again, my own awareness of the inhumane horror of the federal government's refugee policy dates back to 2001-02, and, specifically, newspaper articles by Julian Burnside and (of all people) Gerard Henderson. Jalvin should be commended for attempting to draw attention to a government policy that unapologetically denies individuals basic human rights, goes directly against the spirit of international law, and breaches all standards of common decency and respect for fellow humans. Whether Jalvin influences any readers, which seems to be at least one of her intentions, remains to be seen.

(Endnotes)

¹ Senator Vanstone, quoted in Sue Williams, 'Vanstone attacks children's author', the *Australian* (Sydney), 3 July 2004, p.5.

² *Migration Act 1958* (Cth), s.501(2) ('The Minister may cancel a visa that has been granted to a person if the Minister reasonably suspects that the person does not pass the character test, and the person does not satisfy the Minister that the person passes the character test'); s.501(6)(a) ('a person does not pass the character test if the person has a substantial criminal record'); s.501(7)(c) ('a person has a substantial criminal record if the person has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 12 months or more').

³ For further information on the Badraie case, see: ABC TV, *4 Corners* (13 August 2001); Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Report of an Inquiry into a Complaint by Mr Mohammed Badraie on behalf of his son Shayan regarding acts or practices of the Commonwealth of Australia*, Report No.25, 2002.

⁴ See for example the *Medical Journal of Australia*, volume 175, Issue 11.

Russell Marks

literature



Officer Factory

H H Kirst

Whilst visiting Tasmania we stopped off at Richmond, a small village north east of Hobart. Under strict instructions to do no intellectual work I picked up a second hand book (\$2) with a naff cover, suggestive of 1970s soft porn, from a local café (not that I was after porn, mind you). *Officer Factory* was published in English for the first time in 1962 (original German publication, 1960). I have yet to read a more damning account of the Nazi mentality and of immoral wars. The book was strangely relevant to Iraq, since it deals with the morality of officer cadets, their training and their attitude to the glory of war.

Set in a German training school in 1944 (and said to be based on a true story), *Officer Factory* is an ensemble piece whose main protagonist, Lieutenant Krafft, is ordered to (secretly) investigate the murder of his predecessor, whose class he has taken over. Krafft investigates the murder whilst attempting to encourage his students to think for themselves.

Meanwhile we are introduced to other characters, from the old-school Prussian Camp Commander, to the self-deluded careerist (Nazi) captains; from cynical cadets just out for promotion or survival, to those drunk on Hitler. Through this the debate within Germany gets thoroughly developed; from rabid Nazi's to potential rebels. Krafft has to find the culprit, prove his guilt and survive himself. Well constructed, the book is comic, tragic, philosophical and an utter condemnation of an army brought up without morals.

Andrew J Turner

Editors:
Karlie & Sunshine
ondit@literature@yahoo.com.au



Wow. I love the Internet. It is the penultimate bastion of mediocrity. As one of the most intelligent I know said recently, "Anyone can publish on the Internet." And this means that I can search for the word "mediocre" (I'm feeling unimaginative since my dog died) and dedicated entirely to men's underwear, how comfortable/sexy/practical they are, laughed at most were rated as mediocre comfy, not particularly uncomfortable, lengthy discussion about just how tight for optimum showing off of both buttocks to add that all of these technical terms are taken directly from the original, anonymous, author. Never has mediocrity been so celebrated as it is now. Look at the success of *The Da Vinci Code* and Paris Hilton's fledgling singing career. So why do we all suddenly celebrate mediocrity? Maybe it has something to do with everyone wanting to believe that they have a shot at doing, well, whatever it is that they want to do, and the possibility of making vast amounts of money at it. It could also be about denying privilege - there isn't supposed to be an upper class anymore, and if there is, they aren't supposed to have access to anything special. Maybe we just aren't supposed to have anything special. Instead we have monologues about men's underwear, countless faceless celebrities and lacklustre literature. It's not all bad - or even mediocre. You just have to wade through a lot to get to the good stuff. At least I'm learning about persistence.

Sunshine

MEDIOCRE BOOK OF THE WEEK

Everyone Worth Knowing

Lauren Weisberger



Chick Lit at its stereotypical worst. For those who read Weisberger's first book "The Devil Wears Prada" and enjoyed it you'll either find her recycling of the same storyline incredibly delightful, or as in my own experience, an absolute cop-out. Weisberger's novels are the literary equivalent of Britney Spear's songs: same tune + different words = new hit. This time around the novel's heroine, Bette, leaves her boring existence as a drab banker to join the high-flying world of celebrity PR.

The usual chain of events occurs... Bette's friends and family disown the now hip heroine whilst she chooses to mix it with the rich and famous. Then of course she realises that this fabulous world is not so fabulous and that it has compromised her sense of being. Backs get stabbed, vicious gossip gets spread blah blah blah. In the climactic turning point where she ditches the high life to go back to being her old secure self she still ends up with the dream guy and everyone lives happily ever after! Romantic comedies have a lot to answer for.

I have to admit I do enjoy the odd jibe at the whole celebrity scene and my one hope is the book has de-glamourised the scene for all the wannabe celeb's out there... doubtful but perhaps a more realistic goal than my other... world peace.

Karlie

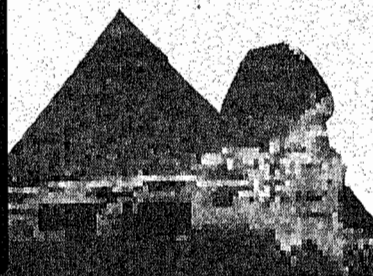
Iris & Ruby

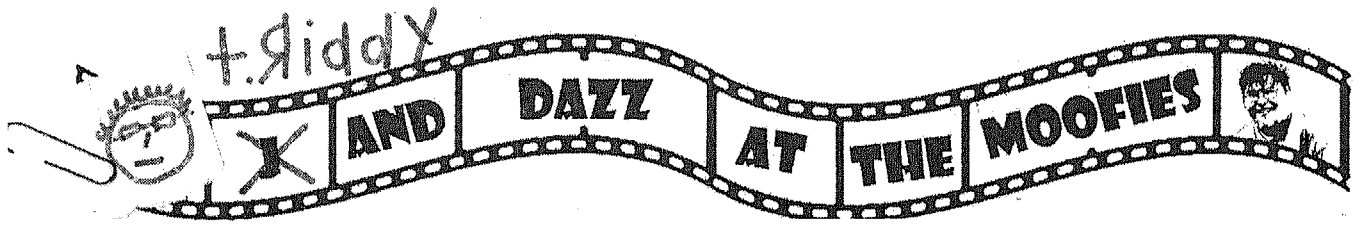
Rosie Thomas
Harper Collins



As mentioned elsewhere, the theme of this week's edition is mediocrity, and *Iris & Ruby* is nothing if not mediocre. This is not one of the world's great works of literature, but then again, nothing about it leads one to expect greatness. It's a classic coming of age story - angry young woman runs away from home to Cairo to live with old, once wild, grandmother. The concurrent stories of Iris in WWII Cairo - with her incredibly brave and constantly endangered lover Xan - and the sullen Ruby tripping around modern Egypt with her own special boy, and Egyptian named Ashraf (whom is luckily the brother of her first taxi driver) are nothing particularly special. Even the characters that populate the women's memories, dead lovers and friends belonging to each, are less than sparkling, even with the benefit of a lovely nostalgic tone. What is done incredibly well are Thomas' descriptions of Egypt. It is clear that her time there made an impression on her, and her imagery has a certain grace, despite the many heavy-handed stereotypes. If you have been to Egypt, the chances are that you will recognise the vast majority of the places she describes, from the Khan al Khalili Souq to the Giza Pyramids. A quick and easy read that is momentarily diverting - but well and truly mediocre.

Sunshine





If you want mediocrity, we'll give you mediocrity! This week, Space Monkey examines some of the most mediocre examples of Austra-Kiwi cinema: the Bryan Brown classic *F/X* and New Zealand's own Temuera Morrison (who? read on). But it doesn't stop there, there's also an exhaustive list of mediocritifilm films, ranging from *Bad Boys to Bad Boys 2!* Even some of the new films this week are mediocre; Bullock and Reeves back together again. That's surely a recipe for multi-academy award winning, riveting, cinematic glory. Pfft! (NB: while writing this little spiel, I did not expect Brian to provide me with a positive review of *The Lake House*).

Luckily, standing out like beacons of filmy choiceness amid a plethora of mediocrity are a couple of great new Aussie films. *Kenny* and *Footy Legends*.

Dazz

Kenny (M)

Showing at Palace Nova from August 17

Who's Kenny? He's a true blue Aussie bloke who is proud of the business he works in dunny hire! Now before you dismiss his work as a load of crap, remember the last time you went to Big Day Out or Womadelaide. Where would you have been without the porta-loos? Not a pretty picture at all, is it?

Kenny Smyth (played by Shane Jacobson) takes you on a road trip through his work in portable waste management, to put it politely. He takes care of other people's business and does it with integrity, dignity and a shit-load of pride. Meet his father (Ronald Jacobson), a man who isn't impressed with what his son does for a living and makes that point clear every chance he gets. Meet Kenny's son (Jesse Jacobson), a boy who is now discovering the ways of the trade. Meet Jackie (Eve Von Bibra), a lovely lass who understands what its like to clean up after someone.

You'll thank the Jacobson brothers Shane and Clayton for cracking you up at every turn. The film, packed full of sharp wit and smart dialogue, will leave a smile on your face long after you've left the cinema. The talented cast lend a tangible edge to the fly-on-the-wall theme and keep you glued to your seat. I thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of this film. The plot flowed flawlessly from beginning to end. This is such a refreshing change from what we're used to watching that I'll definitely see it again.

Better than a poke in the eye with a burnt stick, mate!



FREEBIES

It might not be Footy as we know it in Adelaide, but Khoa Do's new film

Footy Legends

is pretty damn good.

If you would like to win a free pass to see it, simply come down to visit us at On Dit (SAUA Office, Lady Symon Building) at 1:30pm,

Tuesday, 15th August



Footy Legends (PG)

Now Showing Everywhere



Luc Vu (Anh Do) is unemployed and struggling to survive in Sydney's western suburbs. He's also the carer for his young sister, Anne, since their mother passed away. He gets a wake-up call one

day from social services who claim he's been neglecting his sister.

But where's the footy, I hear you ask. Well, Luc and his equally struggling mates (Lloyd [Angus Sampson], Terry [Steven Rooke], Boof [Jason McGoldrick], Shane [Shane McDonald], Walid [Paul Nakad of *Pizza* fame] and Donald [Tristian Fereti]) decide to enter an amateur football (well, if you can call rugby league football) tournament that will win them all new jobs and a brand spankin' new Holden Ute! But the boys from the Yagoona Schooners get a whole lot more out of the competition than that. As the film progresses, you notice in each of the characters that they become more proud; they develop a greater sense of self worth and zest for life; which are issues director Khoa Do explored in his feature debut, *The Finished People*. But *Footy Legends* is very different. It's one of Australian cinema's few sports movies and it's a comedy. While the main subject of *Footy Legends* is footy, the film is about much more than that. It's about family and mateship and what you'll do for those closest to you.

Footy Legends might not be quite as good as *The Finished People* (a fine film, in my opinion), but it might be a bit of a case of apples and oranges.



