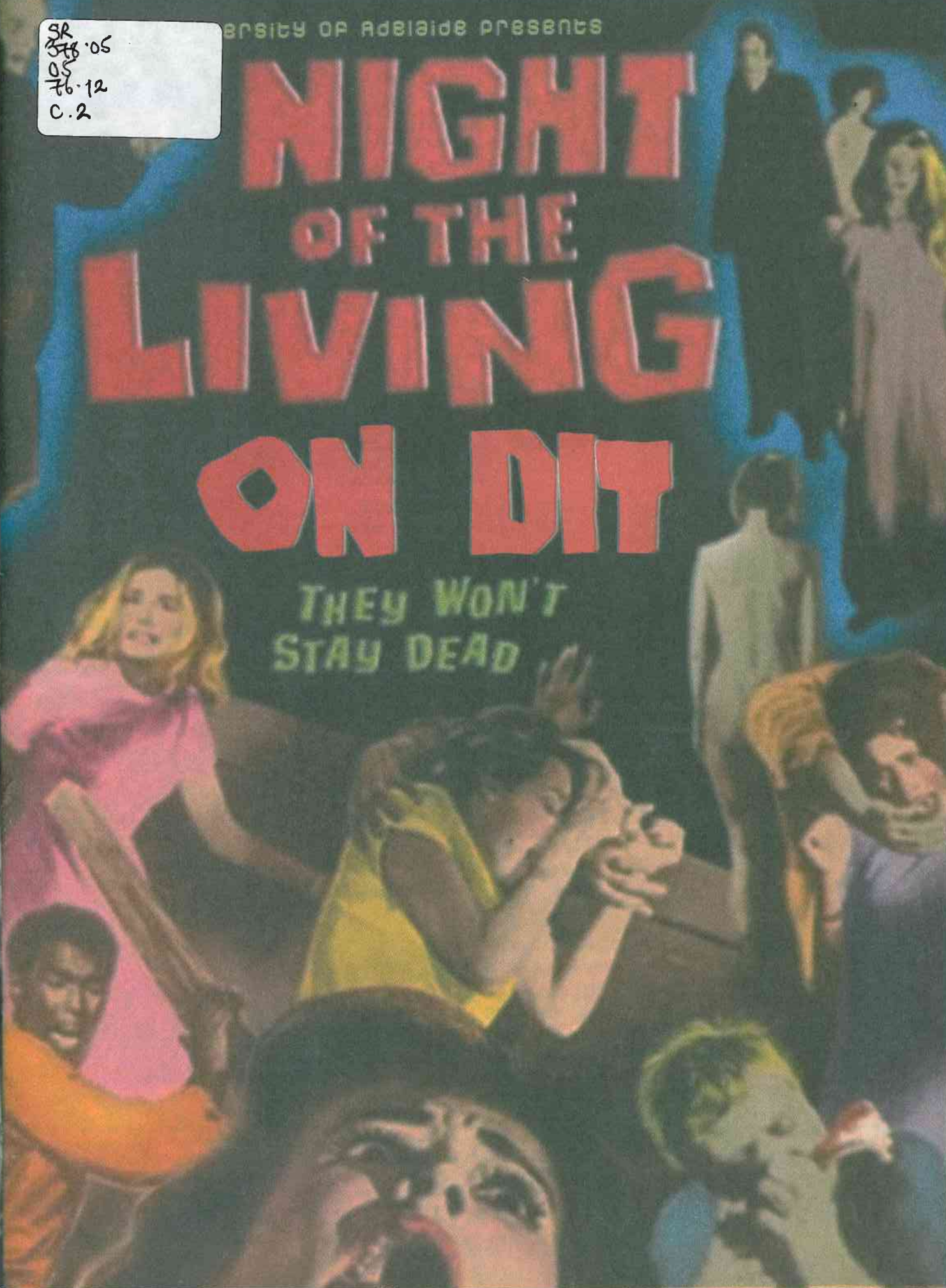


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NIGHT OF THE LIVING ON DIT

THEY WON'T
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THE ON DIT TEAM

**THANKS
FROM
MIKE, CAT
& NAT**

We promised ourselves we wouldn't cry, but get ready for the mother of all Oscar acceptance speeches, minus thanking God/the Academy/the AUU (just jokes).

First and foremost, although we may have turned into whip cracking Editors, we would not have been in a position to produce such a successful year of newspapers if it wasn't for the help and guidance of Ben and Claire (the cool kids who edited in 2007). Even if you didn't get your articles in on time, or layouts done by deadline, we still love you and you always made it up to us in other ways (not dirty ways!)

Of course, we wouldn't have a newspaper to edit if it wasn't for the sabbies and countless contributors who write the content you read/criticise/analyse every edition. What a great year of content we have had. Everyone rose to the challenge of sticking to our wacky themes and deadlines (mostly) that we would often switch at a whim. There aren't enough pages to list you all but much love and positive resume references for all.

The glue for Team CMN mainly came through bonding over inanimate objects such as too many sweets, lots of cheese, a plethora of Dumpling King dumplings, litres of cider, bags of Doritos and M&Ms, hours of shuffled music and of course, our shiny, sexy new Macs. Kudos to funding.

To all our family and friends, thanks for being understanding when we didn't come home for family dinners, stick around at special family events or come over for the *Sex and the City* marathon with the girls (Mike - yes, me included *sighs*). Without your continued support throughout this year, we may never have been able to experience the joys of giving birth every couple of weeks to a slightly shiny, very inky student newspaper baby.

Shout out to wallpaper backgrounds and Chris Martin Feat. Kanye. WORD.

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- Genevieve Williamson
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- Edward Joyner
- Pitch
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- Politics
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- Goldy Yong
- Slightly Political Party
- Harry Dobson
- Will Martin
- Nightlife
- Mike "Mac Daddy" Nicholson
- Tess "TJ" Farrell
- Sex
- Alicia Moraw
- Tech/XOR
- Joe Roberts
- Travel
- Alex Rains
- TV
- Samuel "Sammy Boy" Stearne
- Visual Arts
- Lauren Sutter
- Vox Pop
- Clare Buckley
- Claire "Waide" Wald



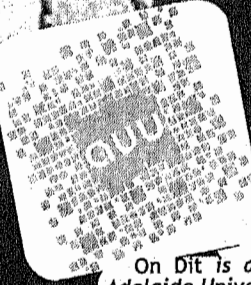
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ON DIT

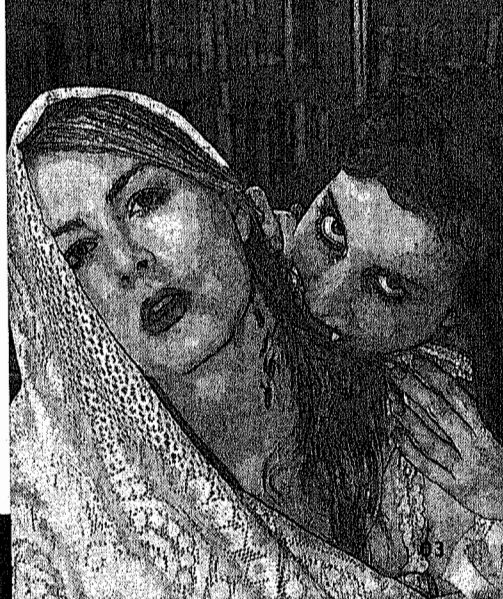
THE HORROR EDITION

ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY STUDENT PUBLICATION



On Dit:
Proudly sponsored by the Adelaide University Union

On Dit is a publication of the Adelaide University Union. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the editors, The University of Adelaide, the Adelaide University Union or Frankenstein, sayonara bitchazi!





Letters

If you haven't already told that girl/boy you love them via print media, it's too late this year, you're going to have to do it the old fashioned way (Facebook of course.) Thanks to all those who took the time to send letters into *On Dit*. It sometimes felt very thankless/feedbackless, but these pages let us feel loved or at least read. Don't forget to send your letters next year. Remember 400 words and the email address: ondit@adelaide.edu.au
Big Love.

The Janette Years

Dear *On Dit*,

An old friend, Mrs. Janette Howard, passed on this passage to me. She was adamant that it should appear in your publication. Therefore, it is with much honour and mild trepidation that I pass this document into your good hands.
Yours faithfully,

Patrick McCabe

The tawdry details I am about to relate to you, dear reader, deal with my marriage to one Mr. John Howard. You may have heard of this obscure historical figure, as he is an ex-prime minister (how I hate that prefix!) of Australia.