Dazz

"It's psychotic! They keep creating new ways to celebrate mediocrity!"
- Bob Parr (Craig T. Nelson), *The Incredibles* (2004)

My Super Ex-Girlfriend (M)

Now Showing Everywhere

Superheroes are often amongst the most idealised, glossy characters in popular culture - a fact that *Smallville's* Tom Welling or the recent *Superman Returns* have done little to debunk. Leave it up to the unexpectedly funny and saucy *My Super Ex-Girlfriend* to skew that stereotype, since its superhero (Thurman as G-Girl) began as a human teenager with a few personality issues. An awkward outsider who crossed paths with a radioactive fallen meteor, G-Girl is needy, neurotic and extremely sensitive - all things that Matt (Wilson) has no idea about when he meets Jenny Johnson (G-Girl in disguise) on the subway. They get off to an awkward start, with their sex life taking off (pun intended!) after Matt discovers Jenny's true identity. Problem is, their relationship doesn't have much of a shelf life, and when Matt decides to break it off, well... hell hath no fury like a superhero scorned.



The fairly radical twist on the classic superhero story is the source for a lot of humour (Eddie Izzard's role as G-Girl's nemesis is especially hilarious). Much of the film addresses what other films have not, and what many of us would likely be curious about if dating a superhero. Suffice to say that the humour, while often quite risqué, is not only extremely audacious but also very smartly written. Such an approach was admittedly a little risky, but it pays off and pushes the film above most of the superhero genre. At the same time, Thurman gets to show off her rarely-used comic abilities in what ends up being one of the most laugh-out-loud funny films in years.



Brian O'Neill

INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK

THE DO BROTHERS

The number of Australian sports films are few and far between.

"We love *Rocky* and *Major*

League and all these great sports films," said Khoa Do, when I caught up with him and his brother Anh, director and star, respectively, of *Footy Legends*.

Khoa and Anh complement each other in what they brought to writing the film (which they did with Anh's wife, Suzanne). Khoa's strength is in dramatic scenes, while Anh is more adept at comedy, having been a stand-up comedian for several years and appeared in such TV shows as *Comedy Inc*, *Rat Pizza* and *Rove Live*. This was evident when I asked the Dos who their favourite directors were. While Khoa is a big Jim Jarmusch fan, Anh prefers the Farrelly brothers. But they are brothers, so that must affect how they work, moreso than other director/actor combinations. "Khoa knows my history. Instead of saying 'in this scene, imagine humiliation', he'd say 'remember year 5 PE class... when you're doing the 50m in the pool...and the teacher had to jump in and get you out? Remember that humiliation? OK let's go there.'"

In addition to experienced Australian stars, Claudia Karvan and Peter Phelps, *Footy Legends* features many young and inexperienced actors. When casting the roles, Khoa and Anh wanted "real people". "Often you see beautiful, very clean cut, people" said Khoa, of who usually appears on Australian screens. "We wanted people who didn't look like they should be on *Home and Away*," added Anh.

So what advice does Anh offer budding actors? In short, a day job. "Set yourself up.

When you go to an audition, it's hard enough as it is, without relying on winning the audition to pay the rent."

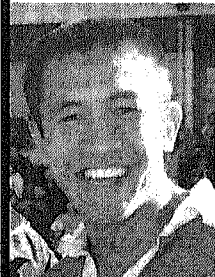
And Khoa's advice to young students wanting to become film students:

"Watch as many films as possible; learn from great filmmakers. Get your digital camera and try it out".

Dazz

"That's sexy. Much better than Sydney uni's [paper]."

- Anh's comment while flicking through the last edition of *On Dit*



"Imagine you just won Powerball!"
- Khoa's method of getting a group of extras to fire up.

Trash Talk

with E. Riddy



Mediocrity, eh? In my search for a somewhat formal explanation of just what exactly this concept entailed, my favourite online purveyor of gossip and hearsay, Wikipedia, extolled the wonderful concept of being not-so-very-special after all. Run-of-the-fucking-mill. But, here is where I'm afraid I'm going to have to go out on a bit of a limb and (gasp!) disagree with what the WikiGods have set forth. The problem is that when it comes to Hollywood, it seems that science just doesn't apply, because mediocrity and uniqueness are far from being mutually exclusive.

Let's, for example, consider Lindsay Lohan, surely a prime example of this paradox if ever there was one. Although, I'm wondering whether or not you could consider *Herbie Fully Loaded* as mediocre. I pretty much found it as appealing as a pile of faecal matter undergoing anaerobic fermentation, but I'm pretty damn sure it was its beige Disney morals that rendered it so. It remains to be seen if *Georgia Rule*, which she is currently filming, will live up to her standards but what's impressed me is Lil' Miss Lohan's struggle for mediocrity of character. It's been widely reported that this week the producers have sent the 'star' a letter telling her to make sure she gets her over-exposed butt into gear. Apparently she's pulled a few sickies due to 'heat exhaustion', which is Lohan code for feeling pretty damn seedy after yet another massive bender on a school night. Maybe she means she's exhausted from being on heat, 24/7. Either way, it appears her co-stars Felicity Huffman and Jane Fonda think she's a right royal shit. So there you go, she's pretty fucking average, but you've got to admit, she's one of a kind.

In a beautiful union of the non-exciting, Eddie Murphy is set to marry Mel B. Wasn't she supposed to be Scary Spice? To me, scary spice conjours images of those canisters of nutmeg with retro cardboard packaging you find at the back of the cupboard that some unidentifiable flatmate used a single shake of back in '83 and which has now solidified into a single mass of flavourless sawdust. Anyone recall one of her solo singles? Didn't think so. And Eddie, Well. As far as mediocrity is concerned, all I need mention are the *Doctors Dolittle* and the *Nutty Professors* really don't? What is it with films about dudes in white coats?

And now for some even more average behaviour, Mel Gibson, Australia's ex-favourite ex-son was busted doing about 140km/h in a 70km/h zone, whilst he was as pissed as a fart (and rather wet one at that). He then launched into a tirade at the cop, saying he'd bust his ass or equivalent. Seems the crusader hasn't lost his *Mad Max* instincts, though maybe he's just pissed that he's not hot any more, more a kind of normal body temperature I guess. Just like the rest of us.

Be sure you pop past Uncle Riddy's next time. We'll get trashed together.

"We've all been raised on television to believe that one day we'd all be millionaires, and movie gods, and rock stars. But we won't. And we're slowly learning that fact. And we're very, very pissed off." - Tyler Durden (Brad Pitt) *Fight Club* (1999)

**F/X (M)
(1986)**



Perhaps the only film to ever feature an Australian special-effects man as the protagonist (except for the even more laeklustre sequel), *F/X* stars Australia's 23rd favourite son, Bryan Brown as Rollie Taylor. The premise of the film involves an F/X man who becomes employed under the table by the US Department of Justice to arrange a mock hit on an ex-mobster who's turned state's evidence. In case you weren't paying attention, that's the cue for the inevitable double/triple crosses and mandatory plot twists that '80s thrillers were all about (not that much has changed over the years). As you

can imagine, the F/X man is pretty savvy once the game's afoot and he uses all of his wiles to foil the villains as they line up one-by-one to be taken out.

Apart from the gaping plot holes and borderline psychic abilities of our 'hero', *F/X* is reasonably entertaining. If you don't stop to think about why they've bothered to involve our hero in the whole issue it almost hangs together, although the infiltration at the end of the film stretches belief. The acting is fair for the most part, although I found the tough-as-nails cop (Brian Dennehy) who's meant to be solving the crime unconvincing. Oh, and don't expect

anything from the female leads either. On the topic of the cast, anyone who wonders why Australian actors are quick to shuck off the ocker accent once they depart our fair shores should check this film out. Bryan's accent throughout this film is as thick as the villains he disposes of and about seven (7) times as laughable. Music is pretty much absent through out the film, although there is one god-awful synthesiser that makes an occasional appearance. Long live the '80s!

Overall, *F/X* is pretty average. There's not too much here to excite viewers, although watching Bryan Brown clubbing a villain to death with an iron was pretty cool. It's a good waste of an afternoon, assuming you don't have something better to watch. You could do far worse than this (you could, for example, watch the sequel, *F/X 2*, or commit ritual suicide. *On Dit* doesn't recommend either), but you could also do far better. If you must see some *F/X* then this is probably the way to go, since the sequel was rubbish and the TV-series (Oh yes, there was a TV-series) was pretty much the spawn of the devil. It even starred one of the Daddos (Cameron-flavoured, I think...). But if you just want to see Bryan Brown in action, I'd recommend *Two Hands*. It's far more satisfying and made from 100% Australian beef*.



Space Monkey

* May not be made from 100% Australian Beef.

ACTOR OF THE WEEK

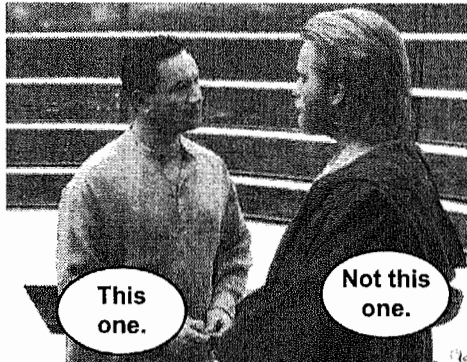
TEMUERA MORRISON

Mediocrity, n. - The state of being moderate to inferior in quality.

Well, this week's theme pretty much begs for a cutting exposé into the career of one of the many overblown, over-hyped B-grade celebrities that Hollywood seems to attract like maggots to a rotting carcass. However we've already done one of those (that's Volume 74, edition 6 for those of you playing at home). So let's take a literal interpretation and find someone truly mediocre, Mr 50%.

So where should we look? Mediocre films are almost by definition the least memorable films, and that makes it tough to recall actors who have performed in a number of such films. In fact it's easier to look for a certain type of actor, and I reckon the best place to begin searching for Mr. Average is probably in television. Despite the recent influx of film actors slumming it on TV, TV actors are always trying to cross the line to the silver screen (I've got two-words for you, De-Markation). Now, while singers generally make pretty piss-poor film stars (take that, J. Lo.), TV actors tend to have a modicum of acting ability, and a modicum of acting ability is exactly what we're looking for. So please allow me to present, for your personal edification, one Temuera Morrison, star of New Zealand cinema.

Temuera Morrison first started in a regular role on the Auckland based show, *Shortland Street*. A five-night-a-week soap set in an Auckland City hospital, which follows the complicated personal and professional lives of it's staff, family and friends, where he filled the shoes of



Filmography:

- River Queen (2005)
- Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith (2005)
- Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones (2002)
- Vertical Limit (2000)
- From Dusk Till Dawn 3: The Hangman's Daughter (2000)
- What Becomes of the Broken Hearted? (1999)
- Six Days Seven Nights (1998)
- Speed 2: Cruise Control (1997)
- The Island of Dr. Moreau (1996)
- Barb Wire (1996)
- Once Were Warriors (1994)

one Dr. Hone Ropata (Thanks, imdb.com!). This launched him into the starring role of perhaps one of the most culturally significant films to come out of NZ, *Once Were Warriors* and the subsequent follow-up *What Becomes of the Broken Hearted?* Aware that he was perhaps over-reaching, he cleverly maintained

neutrality by starring in the abysmal *Speed 2: Cruise Control*, although I can't remember where or in what capacity. His ability to camouflage himself in this truly terrible film was carefully learned in such non-films as *The Island of Dr Moreau* and *Barb Wire* (opposite Pamela Anderson and her twin silicone props) where he was less memorable than my last article. But, he has been in two films where I can remember both him and his role, namely, *Star Wars Episodes 2* and *3*, where he played both Jango Fett and every freakin' clone trooper in the two films. He was also involved in one of the greatest tragedies of modern cinema when, at the behest of George Lucas, he overdubbed the original Boba Fett in the DVD re-release of *Empire Strikes Back*. Please remove your hats and observe a minute of silence... Thank you.