Back in the glory days, our marriage was healthy and rosy. Dear John would go out to serve his country each day and I would stay at home to tend to the rhododendrons and make apple pie. In the evenings, we would sit in front of our small black-and-white television, I in my cardigan and he in his Australia tracksuit, and watch the cricket together, or maybe *Gardening Australia*, while eating my home-cooked blueberry muffins. He would tell me of his friendship problems with George and I would tell him about the wonderful gardening tip I had heard on the wireless that morning. We were the happiest couple one could hope for.

But ever since November last year, our marriage has taken a sudden turn for the worse. Personally, I feel he's found it hard to kick a few old habits. I think perhaps John's job was a good outlet for certain aspects of his personality, characteristics he used to be able to leave at work.

For instance, about a week ago now I told John that it was about time he started doing the dishes occasionally. John ended up making an 'agreement' with me that I would do the dishes that night but that the next night I could 'step down as dish-washer' and John would assume that role. Well, a week on, dear readers, and I am still washing the

dishes every night. I do seem to remember that workmate of John's, Peter; I think, saying something about John not being very good at honouring his agreements and I must admit I'm starting to see what he means. Then just the other afternoon I invited my dear friend Lucille around for tea. I had not warned John she was coming and later that night, John got quite angry at me, telling me that he should be told about all guests. I think his exact words were: "I will decide who comes into this house and the manner in which they come!" When I tried to tell John that he was being ridiculous, he howled me down and called me a 'bleeding heart'. I do despise yelling; it always reduces me to tears and I'm afraid that was one of the more unpleasant nights of our long marriage.

And don't get me started on the little battles with his neighbour he's started in the last couple of months. One day he just suddenly decided that our next-door neighbour Harry was going to poison the lovely jacaranda trees we have down one side of our property. Something about enhancing the view of the Harbour from Harry's property. Harry's never been the nicest neighbour, but nevertheless this story was clearly utter rubbish and John must have known it. I think he just pulled the whole story straight from his... well, actually I can tell you from first-hand experience, that we really don't want to go there. Anyway, for some reason he just took this new paranoia and ran with it. Next thing I know he's at Harry's door demanding that Harry hand over the chemicals he's going to use to poison our jacarandas. Of course, poor Harry didn't have a clue what John was raving about. He certainly didn't have any chemicals to hand over. But still John was convinced about this bizarre theory of his. I'm scared he might be going senile. In fact, I'm beginning to wonder if it didn't happen years ago.

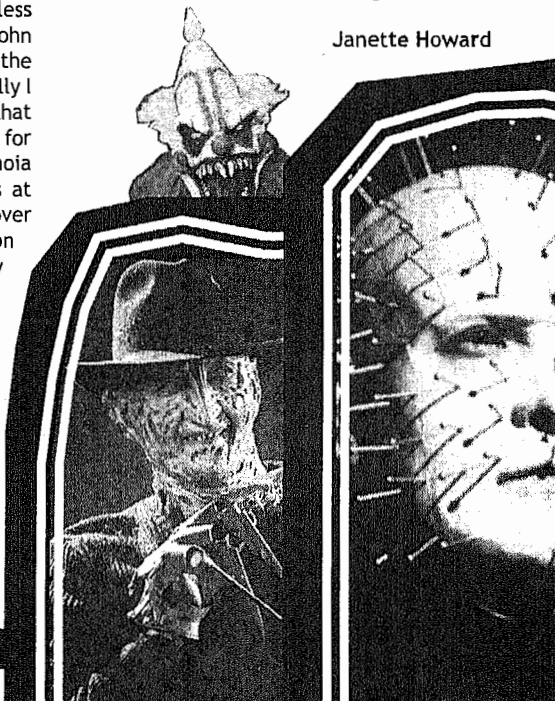
So anyway, a couple of days later, Harry woke up in the middle of the night to find dear John dismantling his garden shed door. When Harry had got his

slippers and dressing gown on and ran down to see what John was doing, he found John sitting inside the shed, which was clearly devoid of any poisonous chemicals, looking very sheepish indeed.

But even this disaster didn't faze John. He still maintains that even if Harry didn't have any chemicals, he still deserved to have his shed vandalised, just for being such a bad neighbour! And to top it off, word of John's night escapade got out, and now the whole street has heard about the incident and hates us for it! The whole fiasco has really ended up ruining some wonderful old friendships.

I really don't know what to do, *On Dit* readers. I thought I loved Johnnie, I really did! But this isn't the John Howard I married. Oh how I yearn for the John of days gone by! To tell the truth, the way he treats me makes me want to trade him in for a younger model! Actually, I met a young man the other day named Kevin. He looked vaguely familiar, and I think it was because he looked just like a younger Johnnie. And, well, I did end up giving this Kevin chap my phone number, so who knows? God knows, I'm ready for a change.

Janette Howard



Vapid? Try Spell Check First

Dear *On Dit*,

I would never have called myself an avid reader of your publication, though as a consistent feature of the landscape for some five years now I've poked my nose in a few times. I must confess myself disappointed with the direction *On Dit* has taken in recent years.

Once upon a time I could pick it up and read a section called 'vapid conversation of the week', something I found a heart-warming and important apparent protest at the shallow individuals that plague our good uni. Since then however, this section is gone. Its apparent replacement; a section on fashion. I'm trying very hard not to make this a personal attack, and yes everyone needs clothes and identity etc. But, is there anything more vapid than the ridiculously excessive fashion industry of today? I'll not make direct quotes in an effort to not attack the author, but some things I read there make me shudder. In uni I had hoped to find a group of people with some form of enlightenment, or at least enough to see how little importance should be placed on fashion and similar excesses of this society. Not only for the betterment of the (usually) poor bastards forced to make this shit (which constitutes a whole other gripe) but for themselves too. Few and far between it would seem.

Yours,

Mikey

Human Knowledge doubles every year. The same cannot be said for wisdom

Equality For All

Dear *On Dit* Eds,

In my years at Adelaide Uni the one thing I have come to expect and believe in is my freedom to be myself- this is my inalienable right as a human being. I believe in freedom of thought, speech and expression, which is why the events that have transpired over the last week seem so disgusting to me.

In the past week I have witnessed students and staff tear down the posters of Adelaide University Pride. These posters were not offensive or in your face; just ambiguous enough to make you smile as you walked past. They were not put up anywhere inappropriately or illegally, and it was done so during the uni holidays. Three days into the new term, they've all been removed - a silent testament to the latent homophobia that underpins this campus.

Pride does not expect everyone to agree with who we are, how we identify and what we choose to believe in. The beauty of university is such that we, as students, are exposed to a variety of opinions, beliefs and discourse - we get to choose what we believe in. Pride don't agree with all student groups on this campus, but we respect your right to be here. We don't tear down your posters, damage your property or personally attack you. We respect your freedom of choice.

Pride is a small, passionate support group. We are here for all students, particularly for those who are struggling with their sexuality and who have nowhere else to go. We do not discriminate because we know all too well what it is like. So if you see someone tearing down our posters, stop them. Defend our right to be full and equal members of this student community, regardless of your personal opinion. We are not going anywhere, and we will not be intimidated in the one space we consider it fair to express ourselves in.

For questions, more info or to condemn us all to hell, email adelaideuniversitypride@hotmail.com

KD
President
Adelaide University Pride

Kyle Sandilands Bites Back

Dear Editors,

I wanted to congratulate you all on the fine publication that has been *On Dit* for 2008! As the student radio director, it's been great working with you three in representing student media for the uni and I'm glad we worked together campaigning for the future. Student media had an unsure future when we came into our positions late last year, but in the end it's been a pretty good year.

I think one of our biggest achievements would have to be getting "student media" mentioned a number of times in this year's election policy statements! It seems that people DO care about student media - Even student politicians!

I thought I might take this chance to thank my student radio people as well, who have done such a stellar job this year. You have all come such a long way in such a short time and I really think you've made the best student radio we've heard in years. Thank you all for an awesome student radio drinks night (I'm still recovering, and I think the Ed Castle want their vomit filled jug back...) and we'll have to party down the end of the year in style.

I must admit, when I first started dealing with student politicians, I was a little unsure of their motives. In the end, it turns out some of them are actually quite nice (not saying that there aren't bastards amongst the lot) and the staff at the Union - particularly Lara and Leanne have been quite accommodating and helpful.

For anyone who has liked student radio, or is interested in getting involved next year, our applications will be out most likely by the time you're reading this - just head to our wordpress - <http://studentradio.wordpress.com> to find out how you can get involved, and you can always email us at studentradio@live.com.au

So once again - Nat, Cat and Mike - thank you for a wonderful year, even if you did start the year by comparing me to Kyle Sandilands, I still love you all. Good luck to the 2009 *On Dit* team - As for student radio, I'll be back next year with Susan Mi and Fletcher Ross O'Leary as co-directors - We're going to have our best year yet!

Jonathan Brown
Student Radio Director '08



THE FIRST ANNUAL ON DIT AWARDS "THE PROOFIES"



Best office entertainment:

Melanie Bartel and Youtube.
That is all.

Office Pet:

Modigliana; the unwanted rat.

Dishonourable mention:

Our food subbie that had teamed with Hannah Frank at the start of the year. She came into our interviews full of confidence and excitement at the Adelaide food scene's year ahead and then vanished without a trace. She was so dodgy that no one can ever remember her name.
Good luck wherever you are.

The late submitter:

- Ben Henschke
- Jake Wishart

In a strong field of two, Jake easily passes Benji due to the fact that Jake never bribed us with food, cider and good times.
Kudos to you Mr Henschke.

Over-excited subbie!!!!!!!!!!!!!!:

Jenifer Varzaly for her general use of exclamation marks!!! Woo!!!!!! Writing the fashion section, who have thunk it!?!?!?

Most interesting late recruit:

Joe Roberts is in this field all by himself. If you haven't checked out XOR or Tech, seriously, do. Funny guy too.

Biggest Whingers:

As much as it would be great to sit here on our collective high horses paying out all and sundry, we have decided that this year the whinging award is a one horse race, won by none other than us, the ON DIT EDITORS. We have all the relevant Uni staff member's numbers on our wall to call at the drop of a hat whenever we feel even slightly miffed. And don't for a second think we didn't take it upon ourselves to do just that. Special mention to clubs who have plotted the *On Dit* office move all year (but thanks for inviting us to your dinner - we were very boozey.)

Biggest office raider:

Kudos to Vincent Coleman of film sub-editor fame. Our sherbie bowl has never been lower, our dodgy left over stocks of alcohol have never been so rank and missing and our freebies never taken so quickly. Being a Uni student living out of home...can you really blame him though?

Most efficient subbies:

- Mills & Boon
- David Kaczan

- Barbara "The Klomper" Klompenhouwer
We don't know what we would have done without our fantastic Millsie and B roping in all the music content, organising the various contributors, dealing with not only the record labels but also Natty for their layout duties. Amazing stuff girls. Barbara and David also get a mention due to their ability to have their articles in our inbox every deadline right on time. David even managed to submit an article from an overseas trip before many of our LOCAL subbies.

Most annoying office drop-in:

Lavinia our dearly beloved AUU president takes the cake. We always knew something was up if Livvy popped her head into the ol' Lady Symon building. If it wasn't something Mike or Nat had written that displeased her it was our dodgy distribution efforts. And yes Lavinia you can use the computers anytime you want.

Subbies who submit articles with the least need for proofing:

Lauren Sutter, our illusive visual arts subbie (funnily enough, someone involved with a visual medium and yet is rarely seen!), submits some of the best-written articles that hardly cause a headache for proofreaders. Special mention to David Kaczan too.

Best lay out:

Although Mike's layouts were simply divine (read: shit and lame), the clear winner for this year goes to our lovely Vox Popping chickadees, the CLA(i)RES; Waldo and Buckers. Although we don't generally let lowly subbies lay out their articles, due to Waldo's past editorial nous and Buckers' overflowing creativity, there was no other way. Check out the Nemesis edition for their best effort ever.

Arch Nemesis Award:

Aaron "Don't you know what a hang nail is!?" MacDonald
The ex-Entropy editor turned martyr left his post as editor after an edition of their "Urban Lifestyle Magazine" was banned at UniChina....err... I mean UniSA due to the "inappropriate" cover. Good on Aaron for objecting to censorship, but his parting editorial reinforced the chip on the shoulders UniSA has in regards to The University of Adelaide and *On Dit*. The whole article was a tirade against *On Dit* and our Union. What a nemesis!

Favourite AUU worker:

- David Coluccio
- Kym :o)
- Lara Mieszuk
- Marissa Lumasag
- Nadine

Between David's rat catching and computer upgrading skills to Kym printing thousands of proofs with a smile. Then we have Lara's general dealings with shitty advertisers and Marissa fulfilling all our officey requests. Lastly, Nadine was our first ever point of contact with the Union and our first edition's person of the week (unpublished of course). We love you all.. so it's a dead heat here.

Controversy for 2008:

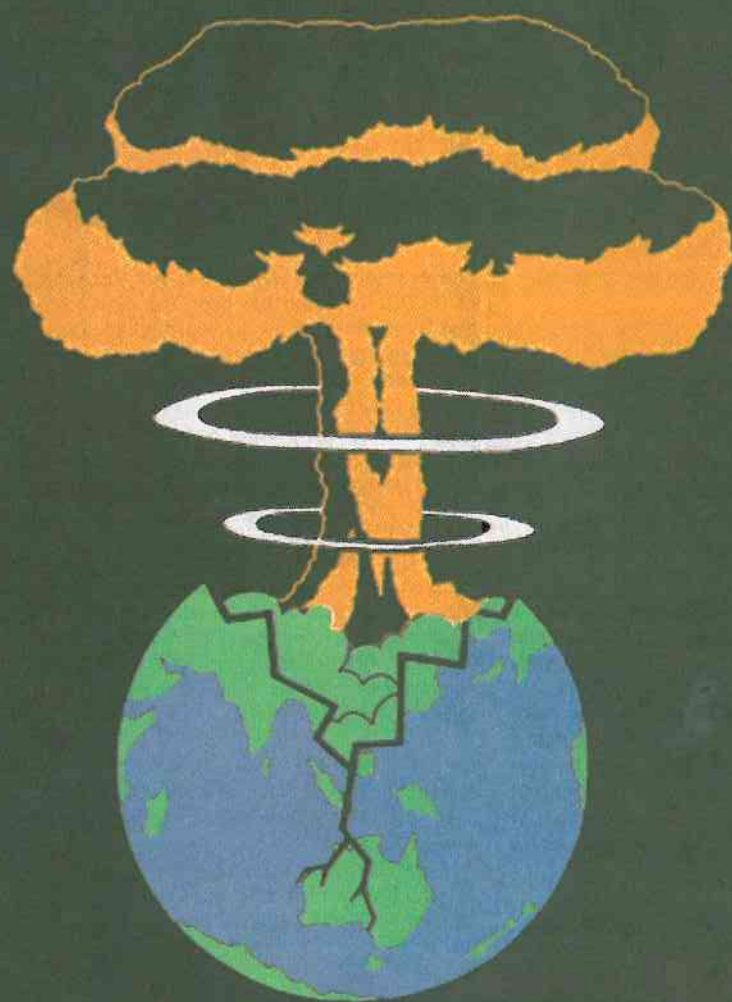
- Save Student Media Campaign
- *On Dit* Editors V The Prez's Column
The year started with Student Radio and *On Dit* banding together to make sure that student media didn't get the arse end of the University's funding deal. Fortunately we managed to receive funding for all our editions (no honoraria though, which is ridiculous to say the least). But we think this award can't be topped by the constant jibes between the editors and Lavinia in the early stages of the President's columns. Check out our earlier editions if you want to know what we are referring to.

END OF THE WORLD

official end of exams party

Thursday 20th November

HQ complex, 8 til late



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base spirits: **\$4**

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schooners: **\$2**

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Nursing, Arts, Engineering, and
the rest...**EVERYONE WELCOME**
(even if you don't have exams,
or don't go to uni...!)

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

REMINISCING THE YEAR THAT WAS

LITTLE DID WE KNOW WHAT WE GOT OURSELVES INTO BUT TWELVE EDITIONS, ONE BILLION HOURS AND ELEVEN COLLECTIVE KILOS LATER, WE'RE AT THE END OF THE JOURNEY THEREFORE WE'RE ENTITLED TO HAVE A GOOD OL BITCH ABOUT EVERYTHING WE'VE EXPERIENCED, AND YOU'LL PROBABLY READ IT.

PHAT NATTY

On Dit takes over your life. In the theme of Horror, I will mention some of the cons: I've put on a considerable amount of weight, especially on ze ass, because I'm sitting on it so much - but in a productive way. I've eaten meals from the vending machines, become addicted to drinks containing taurine, sprouted acne, sat in rat poo and plotted the deaths of some subbies. Okay. The rest of this editorial will focus on the pros. You may proceed.

In the beginning, the notion of running something that so many people would read was exciting and daunting. However, it probably wasn't as daunting as tackling this task in a team that includes my friend Michael. The reason being that I cracked a very public tantie at him one year previously, in a café beside the Fontana di Trevi in Rome. Had you asked me then if I would spend a whole year sitting next to him for hours on end, I would have told you to go choke on your gelato.