Was this enough to end his career? Some say "yea", whilst others, including director Vincent Ward, say "nay". Temuera's latest offering to the movie critics is *River Queen* where he once again plays an emotionless, soulless mercenary with a heart-of-gold. So where to from here? As long as NZ cinema has a need for a mediocre (in the best sense of the word) Maori actor, Temuera Morrison will have a job. Wherever directors of famous trilogies need to destroy the dreams of their fans, Temuera Morrison will be waiting. And whenever a truly average actor is needed, you just need to close your eyes and say a prayer; Temuera Morrison will be there. Now, if only he'd stop haunting my dreams (recurring nightmare #6).

Space Monkey

"Human beings were not meant to sit in little cubicles staring at computer screens all day, filling out useless forms and listening to eight different bosses drone on about about mission statements."

- Peter Gibbons (Ron Livingston), *Office Space* (1999)

Mediocriffic! with Space Monkey and friends

TOP
6 MEDIOCRE FILMS OF ALL TIME. OR SHOULD THAT BE BOTTOM
5 MEDIOCRE FILMS OF ALL TIME? NO MATTER HOW YOU PHRASE IT, IT SPELLS ONE THING, A-VE-RAGE. RANKING THEM HAS BEEN PRETTY DIFFICULT SINCE THESE FILMS ARE BY DEFINITION MIDDLE OF THE ROAD, BUT WE'VE GIVEN IT A GO (ACTUALLY, THEY'RE PRETTY MUCH AS WE THOUGHT OF THEM). AND BEFORE YOU START COMPLAINING THAT WE'VE COMPLETELY MISSED OUT ON JEAN-CLAUDE VAN DAMME, JUST REMEMBER WE'RE LOOKING FOR MEDIOCRE FILMS HERE, NOT TERRIBLE ONES. SO SIT BACK, RELAX AND SEE IF YOU CAN REMEMBER THESE BEAUTIES.

5. **ERASER.** ARNIE STARS IN YET ANOTHER ACTION FILM. THIS WAS THE ONE WITH THE GUNS THAT COULD SEE AND SHOOT THROUGH WALLS. IT ALSO FEATURED ONE OF MY FAVORITE ARNIE LINES OF ALL TIME - "YOU'RE LUGGAGE" WHICH HE SHOUTS AS HE SHOOTS A CROCODILE (OR IS IT AN ALLIGATOR?). COMEDY GOLD. THE REST P T IN AT BEST, ZINC AT WORST.

4. **0MM.** FOR A FILM SET IN THE UNDERGROUND WORLD OF S&M AND SNUFF FILMS, THIS WAS REALLY QUITE BORING. NICK CAGE PUTS IN A SUBDUED PERFORMANCE (FOR HIM, ANYWAY), AS A DETECTIVE SEARCHING FOR A MISSING GIRL, BUT OVERALL IT'S PRETTY BLAND.

3. **MONEY TRAIN.** WESLEY SNIPES AND WOODY HARRELSON TEAM UP AGAIN, THIS TIME POSING AS BROTHERS, (IF YOU CAN BELIEVE IT) WHO BOTH WORK AS TRANSIT COPS. PROBABLY MOST MEMORABLE FOR THE REPEATED SCENES WHERE THE BROTHERS ARGUE OVER WHOM GETS TO PUNCH WHOM. OH AND THE J. LO SEX SCENE (OR ARE THERE MULTIPLE SCENES? I CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER ANYMORE. MAYBE



THEY'RE NOT THAT MEMORABLE).

2. **WATERWORLD.** AT THE TIME IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE FILMS EVER MADE, SO IT'S A GOOD THING IT'S GOT KEVIN COSTNER IN IT. OH WAIT, THAT'S NOT A GOOD THING, IT'S NOT EVEN A GOOD THING. ACTUALLY, THIS MOVIE ISN'T THAT AWFUL, ALTHOUGH IT COPPED A LOT OF BAD PRESS, IT IS HOWEVER RIDDLED WITH PLOT HOLES AND INCONSISTENCIES. BUT IT DOES CARRY AN IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGE: WHEN GLOBAL WARMING FINALLY MELTS THE ICE CAPS, MAN WILL EVOLVE GILLS.

1. **DANTE'S PEAK.** OVERSHADOWED AT ITS RELEASE BY THE STRANGELY SIMILAR **VOLCANO** (WHY DO DISASTER FILMS ALWAYS COME IN PAIRS?), **DANTE'S PEAK** FEATURED PIERCE BROSNAN AS SOME KIND OF VOLCANO-KNOWING-GUY (E.G. THEY'RE CALLED VULCANOLOGISTS, MR MONKEY) WHO TRIES TO SAVE A SMALL TOWN FROM BEING MELTED BY MOLTEN MAGMA... MMM MAG-MA... BETTER THAN SOME DISASTER FILMS (CAN YOU SAY **OUTBREAK?**), BUT WORSE THAN OTHERS, AND THE GENRE ITSELF IS PRETTY SUCKY.

UNFORTUNATELY, WE COULDN'T QUITE FIT IN THESE BAD BOYS...



- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| BAD BOYS | CON AIR |
| BAD BOYS 2 | BIG DADDY |
| YOU'VE GOT MAIL | PROBLEM CHILD |
| SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE | CLIFFHANGER |
| RUNAWAY BRIDE | ENTRAPMENT |
| THE MAN WITHOUT A FACE | THE CABLE GUY |
| THE STEPPORD WIVES | I.Q. |
| DAYS OF THUNDER | ROOKIE OF THE YEAR |
| FINDING NEVERLAND | STEALTH |
| THE TRUTH ABOUT CATS AND DOGS | THE MIGHTY DUCKS |
| DIE ANOTHER DAY | MEN AT WORK |
| SPEED 2 | SWEET HOME ALABAMA |
| PHILADELPHIA | POLICE ACADEMY I - 28 |
| APOLLO 13 | ... ANYTHING WITH SANDRA BULLOCK OR |
| SERENDIPITY | HUGH GRANT |

The Lake House (M) Now Showing Everywhere

In a world not so far away, every man and woman who fall in love are as good looking as Ms. Bullock and Mr. Reeves, both of whom still offer the same chemistry in *The Lake House* as they did in *Speed* several years ago. This world - let's call the world "Happily Ever After" - is such that two people can meet each other even when they exist two years apart at the same house, as is the case with Kate (Bullock), who moves out of a stunning, glass-walled house on a lake in 2006 while Alex (Reeves) moves into the house in 2004. Kate leaves a note asking the next resident to forward any of her mail - yet oddly, the recipient of the note is Alex, who wonders why Kate has apologised for nonexistent paw prints on the front door of the house.

The two begin to correspond, growing closer to each other as they share their lives via mail, all the while they consult their friends and family about the mystery of the time-travelling mail (Shohreh Agdashloo is lovely but under-utilised as Bullock's hospital coworker. At the same time, Kate is reunited in 2006 with Morgan (Dylan Walsh) - a perfectly likeable man whose only crime is that he is not and can never be *the one*. There are a couple of small twists afforded by the time-travel twist - a twist that is thankfully not overused. Yet ultimately, there's really very little point in even writing this review, since most audiences will already know what to expect. Suspend your disbelief for two hours and *The Lake House* will prove to be a pleasant romantic indulgence, leavened by a little humour and a few very picturesque locations.



Look kids, it's Police Academy's own Mafhoney (Steve Guttenberg)

Brian O'Neill

In the Shadow of the Palms (M) Now Showing at Palace Nova

The only film or documentary to be shot in Iraq both before, during and after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, *In the Shadow of the Palms* aims to show the lives of civilians in Iraq, chronicling the changes in their lifestyles over a period of several months. Australian filmmaker Wayne Coles-Janess occasionally speaks with the American military (enough to provide the film with a sense of balance), but mostly focuses on the civilians, whose perspectives are seldom revealed in public here in Australia. The film approaches a diverse range of people - a university professor, a newsagent and a cobbler amongst them, most of whom appear to have a certain resolve in the face of attack. Some of them express great hatred towards the US, while some appear more pitying, resigned or saddened.

The film is otherwise difficult to surmise, except to say that hearing the perspectives of a group of people we have often been

encouraged to judge prematurely is an extremely valuable thing to document. Sadly, this perspective will probably not be heard by those who need to hear it most, with the film most likely to appeal to those who already disagree with the Bush stance on the war with Iraq. For those who do see it, the documentary is engaging and occasionally quite moving, benefiting from dealing not just with the Iraqi experience of the initial attack, but from showing another way of life. There is a sense that the documentary may have been rushed slightly, mostly through the distractions provided by the fairly frequent errors in the subtitles. *In the Shadow of the Palms* otherwise comes strongly recommended.



Brian O'Neill

Mediocrity Watch

We all know one should never judge a book by its cover, where book=film and cover=title. But the forthcoming *Snakes on a Plane* has the movie-world abuzz with anticipation. Its star is none other than Samuel L. Jackson (yes, the same Mr. Jackson from *Philp Fiction*, among other things), who reportedly signed-on when he heard the proposed title and fought tooth and nail when the director wanted to change it. Now I know what you're thinking... surely "snakes on a plane" is just a metaphor for... um... "the struggle of a native people against an oppressive dictatorship, with a subtle undertone of lighthearted frivolity in a timeless portrayal of good versus evil". Ha! Nope. *Snakes on a Plane* is actually about snakes. On a plane.

So get ready, dear readers, there are only 17 days to go until this beauty hits our screens!

"You never even gave me the time of day till I started getting good reviews." - Eli (Luke Wilson)
"Your reviews weren't that good." - Margot (Gwynneth Paltrow), *Royal Tennenbaums* (2001)

Gaming

...with Daniel Purvis

Dynasty Warriors 5: Empires Xbox 360

So here we are with *Dynasty Warriors 5: Empires* on the Xbox 360, it seems like only yesterday I was playing *Dynasty Warriors 2* for the first time on the humble PS2. After dabbling in the weapons based 3D fighter genre in the first game, not unlike *Soul Blade*, the *Dynasty Warriors* games have since made a name for themselves for their over the top battlefield action set in ancient China. So in under a decade we are now at the 14th game in the series (not including the two *Dynasty Tactics* games, three *Samurai Warriors* titles and *Mystic Heroes* which are all spin-offs from the series) and so now what's really changed after so much trial and error and with the extra potential given by the 360? Well not a lot really.

Outside of some minutely prettier character details, *DWS:E* is exactly the same game that came out on PS2. Character models look nicer, but the locations are still as barren and as empty as ever, whilst the models maintain the same inhuman rigidity they have always featured. Sure it was impressive the first time around to see the massively chaotic battles, but 6 years down the track this is no longer as impressive, with games like *Night Nine Nights* and *Kameo* displaying hundreds of characters on screen at once without batting an eyelid. One of the factors that really hindered the overall feel for battles is that the rest of the soldiers in your army hardly seem to fight at all, leaving everything all up to you. Basic elements in control could have simply been altered to make the game mechanics run better and the fact that there is no independent control of the camera with the second stick not only adds a huge level of frustration, but is simply inexcusable after so many releases.

Dynasty Warriors 5: Empires introduces elements of strategy that add at least some new factors to the game, however, this is the same game that was released six years ago with but a few new features here and there; it's mutton in lamb's clothing if you will.

Dynasty Warriors is the first budget release on the 360 so if you're a fan of the series and looking for more of the same (and I do mean same), it's a cheap fix. Personally though I think you're best waiting for a game like *Ninety Nine Nights*, which is set to take similar concepts and truly exploit them for the next generation.

Matthew Williams

Capcom Classics Collection Remixed Capcom Playstation Portable

If I could backflip I would. For the first time, I've played an arcade collection that doesn't suck and it doesn't suck in tremendous fashion (well not all of it).

Featuring a variety of classic games, mainly beat-em-ups and shoot-em-ups, from arcade machines and older consoles revamped and polished from previous incarnations. All games are smooth and responsive and graphically appear bright and vibrant with no flickering and very little clipping or other glitches. Sound has been taken directly from the old machines, but has had slight alterations made so as it's less ... grinding. But only less grinding, effects still sound horrible and repetitive as was the fashion of the day.

Some great features are included. Each game has a variety of screen sizes and ratios that can be flicked through at the touch of the select button. For instance, side-scrolling beat-em-ups can be made larger to fit the screen or include extra information at the top or bottom and shoot-em-ups like *1941* can be made to fit the PSP screen vertically. This vertical orientation makes you tilt the PSP on its side so that the whole screen can be used for play, its practical and well executed.

A few games are terribly boring and extremely difficult however the number of games that are truly worth playing and loyal to their origins is large, making this one arcade collection worth owning (unless you're running emulators of course).

Games featured: *1941**, *Avengers*, *Bionic Commando*, *Black Tiger*, *Block Block**, *Captain Commando**, *Final Fight**, *Forgotten Worlds**, *Side Arms*, *Last Duel**, *Legendary Wings*, *Magic Sword*, *Mega Twins**, *Quiz&Dragons*, *Section Z*, *The Speed Rumbler**, *Street Fighter**, *Strider**, *Three Wonders*, *Varth**

*games featured with a star are excellent games, others are for you to decide.

Daniel Purvis



On DIT 74.9

Dragon Quest: The Journey Of the Cursed King PS2

Dragon Quest: The Journey Of the Cursed King is the 8th game in this series, popular in Japan and being released in Australia for the first time. For a series that has caused the introduction of Japanese laws prohibiting the release of *DQ* games on any day apart from Sundays and public holidays now we'll see what all the fuss is about.

At first glance, *Dragon Quest* offers nothing new. The story is a simple; a King and his daughter have been transformed by an evil curse, which needs resolving. A cel-shaded design style introduced by *Jet Set Radio* makes the game seem basic and childlike. Not all is as it seems though and you truly have to play the game to understand its mass appeal.

Presentation is one of *Dragon Quest's* greatest merits. Even coming from many hours of gaming on the 360, the graphics feel lush and vibrant. With minimal load times and streaming sparse environments, it's a dream to play and a comfortable step back a generation. The character designs, from *Dragon Ball Z* artist Akira Toriyama, feature fantastic expression. Over the Japanese version, the English release features some fantastic voice acting that not only adds life to the characters, but makes cut scenes and character interactions a pleasure to sit through.

As a somewhat RPG virgin, I found that these elements of presentation captured my attention like no RPG ever had. The welcoming atmosphere of the game made it far easier to understand the game mechanics and become accustomed to the world of *Dragon Quest*. This isn't to say that there isn't a challenge for veterans of the genre. With over 100 hours of gameplay, *Dragon Quest* is likely to challenge even the most hardened player. The enemy AI pays attention to your actions so bashing attack again and again won't always work, keeping battles interesting and making them fun, even if a bit challenging (I'm a potion hog, what can I say).

Dragon Quest doesn't escape some criticism and the random battles were too frequent, from the start it feels like you can't go ten steps without clashing with another band of enemies. Whilst the combat is enjoyable, it can at times feel tedious when you're set on reaching a destination to accomplish a task.

What *Dragon Quest* does on the surface is nothing overly special. It takes the most simplistic and clichéd story and places it in a colourful cel-shaded world. What it does do though, it does right. It provides a lengthy challenge that keeps you on your toes and is a dream to play. *Dragon Quest* not only should please hardened RPG veterans but should also attract new audiences unfamiliar with the genre. I recommend you give it a shot, it's definitely a contender for RPG of the year.

Matthew Williams

Nintendo Reviews

A-Go Go!



My DS has gathered up dust lately due to the release of the Xbox 360 so I was pleased to have 4 new games to review turn up over the winter break. Here's what I think:

Golden Nugget Casino DS

Golden Nugget Casino DS is a gambling simulator on a console where the average user isn't old enough to step into a real casino. Initial Impressions of sound, graphics and presentation were pleasing; they were like any online casino and just as lifeless. The game offers numerous game modes to blow your money, from the chocolate wheel to roulette and a large selection of slot machines.

Within 10 minutes of playing it became apparent that there was nothing more to this game than a randomiser under different skins. The only game in the selection that remotely used any skill was Black Jack, which ultimately comes down to luck. To cap things off, there's no consequence for your actions. Who cares if you risk it all when you can just reset your money whenever you feel like?

If you want the same level of fun, buy yourself dice and predict each roll.

Texas Hold'Em Poker DS

*After one crappy gambling sim I was reluctant to give this one a go, but with friends always inviting me along to poker nights and never having a clue what to do, I hoped for the best. *Texas Hold'Em* is the "in" game and whilst other variations of poker are available, it is why this will sell.*

*Unlike *Golden Nugget*, one of the first things I noticed is that *Texas Hold'Em* actually offers a tutorial on how to play the game. Though short and limited, I found the tutorial taught me the basics, making the game feel more complete than *Golden Nugget*.*

Presentation is relatively plain and simple. The top screen shows a basic graphic of the table, names, cards shown, pot and totals. Whilst simple, it works well and is easy to check information on the fly. The bottom screen shows a first person look at your hand, cards on the table and the necessary menus. Card graphics aren't overly crisp though and I found it far easier to look at the top screen

most of the time. There are some nice graphics to depict "tells" of other characters, which works well and gives the table some life.

A Poker Tour mode is featured give the game a point to playing and I found this quite addictive. Although, I felt there was little to the game after finishing this. Quite simply, what more do you expect? It's poker and it's addictive!

One complaint: after a while I learned how to manipulate the game's AI and learnt how to drive a player out of the game in only two turns. It's not as if you're playing against 'Deep Blue' here. If this game featured a single card multiplayer it'd be a winner for no fuss poker on the go. However, you can't beat a round of real poker with mates.

ATV Quad Frenzy

*Enough gambling! A[II] T[errain] V[ehicle] racing eh? I turn on the game and the first thing I realise is I've been looping through the same menus for the last five minutes. Turns out they loop through unless you press start. Three...two...one...and they're off, but hang, on I feel like I'm riding a pushbike here. Why do the bikes move so slow and why are checkpoints so tight and close together? This isn't offroad racing at all. I've played some good ATV games like *ATV Offroad Fury* for PS2 and the fun came from simply screwing round in big open environments and launching off massive jumps. After completing a lap I thought 'screw it' and decided to take it off the track and see what happened. To my surprise, the terrain that generates before you didn't stop generating, there were no calls to come back and for 10 minutes flat I just drove away from the track with no end in sight, bouncing away as I launched off hills and mountains. I was hugely impressed by this limitless boundary, especially for a DS game, but what's stupid is this isn't even a part of the game, there's no game mode that makes use of this technical marvel! If the checkpoints in the game were simply scattered out over the maps, where you could really choose the path you took, this game would be a hell of a lot of fun. There's definitely a solid game engine underneath some sloppy track design.*

The interface does nothing to help the game, often finding myself lost as to my status in the career type mode countless times. When spending your money from wins it doesn't even indicate what parts you've bought and so often

you will buy a lesser part by mistake. The racing style grew on me gradually over time and the quad bikes ultimately felt like they should, with balance playing a huge role in each race. In the end it was the stupid menu design that made me just give up on the game.

It's disappointing to see such promise ruined by lazy programmers, but if they ever fix it up it could certainly be worth your time.

Monster Trucks DS

Hmmm Monster Trucks now, that just has to be awesome!.... that is until I looked at the back of the box and noticed something distinctly similar.

IT'S THE EXACT SAME GAME AS ATV QUAD FRENZY!

*That's right, as soon as I put it in my DS the familiar menus and music popped up. The game is exactly the same except for the fact you race Monster Trucks and not ATVs on slightly different, near identical tracks in largely the same locations. Boy, I pity the kid that gets given both games on his birthday. The reason this game falls flat more so than *ATV Quad Frenzy* is that the game style doesn't even suit Monster Trucks. It felt adequate with ATVs, but when I think Monster Trucks all I want to do is drive off ramps and crush cars and I'd happily pay \$50 to do so.*

Featuring the same endlessly generating terrain, I guess both games are let down by the fact that sister versions are featured on the GBA, which obviously couldn't handle such a feat. I really wish the developers pulled their fingers out.

*On one last but positive note, the checkpoint indicator that was no help at all in *Quad Frenzy* (pointing to the location in relation to the map and not where you are driving which is absolutely useless for a quick glance) has been fixed in *Monster Trucks*.*

Matthew Williams

MOST HATED

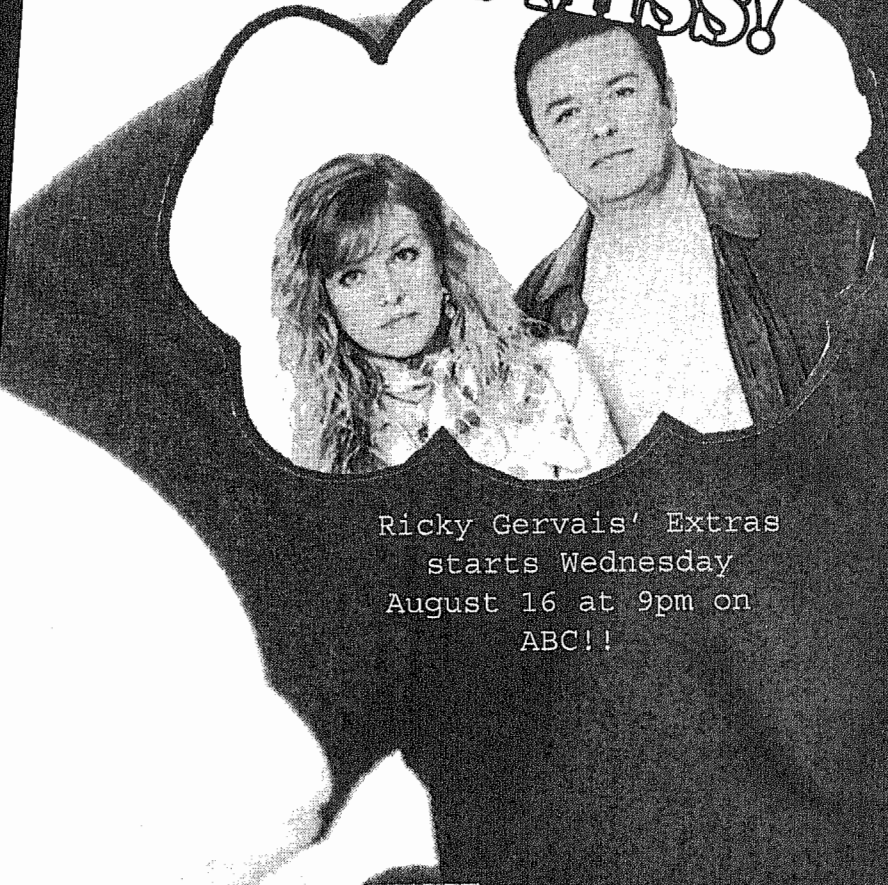
Rosie Beaton

Triple J Announcer and host of
JTV Saturdays

It must be said that I have long had an axe to grind against this woman. Ever since she rang me up in the middle of *The Bill* (a social faux par punished by death in my household) and put me on hold for more than 15 minutes just so I could introduce a song and she could look good, I have wanted to get cold bloody revenge. Admittedly this was back in 2002 and I should have gotten over it by now. But at last - hurrah - I can through the means of On Dit TV! This woman does not deserve to be on radio, let alone TV (as her intros to *Degrassi: The New Generation* previously proved). I encourage any of you who feel the same as I to write to the ABC and demand her instant sacking. Surely we do not pay our taxes to be confronted with that bung-faced screechy lady on a Saturday morning! I wish I put you on hold Rosie Beaton!