I'm not going to say that I find it surprising, but we have come out the dearest of friends to the point where we burp in unison. I don't believe I enjoy myself more than when we're paying the shit out of each other. He can infuriate me to tears or make me laugh till I wee a little. And no, we're not dating - thank yup! I don't know what I'll do when he goes overseas for a year - he's the only one I know that can turn a quick phone call into a full analysis of some minute topic. I guess I'll have more time on my hands and a cheaper phone bill.

Dear, dear Cat. I met you two years ago on a steamy day in the Exeter to discuss our vox pop pages. Little did we know what we'd become.

The three of us have worked so hard together this year to keep *On Dit* around. Fighting for funding with radio sidekick Jonathan Brown and finally getting some computers and a server that's a noughties model. I feel like we've achieved so much, producing some kick ass papers, never without some mistake or the other but always with lots of attitude and each one with a little piece of ourselves. I'll never forget this amazing year we've shared where I spent more time with you than my family or boyfriend or even best friend, but I wouldn't change one moment

- except for maybe when I witnessed THE RAT who we lovingly named Modigliana; my skin's been crawling ever since.

I never wanted the year to end. Not just because of *On Dit*. This year has been the most exciting and friend-filled of all my years at uni. Not only have I got to spend a whole year in the presence of my pal Mike and continued friendship with darling Cat, I've also enjoyed the company with my Brocken pal Mill Dawg and hot Music subbie/ the coolest person I know, B. The hip kids who taught us everything we know: Ben and Claire W and my now, good and ever-sweet friend Clare Buckers Bucko Buckley. It is you guys who have made this year incredibly memorable, swapping ideas and stories and supporting us eds throughout the year. It would not have been anywhere near as awesome without our pals who dropped in, especially Clarry before she pissed off to America and Melly who always came in to see me and will forever be my best friend.

On Dit is the Universty of Adelaide's student newspaper. It gives students a voice, opportunities to be involved. I only wish I'd been more involved sooner, because if there's one thing I have learnt this year, it's that *On Dit* is the people who make it, who breathe life into it. None of this would happen without everyone I have mentioned plus many more - and of course, you kids who read it.

I am proud to have been part of *On Dit* 2008 and I hope more students get passionate and involved because there's nothing more rewarding, fulfilling and exciting as being a part of Student Media.

Bugger! This got all mushy and wanky and crap.

Love, dumplings and cider,

Phat Natty Oh
Your Editor in Chief

xx

MAC DADDY

It's been quite a year. Normally when you have a goal in mind it is often hard to concentrate on anything else but your target. Let's get the wanky, cheesy part out of the way. I think it was Lennon that said, "Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans." For this year, my plan was saving for my impending overseas trip. In a situation such as this, sometimes the departure date is all you can see and therefore the rest of the year passes you by. *On Dit*, however changed all this.

I have been at Uni now since 2005 and in my first couple of years hardly met any new people, nor did I care to. Uni seemed to be a place where I went (barely) to lectures and tutes, attempted to pass my subjects all with the hovering UniBar in mind at the end/beginning/middle of most days. Turn back the clock to 2005 and I probably would not have known what *On Dit* was, let alone how to get involved. Which is sad considering this is generally the attitude I have found even to this day; fuck you VSU and student apathy!

Since taking over the reigns of *On Dit* from the affable duo of Benji and Waldo, I have had a constant stream of new people in my life. These people are all, for the most part, people who I plan to continue seeing as I progress towards the ultimate goal of being a successful part of the media industry (and no that does not include News Limited...I hope.) I have also been privy to countless free events such as the Fringe and the Festival, had an outlet for six editions to talk utter crap about Adelaide's nightlife and spent more hours at Uni than I think any engineer, law or med student can admit to. This was all made possible thanks to student media (shout out to Student Radio too).

Carrying the ever-cumbersome task of editing a newspaper could not have been achieved without my trusty pal Nat and my newfound confidante Cat. I think there is just enough fire between

Nat and myself (we have known each other since Year 8) mixed with the sweet and passive touch of Cat to ensure a successful year has been achieved.

Although *On Dit* hampered relationships with my uninvolved friends, only due to my absentness, my friendships relating to *On Dit* only strengthened. *On Dit* gave my friend TJ and I a direction in which to head with our degrees, so much so that we are considering running for *On Dit* 2010; watch out! I'm also kind of amazed Nat and myself didn't kill each other, although there were close calls. Another fun fact about this year involves our lovely subbie Millsie (Mill-Dawg). I doubt our friendship would have reached its true potential without our constant media interaction (Best New Friend 2008, I say). And B, the other music hottie; I always thought she disliked me, turns out she is A-OK (love ya, B). SPP Will is pretty handy to have on Facebook for procrastinatory reasons too. I'll leave other subbie/contributor thanks and mentions to our 'Thanks' section.

So if someone asked me how my 2008 was I think I would turn around and say, "Best year EVAH" like someone from a 90s teen film. But seriously, I laughed, drank, stressed, seethed, partied, scammed, argued, wrote, edited, proofed, ate, farted, juggled, scribbled, burped, emailed, phoned, internetted, facebooked, procrastinated, italicised, networked, talked about hygiene/bodily functions, swore, smiled and had an all round more awesome time doing *On Dit* than I have up until this point in my life. Something must have gone right. Student media; get involved.

Love and MSG,

Your Editor in Chief
Mike Nicholson

CATTY

I started this year imagining in an incredibly idealistic fashion that I would prevent spelling mistakes from appearing in *On Dit*. Anyone who has had the (relatively unremarkable) pleasure of picking up a copy this year will have to laugh at where that ambition led. Whilst many things have not gone according to plan this year with *On Dit* or with life in general, it has undoubtedly been one of the best years of my life. Corny? Check. Cliché? Check. But, hey, at least I got a bit of alliteration in. My time at *On Dit* has been all-consuming, leaving friends, family and pets neglected and, no doubt, much saddened by my continued absences at meals and social functions. But this hijack of my life has not been entirely unwelcome, as my earlier words indicate. I've formed and cultivated friendships that I'm determined to keep. Chief amongst these are my friendships with Natty and Mike.

I knew Natty a little previously to 2008 having done 'Vox Pop' with her last year. However, apart from a blatant love of making fun of homies and op-shopping (both things that I also hold dear), I couldn't have said that I knew this lovely girly very well. A passionate person - once referred to by a mutual annoyance as a 'formidable woman' - and a perfectionist when it comes to layout, I've come to appreciate Natalie's fiery temper - and to be wary of it. Just teasing. Thanks for putting up with my inane and rather pointless comments around the office.

Mike and I didn't know each other at all at the beginning of our editorship. I quickly learnt that his temper could be as volatile as Natalie's, but that he too was a lovely person. Sharing a love for very, very unhealthy foods in large quantities as well as an addiction to *Project Runway*, Mike supplied me with much cheese and alco-mahol. Oh, and many, many silly pun-ny *On Dit* comments/pictures. Yes, yes.

Claire W & Ben H have been two other super duper, super helpful people to have around this year. Their expertise, similar interests and lovely personalities have made them invaluable as sub-editors and as friends. Thanks and love also have to go to other sub-editors, especially proof-readers/entertainers, those who sent their articles in on time and those who brought us food. Then there are the tag-alongs who came to entertain and feed us but were never actually involved in the newspaper's production. Thanks also to our loving and forgiving families and our loyal readers. Of course.

We've tried to be diverse in what we've printed, we've tried to be creative in our layout. Hopefully, we've succeeded. But probably not. The others have said the rest. (I hope; there's no more room here!)

Wishing you love and allergy cures,

Cat
That Other Editor Chick

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AND NOW, THE NEWS...



Ah 2008, what a year you were. I think. To be honest, I had to do a scarily large amount of research to remember what actually did happen more than a few months past. Maybe it's information being squeezed out of my brain as fast as it's being rammed in, Homer Simpson style, or maybe it's the wholesale alcohol abuse it's been subjected to mid-year. Okay, all year, and beyond. My point is, the past few months alone have been intense, bizarre and epic, both locally, national and globally. Looking back over the year however, 2008 has been as intense throughout its entirety. Before we get into that let's see where we are now: **THE END OF THE WORLD!**

Maybe that's a little hyperbolic. But you have to admit, shit is pretty fucked up right now. In case you didn't notice, the US economy is in a bit of a pickle. We all knew the housing bubble was going to pop eventually, and the stock market starting to take dangerous dives as far back as February when Mr Jones fell a staggering 370 points. Now we're setting Depression-beating record plummets of over 800 points in a day. Eep. Don't worry; we've got a \$700,000,000,000.00 fix! That still isn't really working. Fuck. Enough of that now, let us cast our minds back to the year that was 2008. Just how did we get here?

2008 World Leader Retirement

It's the great bow-out of the decade! Is there anyone who isn't shambling off to the global-superpower-home-for-the-politically-dispossessed? Bush Jr. is on the way out (thank god!), if only because of the end of his second term. Were it up to Dubya I'm sure he'd be golfing, cutting the brush and dethroning non-western 'dictators'

until the cows come home. Mind you, if McCain wins the upcoming election it'll be Bush 2.0 (or is that 3.0?) anyway. So passes another virtually senile US president. Goodnight sweet prince, and watch the pretzels, but no cigar. While we're at it, light up a Cuban for Fidel Castro. One of the great enemies of the west is finally passing on the mantle, having retired in early 2008 aged 72(!) due to ailing health issues. The man is as old as time, survived the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis as well, as a lifetime of heavy smoking.

Ah, Russia, the other red menace. Vladimir Putin is technically retired as President of Russia, although getting your ex-chief of staff elected as president so he can appoint you as prime minister and re-route all decisions through said office isn't exactly what I'd call retirement. Still, he's a lady killer, what with photos online of him fishing topless in combat pants sending Russian ladies crazy, and in August he tranquilized a Siberian tiger, saving a film crew from being attacked. Castro ain't got nothin' on that.

Finally we have the nomination for most conspiracy-theorised political retirement going to North Korean political superstar, Kim Jong-Il. Word on the street is that man isn't so much retired as erm... dead. Considering North Korea's policy on the media, this could very well be possible...

How the West was Won aka Foreign Policy

Scandal, conflict and the War on Abstract Concepts continued to crash tirelessly onwards in 2008.

Terror suspect David Hicks was released from Yatala Prison and straight into a media furore under some particularly suspicious pre-trial agreement terms, or more colourfully put, a gag-order. While it may be true Hicks was treated illegally, it was also perfectly legal for Hicks to spend the rest of his life in a dark hole waiting for trial. Thus a deal was brokered: Hicks gets to serve a relatively small term in Australia on the condition that he never tells anyone what happened, at least until no one cares anymore. And look - no one cares anymore. Sweet deal!

Apart from Australia receiving a political rogering with naught but the occasional reach-around, not much else has changed. The vaguely titled War on Terror continues. Osama Bin Laden is still hiding in his cave / New York Condo come Sound Stage (depending which side of the conspiracy fence you sit on) and Iraq is still immersed in urban warfare between those crazy Sunni and Shi'ite kids much (for some unknown reason) to the surprise of the US Government. Seems no-one googled "eternal cultural wars in the middle-east" before deposing and hanging a moustachio'd dictator.

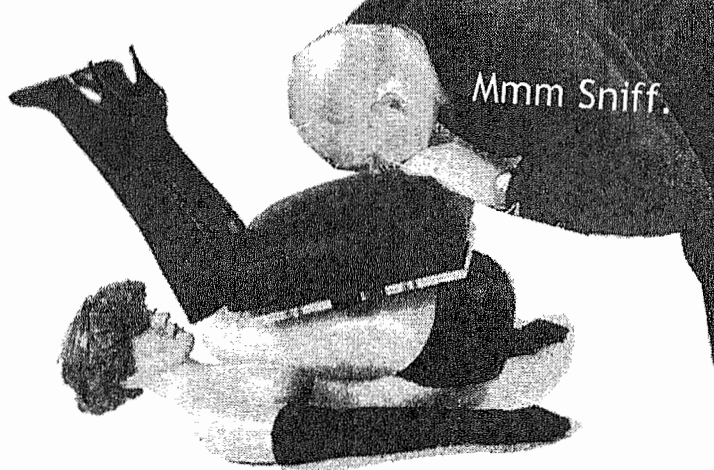
The award however goes to Georgia, the little Eastern-European nation that thought it could, but underestimated the value of a pipeline to US military advisors and ended up being made an example of. Guesses are Eastern-Europe is going to lose a few more strange looking consonants.

Turn Around, Bright Eyes...

Let's look back home to what we do best. Well, what a small percentage of us do best, while the rest of the semi-clinically-obese population watches on television: Sport!

It's amazing what a little gold can do for the public persona. As shown in my last news-related diatribe Stephanie Rice went from Facebook party-slut to Olympic golden-girl then somehow back to posing in saucy outfits and getting paid for it with reputation intact. Nick D'Arcy, meanwhile, went from promising pool-champion to drunken bareknuckle-prizefighter to (perhaps) pool-cleaning.

On a more domestic, if similarly violent tangent, I'm losing track of the number of football players falling off the wagon and into rehab. With Ben Cousins now giving anti-speeches in US colleges to avoid jail-time (Mr Carey to follow?) the lesson here is get fucked up then become an amazingly successful athlete. Still, in my opinion anyone who can captain a national-grade sporting team, win a slew of medals including a Brownlow and spend their free time hanging out with gangsters and banging models whilst addicted to Ice should be voted



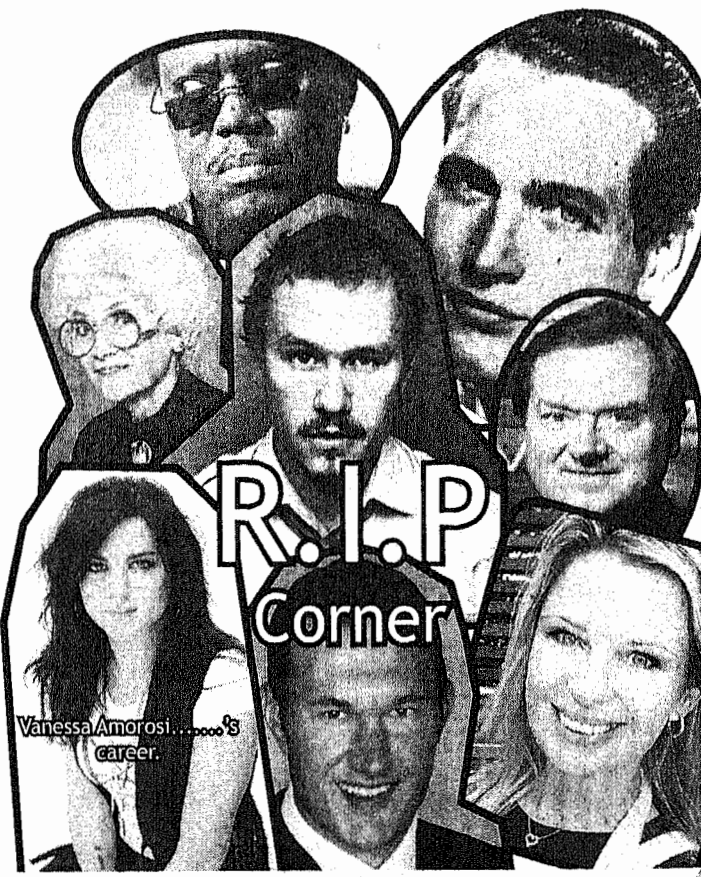
Australian of the Year! Maybe even Prime Minister. At least then we'd be able to buy a carton of Bundy-and-Coke without having to take out a second mortgage.

Strange, Interesting and Modern Times...

So, shit's all fucked up, but when isn't it? Someone once said "bad politics make for good art". The US economy collapse has made for some excellent television (The Daily Show/Colbert Report has never been funnier) although we do have to endure another Michael Moore film, so I guess you have to take the good with the bad. It's been a rollercoaster of a year, and it looks unlikely to stop so let's just hope that 2009 becomes less like the Mad Mouse and more like one of those snazzy Dream World rides, with safety procedures and more sober carnies.

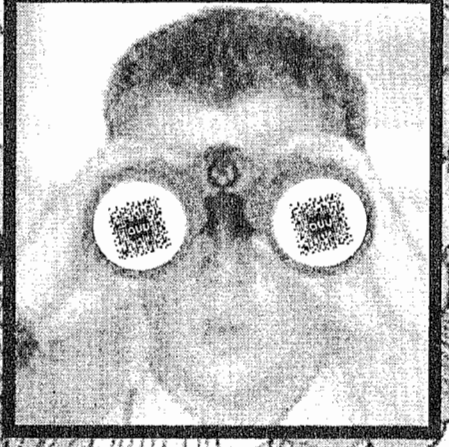
Final thoughts: sit back, relax and invest in soup. Try not to make any economic jokes at dinner parties, I did and it appears it's still a little too soon. You don't want be ostracized from the Jatz and Dip table too early into the night. Have a good drunken holiday (10c bottle/can returns are still beating insurance dividends!) and *On Dit* looks forward to filling your lives with joy and procrastination in 2009.

Vincent Coleman (future editor?)