DO NOT MISS!



Ricky Gervais' *Extras*
starts Wednesday
August 16 at 9pm on
ABC!!

TV: Enemy of the Extraordinary

TV has a bad reputation. The storylines are twee or unoriginal. The scripts suffer from too much 'doctoring', rendering them mildly affecting to all but funny/sad/thrilling to no one bar the most jelly brained, couch-dwelling suburbanite. The production values are as low as the IQ of the stars and the director is a hack who has failed in film. And that is if there is a creative team behind it at all, more and more viewers are being subjected to 'reality TV', where script, plot, acting and direction are the babies being thrown out with the bath water. In short, we are told that TV is a miasma of excreta, rotting our minds, draining our soles and leading us to an early grave.

What utter crap. TV is not a mediocre art form; it is an art form that valorises mediocrity. Mainstream (Hollywood) films are focussed on the big stories; aliens, war, disasters etc. but they seldom reach the artistic and intellectual heights of their subject matter. TV on the other hand is interested in the mundane, the dull, the accessible, but it uses its humble settings to reach into the politics, psyches and desires of society.

One of the most internationally recognised TV icons is Mr. Homer Simpson, the embodiment of the average. *The Simpsons* is syndicated across the globe; it has consistently high ratings, is the longest running animation series of all time and STILL manages to snag awards and critical plaudits.

In short, it is a high quality product with its focus on the Middle American family of Mom, Dad, 2.5 children, a dog, a cat and a mortgage. From this position the writers are game to target the President, the media, family structures, elites, yokels, conservatives, liberals and the French. It is a scope that is more fitting to *Cop Buddy Explosion Flick III: The Terrorist French Newsreader*, and yet it is the mediocre medium of TV that brings these issues to the fore. More 'serious' shows like *The Sopranos*, *Six Feet Under*, *Oz* and the seemingly endless array of crime and punishment style shows from both sides of the Atlantic are also using ordinary people in (relatively) ordinary situations to startling dramatic effect.

No discussion of the ordinary in TV would be complete without touching on the new staple of crap TV; Reality programs. I am not going to pretend that this genre is known for reaching heights of excellence, but borne of the public's love of the ordinary. Reality TV producers like to claim that they hold a mirror up to society and that people are enthralled by what they see. Such statements a fanciful media spin, reality TV is as constructed as any other show, and the producers know that what people want to see are very average, dull people just like themselves. How else could Jamie have won *Big Brother 2006*?

Anal's Chevallier

POCKET TOTTIE

Name: Dr. Maryanne Demasi

Where you've seen her: as a medical/science reporter for Channel 7 news, as the presenter of *Catalyst* on the ABC

Where you'll see her next: hosting *Catalyst* - 8pm Thursday nights ABC

Why we love her: She's got the looks, the brains and manages to make science super cool! In other words she's the new Susan Greenfield.

Trivia: Maryanne is a former student of Adelaide Uni, having completed her PhD in Medicine here. Represent!

<http://www.abc.net.au/catalyst/>



BIG BROTHER THE EPITOME OF MEDIOCRITY

So another series of Big Brother has wrapped up and word on the street is that it's coming back next year. I can safely say that this year's series was the blandest thing since plain white bread. This is, mind you was despite the serious efforts of the producers who stuffed this series with the mother-daughter conspiracy, the revenge room, Michael the insider; no less than six intruders, the turkey-slapping debacle with the removal of two housemates and the arrival of two new ones, in the space of just three months. Big Brother is a celebration of the mundane, the ordinary and the blah. Just line up all the previous winners - Ben, Peter, Regina, Trevor, the Logans and now Jamle - and you'll see that they're all pretty average, pretty middle of the road sort of people. The interesting and mid-numbingly annoying ones such as Vesna, Tim, Dan, Crissy, Camila and Sara-Marie may get a glimpse of the finish line in second or third place, but ultimately they're way too interesting to deserve it. This series once again proved that Mike Goldman (the host of *Up Late* and *Friday Night Live*) is the only one worth watching (that is of course if you don't include Gretel's frocks). Someone should give that guy a medal.

Kalista Campbell

BIG BRO '06 QUIZ

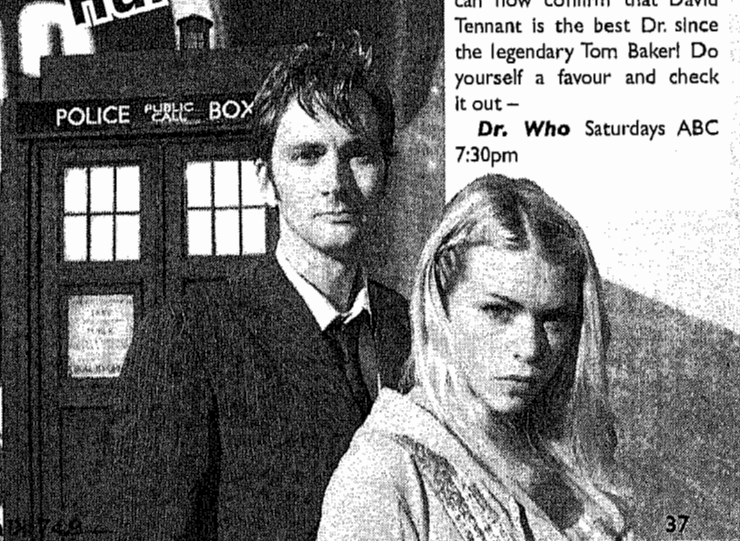
- Which SA gal, with an entirely mediocre level of talent, snagged herself a recording contract after warbling a few notes in the BB house?
- Who was the second BB Insider?
- What was the name given to the 'ordinary' act of sexual misconduct that got the whole country talking?
- Who did Katie say, "You do have a big wang, don't ya?" too?
- Which utterly mediocre sex tourist coined the phrase 'nucleus of cool'?
- Which housemate distinguished himself by using surfboard wax as a hirsute styling aid?
- Which poster child of suburban skankness uttered the immortal words "Game on molts!"?
- Name one of the completely adorable but ultimately dull members of the house, i.e. one of the farm animals.
- Which housemate should be fined for false advertising after stating on the BB website that the three words that best describe him are: Awesome, good looking and personable?
- Which mildly interesting housemates was rendered larger than life by being placed with such a large group of twonks? (amusing replies of up to 50 words - that I agree with - will be rewarded)

WHAT WOULD AGGYVER DO?

Hurrah for Dr Who!

Well we predicted at the start of the year and we can now confirm that David Tennant is the best Dr. since the legendary Tom Baker! Do yourself a favour and check it out -

Dr. Who Saturdays ABC 7:30pm



GOOD CD REVIEW

WITH Jamie

Rambling # B...which is for bananas missing their pijamas.

Ireland:

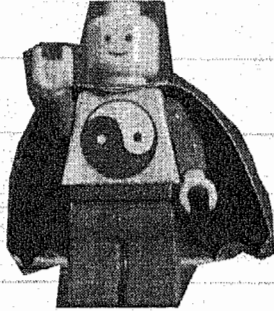
Today I am going to be looking at an Issue that has been perplexing me for some time now. In this land, the land 'down under' so to speak, why is it that us Australian's often can't tell the difference between the heat of summer and the coldness of winter? Why is it that so many Adelaidian's (including Tyson) wear those things on their feet known as flip flop's/thongs in the middle of July?

Coming from Australia means that we love to go down to the beach in the summertime, checkout those spunky boys playing Frisbee with no shirts on, and laugh at that dorky kid who jumps on their boogy board to skid across the sand and falls flat on their ass. In these types of conditions it is fantastic to be able to slip off your thongs, skip across the sand carefree, trying to look like any celebrty remotely beach-like except for Pamela Anderson from Baywatch. But, why is it that when the gloom of winter starts to appear that half of Adelaide stay in their summer gear and ignore the need to wear boots or other forms of protective footwear to stop our toes from falling off due to frostbite? I have a theory (yes I actually am going to try solve the world's problems in On Dit for once!). Australian's love summer so much that they are in denial about it being cold at this time of year! So instead of dealing with the fact that it's bloody freezing outside and your house is covered in fog (I live in Belair), we'll all

continue to go to the bar, ask for a cold beer and lay out on the Barr Smith Lawns hoping to soak up some (any!) rays of sunshine! Problem Solved! The End! Oh I forgot about you Tyson, what did you have to say?

Shiny:

You're wrong...the end! (Insert word count filler here => ...so anyway, hot re-orientation day in the cloisters on Wednesday guys. The AUU did well in providing fun filled times for everyone. One problem though. Did anyone actually know that it was the AUU who got the camels, rock climbing, hair lady etc. in for us? Why oh why, was there no real PR for advertising the AUU? Don't get me wrong I love you guys, but I would be interested in seeing how successful re-orientation day was in gaining support for the AUU, because it all just seemed like "a hell of a lot of fun, for what reason again?" Furthermore, I question the validity of a union that pays models to pose for their pretty banners, when we're surrounded by picture perfect students. Students who don't require the thousands of dollars to 'look like real uni goers' in a photo shoot...come on guys, the union is going well in fighting strong after the intro of VSU, but think things through a bit before you act eh?...am I the only one feeling this way? I think not!



Mr Wednesday

The Garden Where Parties Grow Independent

The Garden Where Parties Grow could be the soundtrack of a long trip home from work through an urban and industrial landscape. You start waiting for a bus, mingling with other commuters, whose conversations start out quietly but soon develop their own dynamic. As the trip continues people come and go, conversations stop, start, harmonise. This is how the musical themes develop. The aural landscape changes; you change from being stuck in road works ('Falling in Numbers') to long roads where the bus stops frequently ('Sealevel'). Finally, you arrive home in the dark where you can prepare for a big night out. Whether this is the intention of the band I don't know, but the analogy here gives an idea of the dynamic of *The Garden*.

Musically, *The Garden* has to be taken as a whole, just as you cannot travel partially home. A mix of quiet theme development (reminiscent of Godspeed You Black Emperor), repetitive synthesisers (Mum), soaring soundscapes giving impressions of space (Sigur Ros). If there was a stand-alone track here, it would be either 'In the Garden Where Parties Grow', with its developing guitar and vocal crescendos or perhaps, 'The Wall Where the World Once Ended'. As such this is best played when you have the time to listen to all of it. Dipping would reduce the impact. A mix of (sometime chaotic) keyboards, guitar, distorted but quiet (sometimes chaotic) vocals and cello. *The Garden* varies, but always in an interesting way, unlike a commute home.

Think

'9-15-00' - Godspeed You Black Emperor

'I'm 9 Today' - Mum

'Gong' - Sigur Ros

'Sail to the Moon' - Radiohead

Andrew J Turner

COHEED AND CAMBRIA

IV

COHEED AND CAMBRIA

Good Apollo I'm Burning Star IV /
Volume One: Special Edition

Sony BMG / Columbia

A number of friends had been praising this band for a long time, so I thought it was time that I should see what all the fuss was about. Firstly, I must state that Coheed and Cambria isn't your typical punk band. They have sweeping guitar solos, beautiful acoustic numbers and haunting lyrics. Somehow they have managed to build a strong underground following, without much commercial play or promotion. Their music has done all the talking and convincing for them.

Good Apollo starts with a small orchestral piece that eventually leads into the second track called 'Always & Never'. This track shows a softer, more emotional side to the band, yet manages to never be soppy. The acoustic guitar mixed with what sounds like bird noises and children chatting in the background, somehow manages to elevate the band to a level that most punk / emo bands never reach. Surprisingly, they don't lose any credibility for doing it either.

From there, the disc takes a small nosedive. Songs like 'Welcome Home', 'Crossing the Frame' and 'Apollo 1: The Writing Writer' all tend to blend in with one another; it isn't until 'Once Upon Your Dead Body' that things start to look up. At this particular track, the band starts to broaden their horizons and add other elements and instruments into their individual mix of prog-rock. The guitars add a spacey feel to the track and allow the band to break out of that mould of samey song. You're then thrown a punch in the face with the next track.

'Wake Up' is a beautiful acoustic ballad that has strings and slide guitars and other instruments that you don't expect to pop up on an album like this one. The track transports you to a place where your mind is misty and full of emotion, and would be perfect for everyone's favourite teen drama, *The O.C.* This track would have to be the standout track for me, with such emotion and power that you really don't expect from the band.

Once again, the band falls into a trap of all of the tracks sounding the same. You're thrown into five or six tracks that all blend into each other and don't really stand out. *Good Apollo* is a great album if you are a big punk / prog-rock fan. It has a handful of standout tracks that really show what the band could be capable of. With the right direction, Coheed and Cambria could soon be your new favourite band.

Simon Finck



THE SUNPILOTS

EP
Honeytrap Records

The Sunpilots, being a four piece from the womb of Australian music, Sydney, could be forgiven for falling short of the headlines and being excluded from the big reviews but the good news is there's no need as they've achieved quite a lot in their brief stint since early last year. Their eponymous debut EP has just been released on front man Raj Siva-Rajah's independent label Honeytrap Records and it's safe to say you'll be seeing more of The Sunpilots.

The band's own bio and various press reviews liken their style to that of Radiohead crossed with Pearl Jam and who am I to question a quite accurate comparison? It must be said that the music is likely to be heard on an easy listening time slot of your local radio mix station but that can't detract from the careful and skilful preparation of the works.

Their first track, 'Animals in my Mind' is clearly the standout single, designed to be heard over the airwaves and to earn them the recognition they deserve. Impressive use of backing vocals and classical fade and crescendo techniques give rise to a heavily structured and almost too neat song. Oddly enough the six track EP contains two versions of their intended single, 'Animals in my Mind' and 'Spotlight in the Sun'; radio edits of each can be heard and aren't significantly different from their full length counterparts. I can't help but feel this could be a shameless advertisement of their marketability coupled with a distinct lack of volume. Then again, it's equally likely they're holding back for their full length disc which, if they're smart should follow this beauty in the very near future.

'Spotlight in the Sun' follows on from the first track and is very much more of the same, which in this case is not a bad thing at all, it has its hooks and appropriate bridging and maintains the soft rock style very aptly. At times I wonder if Raj takes his lyrics a little too seriously as there are very few lulls throughout the entire album, his voice is an almost constant presence and while a welcome quirk could possibly detract from the music and melodies themselves. 'Metric System' and 'Medicated Shell' are more progressive than the two 'single' tracks telling more of a story in each.

The Sunpilots are on the right way to building a name for themselves. Their official website www.thesunpilots.com boasts links to their content via iTunes, direct downloads and the infamous Myspace. While I'm not marking the days off on a calendar until the upcoming LP I sure hope that all this press attention and free distribution of their work isn't going to amount to a monumental sell-out. Cross your fingers with me folks.

Lyam Heikkinen

THE LITTLE WILLIES

The Little Willies
EMI

Now some would say that country music is a dirty word. I used to be one of these people. I still am to a point (yes I am looking at you Tim McGraw and Kasey Chambers), but I have learnt that there is more to country music. People such as Johnny Cash and Willie Nelson bring heart and soul to music from the south. The Little Willies, I am very glad to say, are on the positive side of country music. A band comprising of Norah Jones and other studio musicians. The Little Willies brings together country, jazz and blues music.

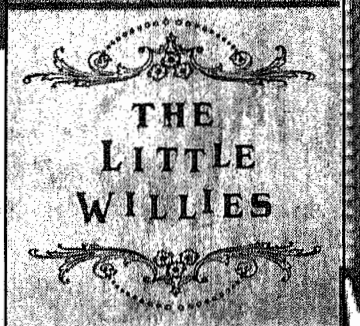
When first reading about them, I was a little worried on what the album might sound like. On paper the idea of trying to mix a number of musical genres together doesn't look promising. So when it came to listening to the album, I was genuinely surprised. After listening to the first few tracks, I didn't feel as if it was country music at all. It felt as if the listener had been transported back to the days of cowboys and saloons filled with singers and dancers, yet with a modern twist.

Tracks such as 'Love Me', 'I'll Never Get Out Of This World Alive' and 'It's Not You It's Me' evoke such strong emotions and make you feel for the character in the song. Although the country influence might stick out like a knife in the side of your body, it never really affects the song heavily. Some of the standout tracks include 'Roly Poly' and 'No Place To Fall'. 'Roly Poly' is a rollicking number that never seems to lose momentum and is just a fun, fast paced song. 'No Place To Fall' is a gorgeous ballad that would fit beautifully on a Norah Jones record.

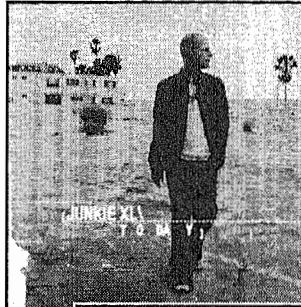
The album, produced by bassist Lee Alexander, is mainly covers of old country songs. Only two of the albums tracks were written by the band. 'Roll On', written by Alexander, is a medium paced song that explores the hardship that life brings, and how we must overcome it. The last song that caught my attention was 'I Gotta Get Drunk'. Written by Willie Nelson, the song showcases Norah Jones ability to change from jazz songstress to heartbroken lover. The cost of this album is worth it just for that one track.

Whether this is just a small side project for Ms. Jones, or whether The Little Willies have more to show the world, this album is full of quality songs. It's a good album to have playing on those lazy Sunday afternoons when you want to relax, or for those Saturday nights when you're drinking by yourself at home.

Simon Finck.



THE
LITTLE
WILLIES



Today
Ultra Records

Junkie XL

Junkie XL, aka Tom Holkenborg is a Dutchman whom many may not have heard of, but whose music may be more familiar than some realise. He has contributed to the scores of such movies as *The Animatrix*, *Team America* and *Kingdom of Heaven*. He composes music for video games and commercials. He is one of the most respected composers, producers and remixers in his new home of Hollywood. He is also responsible for the 2002 remixed version of Elvis Presley's 'A Little Less Conversation', but we shouldn't hold that against him. *Today* is his fourth album, a showcase of Junkie XL's ability to meld rocking guitar riffs and ambient synth with a plethora of interesting samples and well constructed loops to create an album that takes the listener on a journey inside the mind of Tom Holkenborg.

This disc is an interesting blend of the electronic and the instrumental. Guitar based melodies with gutsy synthesized rhythms dominate this album, and the music flows seamlessly from one track to the next. It is also interspersed with introspective, ambient melodies. It has a very distinct 'eighties' sound in parts, a lot like New Order but perhaps with a hint more technology (although after 15 years one would think the divide would be greater). His talent is undeniable - and his motivation is clearly evident. He has obviously produced this album as a side project, to escape the confines of his other work which dictates the extent of his creativity. His talent lies in the creation of ambience - some of his tracks will pick you up with him (listen to the opener, 'Youthful', or 'I've got a Xerox to Copy'), while others will have you brooding with him (listen to 'Yesterdays' and 'We Become One'). It's clear to see why he has been so successful with his work in creating music for film scores and video games. Tom himself says of *Today* - "This album is more of just one thing; it's really a vibe that I'm in right now. So that's why it's called *Today*. It's pretty much where I stand right now in my musical development."

With Junkie XL's influences ranging from King Crimson to Peter Gabriel to Sonic Youth to Sepultura, one might expect a more comprehensive journey through the genres, but alas, this is not the case with *Today*. It is an interesting album, upbeat at times - but mostly wistful and reflective. The lyrics are sparse and mostly ornamental, but serve to offset what would otherwise be overly repetitive melodies. For all you Faithless or New Order or Enigma fans out there, this will likely be right up your alley. For those of you who are not, give it a listen - it has still found a special spot on my maybe pile. Check out www.myspace.com/junkieXL.

Trust me
Jimmy

The Finishing School



Thom Combe interviewed by Chris Burford

The Finishing School is the product of two sets of greatly gifted musical siblings, and have been welcomed in venues across town since 2001. OnDit speaks with guitarist/violinist/vocalist Thom Combe, about the bands latest release, traveling abroad, and Australian Idol. But Thom begins by telling us about the perils of pet ownership.

Yeah, our neighbour rang up the other day saying, 'your cats keep sitting on the bonnet of my car and scratching it, you've gotta keep them inside at night'. So that's what I did last night, but I couldn't find any kitty litter, as the area of the house that usually contains the kitty litter is about to be demolished, and hence is empty. So I laid out some newspaper, in the naive hope they might use that, and thought the rest of the floors tiled so it wouldn't be too hard to clean. But I awoke (to glorious aromas) to find the newspaper seeming to have been involved in some epic cat-battle, the tiles bare, and the one square metre of mat I'd forgotten about covered in...well it had changed colour. So neighbour, your car's getting scratched tonight! And if you're reading...I'll make it up to you by inviting you to the launch.