AUU WATCH

Hannah Mather



Despite only ten of the eighteen board members showing up to the final meeting (even after the September meeting was cancelled because of a lack of quorum), it was one of the most important and active meetings of the year.

An impressive nine of the fifteen new Board members showed up to take a look at what they were in for, and had a respectable amount of input into the proceedings, giving the old Board and other interested parties some hope for the future.

Two affiliates; the Overseas Students Association (OSA) and the Postgraduate Students Association (PGSA), were put on notice by the Board. Notice is reviewed at the next Board meeting and, if the Board sees no changes have been made to the state of affairs, it can result in the affiliate losing a share of its funding.

The OSA was brought up (again) for its dodgy reporting practices, on the basis that most of the reports to the Board this year are apparently identical. Not only does this mess the Board around, it also means that the University will have proof that the OSA has been negligent about their KPIs this year. As a result, there would be a strong argument to cut funding to the OSA next year, which would be extremely disappointing for the new OSA executive that is chosen at the AGM this month.

Having the PGSA put on notice was far more unexpected and was related primarily to the suspicion that an honorarium has been drawn from the postgrad share of University funding this year. When the funding agreement was put in place, the University specifically stipulated that honoraria were not permitted from university money. However, it is believed that one honorarium had been automatically continued over from last year, and so wasn't noticed until the AUU's reporting system began working in the last month or two. It is not known whether the PGSA or the recipient were aware that the honorarium was being continued. The matter is being looked into further by the AUU. When coupled with suggestions that the PGSA hadn't been fairly representing the postgrads they were meant to be advocating for, the Board showed little hesitation to put the PGSA on notice.

A number of Board members have shown discomfort with the idea of Student Media - as the only body with any potential to enforce a level of accountability on the Board, or at least to communicate their decisions in a vaguely reliable manner - being appointed this year. The idea of having Board appoint the directors and editors who have the potential to report on them clearly felt unethical to some of the Board and, as a result, Student Media, which was a

sub-committee of the Board, is now in a strange limbo. If the motion put to the meeting just gone passes the first meeting of the new Board, Student Media will become an incorporated body affiliated to the AUU. It will operate in much the same way, though. The big difference will be the potential for there to be a mini-election, probably held over three days in AUU reception, to determine the *On Dit* editors and Student Radio directors for 2009, which is a huge improvement on having the Board choose them. Keep your eyes peeled.

The other major motion that was passed during the meeting was to determine a more technological and less expensive way to run referenda, seeing as we need to have one (preferably soon) to instate the new constitution once it is written. Kudos to the Board (specifically Lavinia) for thinking ahead and making these necessary changes even before the constitution has been started.

The two options that were discussed were to have voting over Access Adelaide or to have voting conducted on computers in specific ballot areas, like normal elections but without all the paper. Despite the suggestion of a compromise - tents on the lawns from which votes could be lodged on Access Adelaide - the Board chose to have electronic ballots conducted in the same manner as our usual pen and paper elections.

And with that, I give my enormous congratulations to all the involved members of the 2008 Board who, in my personal opinion, have done relatively well. Good luck to all of you new Board members. I will be pleasantly impressed if you can surpass the caring and passion of those who were genuinely a part of the Board of 2008.

More info at www.adelaidestudentpolitics.blogspot.com

***Eds - Many thanks to Benji for his practical lay out of AUU Watch that has lasted all year. We thought we would spruce up this final edition with some wallpaper. Fresh.*

STATE OF THE UNION

~~Workers~~ Students of my country University, I have faith in Chile the AUU and its destiny. Other men will overcome this dark and bitter moment when reason seeks to prevail. Keep in mind that, much sooner than later, the great avenues will again be opened through which will pass free men to construct a better society. Long live Chile the AUU! Long live the people! Long live the workers students!

-From President Salvador Allende's final speech before his assassination, 1973, spoken while clutching a machine gun gifted to him by Fidel Castro.

This year would have been unbearable without the assistance of Passion Pop. This year could not have been unbearable without the assistance of the National Wine Centre, Judy Szekeres, the Labor Right, Robert Fletcher, ITS, Sandy Biar, Property Services, the legacy of the Howard government and board pack preparation.

Random Highlights from 2008

- The SRC getting ITS to agree to a 300% increase in printing and internet quota for students in 2009 in its first year of operation
- Beating the National Wine Centre on the liquor licensing issue
- Getting a call from my Vice President in terror at O'Camp as first years did a conga (line around him, wearing nothing but glad wrap)
- Making over half the board cry (individually, not all at once)
- Receiving the highest primary vote of any candidate in elections
- Andrew Anson successfully hiding behind the skinniest tree on the Barr Smith Lawns in order to film Paris giving a speech on student poverty
- Being thrown in a pond by the Engies (I tell myself this is a sign of respect)
- Securing the AUU's financial viability for the next ten years

For those of you that don't know, I got involved in student politics in 2004. I was kicked out of my factional grouping in early 2005 and exiled to student politics Siberia. Even though I was relegated to the sidelines by the factional headkickers, I stuck around and was a thorn in their side whenever they were dodgy, because I care about the AUU and what it does for students. This place has given me hell, but it has also given me the greatest friendships and the most profound experiences of my life. The Union is worth the fight. Through patience, sheer determination, luck and balls of steel, I clawed my way onto board and into a position where I could actually make a difference. The job isn't done, but I remember when the Union was once great and before I leave, I'll make sure it's great again. So the moral to the story kids is if you grow a pair, you too can be a political hack.

There are certain people who I have to thank for helping me survive 2008 as AUU President: DC, Marissa, Lara, Kim, Chris, Eirean and all the other AUU staff who have had the passion and drive to get the Union back to its former glory, even when the student politicians drive them bonkers; my comrades - we fight constantly but I believe it's the reason we end up with the best argument; Michael Physick for making me believe not all University bureaucrats are pure evil; my parents for loving me and my student politics induced drinking problem; Matt, Justin, Hannah, Daniel and the CA peeps for getting Clubs back as a functioning affiliate (and just being generally awesome); Andres for keeping me honest; the 2008 Board - in particular Sam, Zhen, Jameson, Amy, Tom, Xan and the Activate crew - for getting things done for students; the Labor Right, in particular Matt Walton, without whom I would have far less amusing anecdotes; Rhiannon Newman because she lights up my life and holds my hair while I vomit; Emilio, Fletcher, Kim and Pezy for enduring my madness; the IndyGo kids for showing that student politicians don't have to be assholes; and Paris Dean, who never lets me forget.

Lavinia Emmett-Grey

"Mummy, The mean people Tried To indoctrinate me!"

WHY THE SENATE INQUIRY INTO ACADEMIC FREEDOM IS A PARTISAN WASTE OF TIME

"Schooling should assist in overcoming inequalities between social groups, seeking to produce equal and high educational outcomes for all social groups."¹

Say, it looks like those damn commies at the Australian Education Union have read a bit too much Marx at uni! Such seems to be the insinuation of the Make Education Fair campaign, a joint venture between the Australian Young Liberals and the Australian Liberal Students' Federation. The above phrase, appearing in the AEU's curriculum policy, was highlighted as one of the reasons that the education system is failing Australian students.

The reason, they say, is the "extreme left viewpoints" that are rife in secondary and tertiary curricula, particularly in the humanities and social sciences. Also to blame is "a focus on 'social justice' topics by teachers rather than on hard disciplines, resulting in an alarming drop in both literacy and numeracy".²

The remedy? The campaign managed to gather support from a few Liberal senators keen for some good ol' lefty-bashing, particularly Mitchell Fifield who moved for a Senate enquiry to be held on the matter, as it was on the 9th and 10th of October.

A 'blacklist' of left-wing academics was compiled by Federal Young Liberal President, Noel McCoy, using that bastion of academic enquiry, Google search (dude, at least use friggin' JSTOR!).³ The majority of these academics have a research interest in feminist, queer, socialist or post-colonial theory, and they include the *entire* Department of Critical and Cultural Studies at Macquarie Uni and any academics who are members of the Socialist Alternative party. Three University of Adelaide academics are also in the Young Liberals' headlights: Professor Carol Johnson, Dr Damon Riggs and Dr Anna Szorenyi. Parallels with McCarthyism were not lost on some academics; Sydney University law lecturer Ben Saul labelled the inquiry a "witch-hunt" that attacks the professionalism of academics.⁴ Predictably, no mention is made of right-wing academics who hold views that 'aren't mainstream'; Stolen Generation denier, historian and ABC Board member Keith Windschuttle even made a submission to the inquiry (though even he didn't agree with the Young Liberals' recommendations).⁵

The 105-page report contains 96 pages of cases that they deem to be biased, taken from syllabi, readings and teachers' guides.