For those not in the know, can you introduce The Finishing School to OnDit readers;

We are 'The Finishing School', a local Adelaide band that has been around this town in one form or another for about 5 years. We started out with a couple violins, cello and guitar (with 2 vocals) but over time the group has evolved into a more conventional guitar-bass-drums + violin set up. The four piece group consists of two sets of siblings; Zac and Tristan on drums and bass, and Emily and myself (Thom) on violin and guitar/vocals. We play about 80% originals, and just throw in the odd cover by Radiohead or Tori Amos for good measure. We recently recorded our second EP called Unit One, which we're launching at Jive on Friday August 11, and have been selected as a feature in Triple J's unearthed competition. **You returned to the scene late last year, but disappeared for quite a while before then. Where did you go?**

Well, Emily hit England working all different kinds of jobs. Tristan spent a year in Canada where he played in a number of indie bands in the Toronto scene and also spent his time checking out music in New York and Seattle. Zac lazed around in China (as he does from time to time!) doing everything from music to study and mountain climbing! It was 18 months before all four of us were back in the country again, at which point we decided that it was time for the band to reform again, write some new songs and record a new EP. **How did travelling affect their inspiration, and what inspired them most whilst o/s?**

Tristan found the whole Seattle scene amazing, and The Crocodile Club isn't wallowing in its fame as the home of early 90s grunge at all, and it's still promoting new experimental music. Apparently big crowds come out and see awesome stuff there which is way less conservative than Adelaide music, it's great to see that sort of music being really appreciated. And just the amount of music coming out of Toronto and London at the moment is huge, and it's pretty mind blowing to see. The competition is fierce so the calibre of bands playing in ordinary venues is fantastic, and it's inspiring to see. As for Zac and his China travels, he says you can't beat seeing 20 Buddhist monks beating their drums and gongs in a 1000 year old snow covered monastery on a mountain.

Probably not. Can you tell us about the new EP, and what direction you have taken with it;

We put a lot of time into the new EP, recording it over a couple of weeks at The Cheese Factory in Black Forest. It's a little heavier than our first, but that is just the nature of how the band has evolved since getting back together. There are moments with distorted guitar and Zac exploding on the drums but also with violin at the same time, so it's not like we've totally changed our style; we still have those bluesy folk roots but sometimes it's in a heavier context. That said, there is one track on the EP which is just a trio of acoustic bass, guitar and vocals. We tried to mix up the sound of the EP as much as we could to keep it interesting.

Which singers have you idolized throughout your career?

Anyone that can give you those 'fission' moments, you know when their voice gives you shivers down your spine, does it for me. Of course Thom Yorke has delivered quite a few of those, but also some people I've got from my parents collection, like Eva Cassidy. She has this ability to move from beautiful, serene, if not somewhat cheesy verses, to crazy pop-diva choruses. She always inspired me (to watch dishes) in the car when I used to work up in the Barossa. There was also a dude who I used to see at uni. He was blind and would sit in the caf' doing a few Tibetan sub-harmonic exercises or something, he was pretty crazy.

What do you think of competitions like Idol, should they have a place in the music industry?

Hey they're good entertainment. I kind of view them as a separate entity to the music industry. Everyone likes to see somewhat embarrass themselves, everyone loves to see someone taking the piss, everyone loves to see someone get shot down by a judge, everyone loves to see awkward moments, everyone loves to see someone win, and hey, sometimes people even love to see a bit of the old touchdown.

What albums have you purchased recently?

Well, I'm a little bit naughty when it comes down to not downloading the fuck out of stuff that I like. And I've never bought a huge amount of Cd's, most often I hear about new Cd's from friends who've already bought the Cd and I listen to theirs. But semi-recently I guess I've bought the new albums from The Beta Band, Wilco, The Elected, and I got given the DVD of Moonwalker from a friend recently. Now that shit is entertainment.

What can we expect to see at your cd launch @ Jive?

Well, we will basically try to play the best gig we've ever played, with the best sound we've ever had, with the best support we've ever had (Brunatex & Jude Elliot). There's no real theatrics or fireworks planned, I guess just trying to give our own songs what the appropriate amount of justice it is that they deserve. And we'll pull out a few new tracks for those in the crowd who have maybe seen our set on more than one occasion.

The Finishing School launch their new EP Unit One at Jive on Friday August 11th at Jive. Joining them will be locals Brunatex & Jude Elliot. Read more about the Finishing School at www.thefinishingschoolmusic.com

Chris Burford

MUSIC IS CRAP

What could possibly be mediocre about the music industry? It is a fair and democratic system, whereupon all artists are rewarded financially indexed upon talent and consumers are both informed and valued. Oh yeah, and Peter Costello wants to be treasurer for the rest of his life, Woody Allen wants Mel Gibson to star in his next film, and Michael Jackson doesn't touch children.

The closer truth is there is much that is mediocre about music. But there is much that is mediocre about society. But which came first? Does mediocre music make one mediocre? Or is mediocre music manufactured to capitalise on the mediocrity of the wider public? Music is a subjective form of expression, and should be enjoyed subjectively. Subsequently there are people that actually believe Lee Harding is gifted, and the opinions of these idiots must be protected in a free society. *Cough*

Frank Zappa theorised of a fictitious character called Debbie, a fourteen year old girl that has ultimate control over the music industry. Debbie is all-American, upper-middle-class, white, and dreams of giving backstage blowjobs to her favorite pop-singer in exchange for free concert tickets. Record company executives pay Debbie's parents lots of money to hear what she thinks, and make career make/break decisions based on her opinion. A cynical view perhaps, but not far removed from an Australian model where our Debbie equivalent is perhaps Jamie King, as introduced on ABC's *We Can Be Heroes*. Make it to *The OC* soundtrack (just cover a song from *Napoleon Dynamite*), and you're immediately on the iPods of Jamie's and Debbie's everywhere.

Top 40 music is too often at the centre of mediocrity accusations from music snobs worldwide (myself especially). Mediocrity in music (like everything else) is to take the easy option, but writing infectious pop-music is actually very difficult, and the songwriting skills that are required to get something into the top-ten should not be underestimated. Mediocrity appears today, when artists mime television or live performances. It appears when *Neighbours* cast members or *Big Brother* contestants are given recording contracts over more worthy artists. And then there is *Australian Idol*, which is not without it's pros, but is an exploitive, demeaning, and mediocre form of entertainment. Period.

But how can the production of mediocre music be blamed when there are mediocre radio stations playing it on high-rotation? Not to mention the endless-scores of music publications (of which *On Dit* can't be excluded) writing millions of words praising these inane figures of banality. But the music food chain ends with the most mediocre of all, the consumer. But laziness is no excuse now, as broadcasted media narrows its playlists, the Internet has opened up a new world of music exposure, I've found myself spending more and more time listening to screaming music from artists' websites, from MySpace, from internet radio, and other independent artists channels. Purchasing music online has to be one of the greatest breakthroughs in music distribution, since the industry became globalised.

I have avoided pointing fingers here at specific artists, as I respect that one person's turd is another one's diamond (except for Lee Harding who is an insult to turds). There is no doubt that mediocrity will forever exist within music, as it will within society. But there is no longer much excuse for accepting it as given.

Chris Burford

Death Cab For Cutie

Gov Hindmarsh

17th July 2006

Supported by Clue to Kalo

One thing that really stood out for me when going to see DCFC was the diverse crowd that they drew. There was the hardcore fans, the hipsters, the people who only know that one song off *Nova* and random people who just rocked up. One thing was in the air though, tonight, no one would walk away from the show disappointed.

Support act, Clue to Kalo, were average. They play melodic indie pop, but I honestly felt that they were trying too hard to be alternative. Apparently, the bands are close friends and catch up when they can. All the songs seemed to blend into one another and it was hard to distinguish one from another.

When Death Cab hit the stage the audience was prepared for a fantastic night of music. Opening with *Passenger Seat*, the band blitzed through a number of songs from many of their previous songs, *The New Year*, *Prostobooth*, *Your Heart Is An Empty Room* and *What Sarah Said*, were just some of the tracks played. The crowd also enjoyed songs I will follow you into the dark and *The Sound of Settling*.

Ben Gibbard (singer) and Chris Walla (guitarist) swapped pleasantries with the audience and even got into talk of Victor Harbour. Chris Walla has officially apologized for his penguin incident at Victor Harbour. The air is clear. When one punter shouted "Go Seattle", which is where the band hail's from, Walla shouted back saying "No! Go Adelaide!"

Highlights for me were scattered throughout the night. Off their *Transatlantic* album tracks *The New Year* and *We Looked Like Giants* were definitely highlights. *We Looked Like Giants* lasted for about 10 minutes and saw Gibbard swapping from guitar to drums and vice versa. I think everyone inside the room was a little blown away by what they were seeing. From their most recent record *Plans*, highlights were *Soul Meets Body*, *I Will Follow You Into The Dark* and *Crooked Teeth*.

After finishing the lights came up and the punters started to walk away. I thought that I would stick close to the stage door just in case they came out to greet people. Just about to give up hope, I notice the door open and the four men walk quickly from the stage door to the exit door. Although Death Cab for Cutie isn't a stadium band yet, it won't be long. They left the building looking like true rock stars. And hopefully they meant it when they said they would be back real soon.

Simon Finck

photo: Emma Lewis

- Sunda*
- Fri 11th Aug - Finishing School (CD launch), plus Brunatix, Jude Elliot @ Jive.
 - Fri 11th Aug & Sun 13th Aug - The Butterfly Effect (QLD), plus Repeat Offender @ The Gov.
 - Sat 12th Aug - Dan Kelly & The Alpha Males (VIC), plus Ground Components @ Jive.
 - Sat 12th Aug - Youth Group (NSW), plus Darren Hanlon, Don Lennon @ The Gov.
 - Sun 13th Aug - Bob Evans (WA), plus Bertie Blackman @ Adelaide Uni Bar.
 - Fri 18th Aug - The Panda Band (WA), plus Jump 2 Light Speed, New Rules For Boats @ Rocket Bar.
 - Sun 20th Aug - Augie March (VIC), plus Jolie Holland, David Ford @ Queens Theatre.

Bach, Handel and Rhodes



Charismatic New Zealand baritone Teddy Tahu Rhodes is set to return to Australia for his first performances here in 2006. Teaming with the Australian Chamber Orchestra to present a program dominated by Baroque works. The Visionaries' concert series comes at a time when Rhodes' international reputation is growing - the singer is scheduled to make his debut with the Metropolitan Opera in New York in its 2007/2008 season.

The ACO's artistic director and leader also returns to Australia after a stint with the Irish Chamber Orchestra, and will lead his group through works by Bach, Handel, Kuhnau and Hindemith.

Famous arias by Handel from the opera *Xerxes* and the ode *Alexander's Feast* will be featured alongside the composer's *Concerto Grosso No. 5, Op. 6*. The other great composer of the late Baroque period, Bach, is not left out.

with his *Cantata No. 82 'Ich habe genug'* acting as a drawcard. As well as other works by Bach, an aria by Johann Kuhnau will be performed, giving a flavour of the sort of music that Bach and Handel would have been influenced by in their youth.

In typical ACO fashion, Hindemith's *Trauermusik* for cello and strings will challenge the audience, and give principal cellist Emma-Jane Murphy a chance to show off the expressive qualities of her instrument.

The Australian Chamber Orchestra will perform 'The Visionaries' at 8pm on August 9 at the Adelaide Town Hall. As with all ACO concerts, student rush tickets will be available on the night for \$17 (student ID required) and 'under 30' tickets can be booked at any time for \$31.

Benedict Coxon

Classical Masters 2

**Adelaide Symphony Orchestra
Adelaide Town Hall
July 13-15**

The eighth Master Series concert for the year saw the continuation of the sub-series 'Classical Masters', marking the residency of Stephen Kovacevich with the ASO. The pianist is renowned for his interpretations of works in the Classical style, a fact that was reflected in the program presented.

The first work, Haydn's Symphony No. 83 ('The Hen') had Kovacevich conducting the sparse number of orchestral players. The size of the group did not mean, however, that the dynamic contrast was anything less than anticipated. In fact, in the first movement, the passing notes were overdone to the point where the resolution could not be heard. This made the passing notes something other than passing notes - harmonic interruptions that were out of place, and not appropriate in the music of Haydn. Overall, the orchestra's playing was 'hard', as opposed to the warm and gentle playing sometimes demanded by Haydn and Beethoven. Credit is due, though, for the enjoyable moments when anticipatory quiet lines were followed by bursts of full orchestral sound.

Switching to the dual role of pianist/conductor for Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25, K. 503. Kovacevich seated himself in the centre of the stage, surrounded by the orchestra. Most times while playing, Kovacevich was wholly focussed on the piano. While some conductors keep in contact with the orchestra with nods of the head, Kovacevich led with little more than his playing. However, there were no problems with the ensemble and Kovacevich's playing itself was impeccably balanced, showing his considerable skill.

Beethoven's Symphony no. 4, Op. 60, the final work for the evening is spoken of as the most technically difficult of all Beethoven's symphonies. The ASO made a feisty entrance into the first movement as if the players were relishing the challenge. On the whole, the work was negotiated admirably, with special praise going to the woodwind players for some sublime moments, particularly a startlingly brilliant bassoon 'mini-solo' in the fourth movement.

Ryan Cuthbertson



The Romantics

**Australian Chamber Orchestra
Adelaide Town Hall
July 11**

For this program of Romantic masterworks, the ACO was lucky to have guest director and soloist Anthony Marwood at the helm. In a rather classy exchange, the charismatic Richard Tognetti was in Ireland directing Marwood's group, the Irish Chamber Orchestra. Marwood's credentials include his membership of the acclaimed Florestan Trio. The ACO is a group that prides itself on tight ensemble – the personnel lock together through familiarity and raw musicianship – so it is interesting to see what effect a guest director can have. Marwood's direction was noticeably different from that of Tognetti. The usual flamboyance and bow-waving that Tognetti employs were done away with, Marwood choosing simply to lead by example.

The program consisted of Barber's String Quartet in B minor, Op. 11, Mendelssohn's Concerto in D minor for Violin and Strings and Beethoven's String Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131. The first work was the highlight of the evening; the central Adagio is often performed but the outer movements are no less gripping. For this concert, the ACO used the original string quartet parts (with the addition of double bass!) for the first and third movements, while deferring to Barber's own luscious orchestration of the Adagio. There were a few uncharacteristic tuning issues, but, on the whole, this was an enthralling performance.

Marwood and the ACO were predictably excellent in Mendelssohn's Concerto, but it's a shame that a player of Marwood's calibre wasn't given a work with which to really show his talent. The arrangement of Beethoven's String Quartet in C-sharp minor was technically flawless, but lacked the energy and passion of the Barber quartet. The program notes cited a 'tradition' of string orchestras performing Beethoven's quartets, but perhaps it is a tradition best left in the past – although the ACO is adept at adding depth to chamber music, on this occasion it seemed more like using a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

Edward Joyner

Here is a ridiculously average drawing of Catriona Rowntree.

Note how the artist has attempted to show differentiation between the shadows in her hair and the creases on her décolletage with some rather err, sketchy shading.

The tone is overall très year 12 art major, as demonstrated by the juxtapositioning of solid lines and shading to create a more 'creative' interpretation of the classic portrait. The tepid quality of Catriona 'the personality' has been wholeheartedly butchered by Catriona 'the shitty drawing', which is saying something.

Overall, this portrait screams 'I am average' in 356 shades of grey.





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Dusty: The Original Pop Diva



I had no idea that Dusty Springfield was a dyke and a junkie. But then again, I wasn't entirely convinced that Australia could produce anything to surpass the magnificence of *Hey Dad* in its, ahem, hey day. Too bad it's not 1994 and I'm not ten again...the inner child in me absolutely adored *Dusty*. To put it simply, the show was fabulous. The actors were fabulous. The sets, fabulous. The costumes, fabulous. Those gosh darn wigs, OMG fabulous. Even the promo posters were pretty fabulous. Sure it got schmaltzy in the end, but that's musical theatre for ya'.

You know the story. Little gawky Irish Catholic girl Mary O'Brien decides she wants to be extraordinary and takes over the pop world by storm as the White Lady of Soul, Dusty Springfield (the performance of Tamsin Carroll's lifetime methinks). Fame gets too much, diva demands come on thick and strong, lots of fighting with bitch-ass girlfriend Reno (Deni Hines) and eventual bloated, purple-on-a-toilet-seat alcoholism, belated comeback success and a painful death laced with regrets. Curtain down. Encore. Fabulous.

The supporting cast were pretty slick and Deni Hines proved once again she's indeed her mother's daughter by belting out a mean rendition of the MoTown classic, *Dancing in the Street*. But Carroll stole the show hands down with her soulful, sympathetic performance of *Dusty* that made you want to go blonde reeeeeaaal bad. The only issue I could nitpick was that perhaps the writers scraped the barrel a bit in making a musical about the life of Dusty Springfield. What's next? *Tina Arena: The Arena Spectacular*?

But whatever. The after party was equally phat and the Festival Centre sushi tasted real fresh. I met a lovely drag queen named Candy who liked my plastic shoes and together, in the name of Dusty herself, we were fabulous.

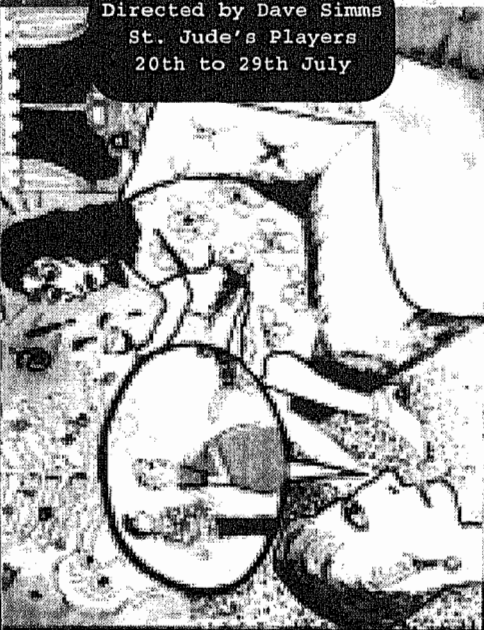
Shauna McGinty

THEATRE

...with Sahil Choujar

Breezblock Park

Directed by Dave Simms
St. Jude's Players
20th to 29th July



Take Christmas, annoying relatives, expensive two-piece suites, a pregnant daughter and a drink mixer which is actually a vibrator and you have a two hour long laugh riot. Sounds familiar? Well, I'm talking about Willy Russell's timeless comedy *Breezblock Park*. Now over 30 years old, the play is still as funny and relevant as it was then. And this latest ensemble by director Dave Simms and Co. is one of the funniest I've seen.

To pull off a play like this, one needs a cast of actors who can take the roller-coaster lives of their characters and make sure that it is still funny for the audience. So even when the dark and tragic side of the characters are at their peak, there is something about the situation that constantly reminds the audience they're watching a comic play. And the cast in this production handled the challenge with utmost ease. While all performances were above par and they handled the English/Irish accents very convincingly, some of the actors that stood out: Julie Quick's portrayal of Betty, a pretentious and conservative woman, was strong and consistent. Tony Busch, playing Ted, was the very real and obnoxious character of the know-it-all uncle who will put you down at every chance he gets. Paul Davies, filling the shoes of Tommy, was enthusiastic and energetic as the

happy-go-lucky uncle you'd love to hang out with. Damien Carr, playing John, accurately delivered the obedient child with an oppressed and rebellious inner voice. And finally Amy Hutchinson, portraying Sandra, was so immersed in her character that you believed every word she said even when you disagreed with her. I consider this to be her best performance yet.

While the set was impressive and realistic it was also one of the play's few drawbacks. I felt that by creating a "blanket" set, the already small stage in this old church was made even smaller. This made the room look a bit too small, even for a middle-class house in Northern England. While the props and wardrobes co-ordinated by Judy Menz and Mary Partis were fundamental in transporting us into the characters' festivities, the lighting and sound by Adrian Pearce left a lot to our imagination.

All in all, *Breezblock Park* was a funny, engaging and at times dark tussle between two sisters who care more about their furniture than about their kids. This play is a must see — so get off your expensive suite and head to St. Jude's Church for an early Christmas.

Sahil Choujar

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60 North Tce

www.rapturenightclub.com

Rapture is a state of great happiness, enthusiasm or euphoric transcendence. Apparently The club has a two level set up and an outdoor garden/bar area out the back, although now that it's winter it has this hideous marquee permanently set up. Fortunately, it is RnB outside. Where it belongs. In regards to the interior design of the place, well, it's fairly non-existent. There's white walls, black edging, mirrors and a few chandeliers over the bar. It actually has a very cold atmosphere and the industrial carpet on the dance floor doesn't help. There are three bars, one on the lower level, a smaller one on the upper level and a large bar in the outdoor area. Bar service is quick and efficient, but drinks are the usual price, with the exception of the advertised specials. There is also a coat room which is always an added bonus in winter.

The club is designed for dancing and partying, so don't go if you want to lounge or have a good yarn with long lost friends. The main area (which is the whole indoor part of the club) plays commercial house on a Saturday night. Yes, COMMERCIAL dance. Don't expect anything cutting edge whatsoever. Same applies for RnB. The main DJs (DJs, not artists, lets just establish this now) are Souli (commercial dance) and Chris C(RnB).

Most will recognize these two from the infamous Heaven Nightclub, and most people will remember they were not exceptionally amazing DJs in that they specialize in commercial hits BUT they are good at knowing how to spin out a (predictable) party mix.

Dress code is simply YD for the lads, and Supre (layered up with hoards of make up and accessories and a nasty attitude) is sufficient for the girls. Otherwise just play up to a stereotype of your choice. Anything better than that and you'll be feeling mighty hot there.

When I first went to Rapture I was expecting

the worse, which is a good thing because it ended up being a notch better than what I expected. It really is a party venue and nothing more. But if it dropped its tryhard image and just openly admitted it's an imitation Heaven then we could all sleep better. Saying that though, it is disappointed to see a new club open that sticks to basic fail-proof formula. They (Souli and Chris C) had the opportunity to start again and do something new and fresh for Adelaide but instead chose to adhere to the rules of mediocrity and that's what Rapture is. Mediocre. The \$10 entry is not good value for money and the door bitches really are BITCHES. There are massive line ups for the place (why?!?!?) and there are a zillion people crowding the pavement trying to get in with a secret handshake so expect attitude from the staff there. A club of that size (approx 500 capacity) that feels the need to have metal detectors and bag checks spells trouble from the word go, in fact there was a serious altercation there on it's opening night.

And I'll say it again, the door bitches are BITCHES. Watch out for the blonde, I think she's in La La Land and thinks she is the almighty leader of a totalitarian state.

While Rapture really isn't for me, the regulars do love it and they keep going back, so for them the place is not a complete hole. And it is keeping lots of tarty little try hards out of the more desirable places.

My final words for Rapture are "HA HA HA HA" for when HQ re-opens.

No Peace and Love this week...I need not explain.

Natashka Miernik

PS If you type "rapture" into your predicative text on your phone, "pasture" will come up which is probably a more suitable name as only sheep go there.

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