Offending the campaign's standards of objectivity are references to "environmental sustainability", "diversity of lifestyles, values and beliefs", "global inequalities and issues of development and displaced people" and Indigenous issues.⁶ I always *thought* conservation, multiculturalism and poverty were facets of the nefarious left-wing agenda...

Of course, it wouldn't be the ALSF without some gripes about student union material; these range from anti-Howard posters and Women's and Queer Collective material, right through to little old *On Dit*, whose pulped bondage-themed edition occupies a couple of pages. The argument is that student funds shouldn't be used for political purposes, which is a valid one (except in the cases of women's and queer groups). But now that union fees are no longer compulsory, why do non-members care what they are used for? And while we're on the subject of mis-spent funds, should funds really be allocated for a Senate committee that is promoted solely by the Right for ideological purposes?

Submissions in support of the inquiry then comically forgo all evidence and referencing, treating us firstly to a completely unsubstantiated account of a tutor who "unfortunately gave better grades to those students who displayed a political standpoint that reflected his own left leaning personality".⁷ No mention is made of whether this was taken up with the course co-ordinator, or whether the essay was remarked. The Young Liberals also allege that academics "abuse their positions of trust and responsibility by demanding that students only think or write a certain way".⁸ Not only are these claims devoid of any proof, they're frankly insulting to the intelligence of students. Any student who is bright enough to have earned a university place should be capable of discerning whether their teacher is biased, and if so, to seek out alternative opinions. There's a library full of them at every university.

So after all of this name-calling and insinuation, what do they propose we do about it? The Young Liberals have set out a Charter of Academic Freedoms,⁹ which on face value is reasonable and commonsensical (though a few people might argue with the pro-VSU argument), but the problem is in its application. Essentially what it boils down to is government interference in academia. Ensuring 'academic freedom' by limiting the activities of academics is a contradiction in terms. Lawyer Edwin Dyga goes as far as to propose "the prohibition of any and all



political expression by academic staff on campus".¹⁰ Say what, Campaign for Academic Freedom? Academics are thinking humans after all, who are doubtlessly going to have their own opinions, some of which students will disagree with. Still, if they manage to challenge the student's perceptions and encourage them to research the topic for themselves, then they have done their job. The suggestion that academics' holding opinions is somehow unprofessional is not only unreasonable; it is completely incompatible with the spirit of academic inquiry.

An even larger problem is what constitutes 'bias'. As can be discerned from the opening example cited, the Make Education Fair campaign has a pretty loose definition of left-wing bias. Biased or not, if a scholarly article were not based on fact or reason then it simply wouldn't get published. That's exactly why there is a peer-review process in the first place (that and stopping people from writing things on the basis of a Google search, I expect). If only it were the same for Senate inquiries...

Ben Henschke

Footnotes:

¹ Make Education Fair, 'Academic Freedom', 13 August 2008, p. 33.

² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³ Josephine Tovey, 'Academics rally against Young Liberal "witch-hunt"', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 October 2008, <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/academics-rally-against-young-liberal-witchhunt/2008/10/09/1223145541980.html>.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ ABC Online, 'Aboriginal history a "live political issue"', 10 October 2008, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/10/10/2387441.htm>

⁶ Make Education Fair, 'Academic Freedom', p. 35.

⁷ Tarrant Tolotta, 'Re: Young Liberals Make Education Fair Campaign', p. 3.

⁸ Australian Young Liberals, 'Submission to Senate Enquiry on Academic Freedom', 15 August 2008, p.2.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁰ Edwin Dyga, 'Inquiry Into Academic Freedom', 8 August 2008, p.3.

*the submissions can be viewed at:

<https://senate.aph.gov.au/submissions/committees/ViewSubmissions.aspx?InquiryId=126>

THE HORROR OF REALITY

FILM AND NEWS MEDIA



Since the early days of conception and eventual mass production of media there have been those who sought to air their complaints and anxieties to the world at large. Often these complaints have had genuine grounds, such as the marketing of cigarettes to children. Some complaints are less sensibly based. For instance readers will remember the controversy surrounding the Columbine Massacre (back in 1999), particularly the supposed influence violent video games were meant to have had on the murderers. My theory is that whenever a negative event occurs, such as the Columbine Massacre, or childhood obesity, or just about anything, the media finger will point accusingly at the easiest, but not always the most correct, scapegoat. The particular goat I will be discussing is the horror genre.

While arguably the theme of horror is a constant one in media (particularly in news reports covering wars, kidnappings, massacres, murders etc.), the more "fictional" horror genre that we know so well through film, literature, music and even the humble comic book is never too far away from mass media. A *Moral Panic* can be neatly described as "a panic over what is seen as deviant... the subject of the panic is usually not a suddenly new phenomenon, but something which has been in existence for many years, and suddenly comes to society's and the media's attention" (Gagne 2001). Over the years there have been a number of moral panics voiced through mass media outlets about the affect of horror films on what we consider the weakest, most vulnerable members of society, which include children, the elderly, the mentally ill and the traumatised. We have seen a similar trend in computer games (particularly 'scary' ones such as *Doom 3*), where outraged, conservative parents voice their disgust at the evil marketers targeting and injuring their poor innocent offspring.

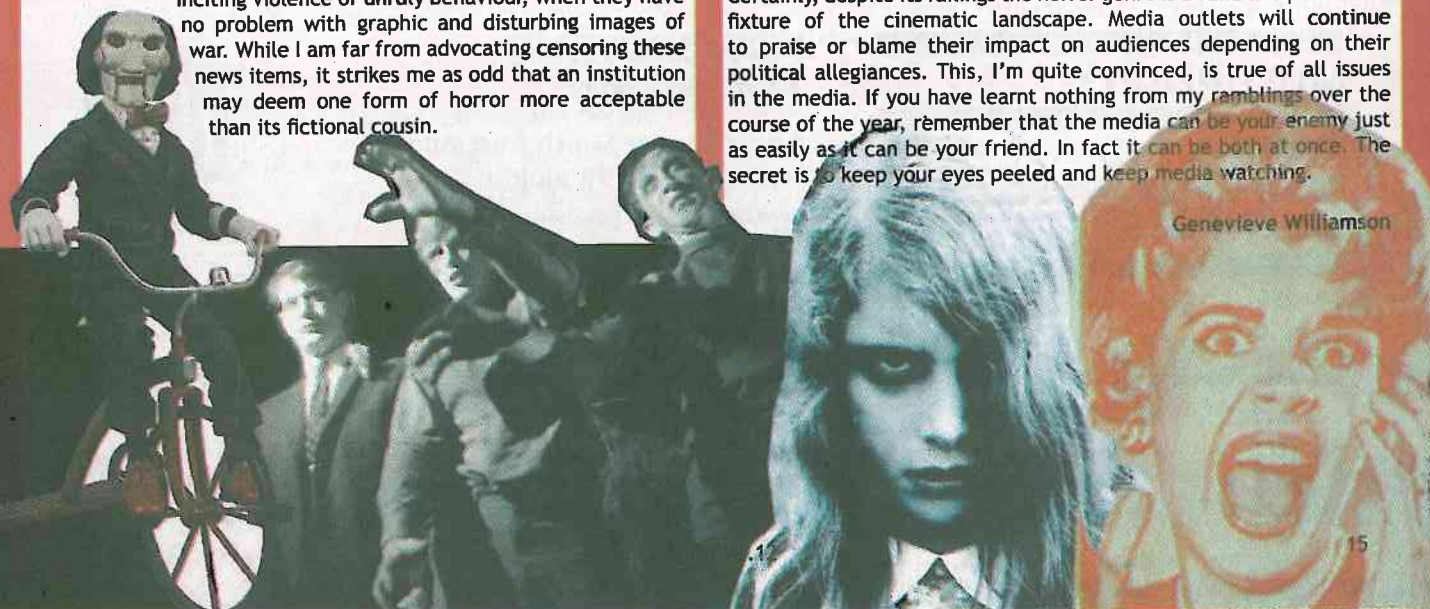
It would be difficult to argue that horror films have no impact on children. Many may dread a duplicated satiation in their own lives, or may experience nightmares and difficulty sleeping after watching a film. However, these symptoms tend to pass, or if they do not, they are closely linked to some other form of trauma the child may have experienced. What amuses me is the hypocrisy of those who consider even the vaguest mention of the horror genre in mainstream media as inciting violence or unruly behaviour, when they have no problem with graphic and disturbing images of war. While I am far from advocating censoring these news items, it strikes me as odd that an institution may deem one form of horror more acceptable than its fictional cousin.

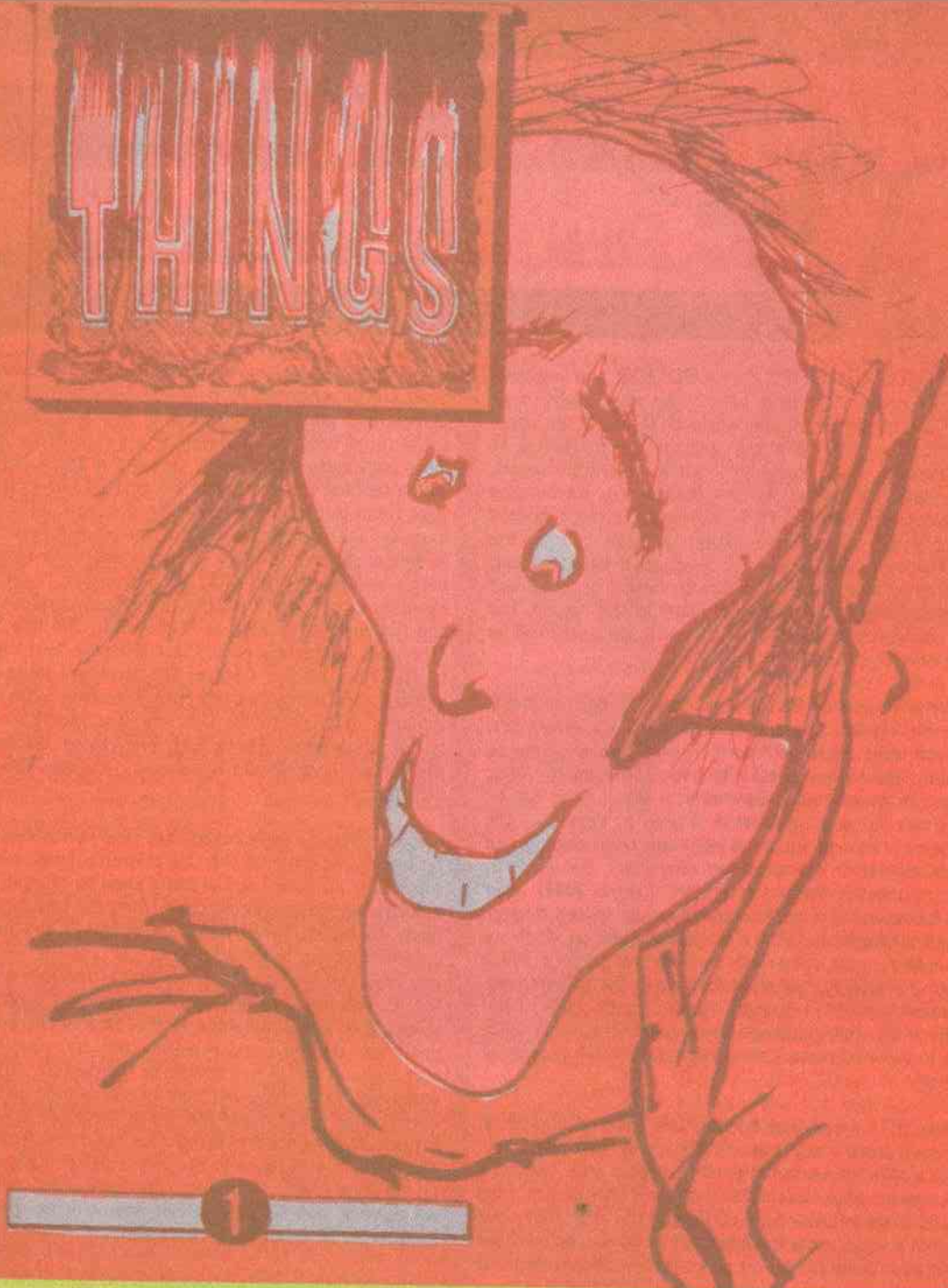
Many media outlets have commented on the move away from the more classic suspense films of the 20th century and into the more sadistic and gore-infested likes of *Saw* and *Hostel*, suggesting the social trend towards increasing levels of violence has led directly to more pointlessly brutal films. One of the latest horror flicks to get a media bashing was the highly anticipated *Cloverfield*, a *Blair Witch*-style romp through a rapidly collapsing New York. One media source in particular made quite a lot of noise about how the producer Matt Reeves could be so callous as to discuss the destruction of New York only a handful of years after the September 11 terrorist attacks. *Fox News* reporter Roger Friedman drew many parallels between real life and fictional destruction as displayed by the film, even stating that "the main characters go to the city's new Twin Towers, represented by the Time Warner Centre. The structure looks so much like the World Trade Centre that you have to wonder what these people were thinking" (Fox 16/1/08). This American media sensitivity post-9/11 is not uncommon. There was even some discussion of renaming the second *Lord of the Rings* epic, *The Two Towers*, for American distribution.

Closer to home, I have noted that local horror movies have attracted far less public criticism than their international relatives. Our intense support of all things Aussie has rushed to the side of our ailing film industry, with the consequence being that Australian media is more likely to report these films' successes in the business than their potential danger to the audience. The outback horror film *Wolf Creek* was reported for its critical acclaim at the Cannes film festival, and for its cultural interrogations. ABC-quoted producer, Matt Hearn stating that the film "plays on that fear of the outback, fear of the unknown you know and realising that once you're actually in that scenario and out in the middle of the desert, and if something goes wrong you really have nowhere to run or hide" (ABC 13/5/05). Other horror films which avoid the moral panic are those now considered historically significant. The obvious example is the casting of African-American Duane Jones in the lead role of the original *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), and the comparisons made between his struggles for survival and the slow-moving enemy of the Caucasian zombies (a parallel to the Civil Rights movement).

Certainly, despite its failings the horror genre is a valid and permanent fixture of the cinematic landscape. Media outlets will continue to praise or blame their impact on audiences depending on their political allegiances. This, I'm quite convinced, is true of all issues in the media. If you have learnt nothing from my ramblings over the course of the year, remember that the media can be your enemy just as easily as it can be your friend. In fact it can be both at once. The secret is to keep your eyes peeled and keep media watching.

Genevieve Williamson





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WAR OF THE POLITICAL CLUBS

For our final edition we asked the clubs to reflect on 2008. True to form, the Greens didn't submit in time, Labor takes a swipe at the Liberals, Liberals swipe at Labor and the Democrats sit their laughing...alone. Thanks to all the clubs for being good sports and submitting each edition. It made for an interesting read.

Labor

We could say many things about 2008. It has been dubbed by various multinational organisations the International Year of Languages, the International Year of Sanitation and the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. In hindsight, particularly for Adelaide University students', 2008 could more correctly be called the Year of the Left.

At an international level it will be the year in which a neoconservative and imperialist agenda is overwhelming rejected by the US public, and for the first time an African-American holds the USA's (albeit misleading, arrogant and self conferred) title of "leader of the free world".

2008 also saw a global financial crisis forcing even the most market obsessed commentators to promise the end of laissez-faire capitalism (again), with leftism - and its emphasis on collective decision making and interventions to assist those in need - having to reluctantly save the market from itself and people from the market (again).

At a national level it was the first year of progressive government in over a decade; the year in which much of Australia finally felt comfortable electing a government that promised and delivered on a commitment to cast off the shackles of continued racism and denial and apologise to Indigenous children abducted from their families, rejected the libertarian fantasy of just whilst unregulated labour markets, and a government committed to the implementation of real solutions to climate change. It also saw the deterioration of any serious rightwing opposition at a federal level, with the central tenant of liberalism - self interest - now feeding on its own and further crippling the federal Liberal party.

At a campus level it saw the best side of the Labor Club - its independence and fearlessness - when the club focussed its energy on preserving workers rights in the Workers Compensation debates. As usual, the Adelaide University Liberal club continued in its role: as a shadowy rightwing minority extremist organisation. It's presence, however nauseating, was confined to irrelevant fundamentalist rants in the pages of *On Dit*, with young Liberals rarely venturing outside the safety of their own increasingly out of touch clique formed out of a philosophically unhappy marriage of the morally bankrupt ideologies of libertarianism and social conservatism.

The Year of the Left has seen many new achievements by, and responsibilities for, progressives in Australia. These include rescuing the global economy, implementing the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, and running the free world. As ever - for the sake of humanity - the international leftist movement can and must succeed.

Paris Dean
Secretary
Adelaide University Labor Club



Democrats

It's been almost a year since the Federal Election. Immediately after the last election, the media held a funeral for the Australian Democrats. While nobody had a thing to say about the Democrats during the campaign, nobody could stop talking about our achievements after it was all over. I wasn't actually surprised, after an election, there is no chance of affecting the vote by accidentally informing people of the good things the Democrats have done. In one sense, it made the saying "you don't miss something until it's gone" slightly true for the Democrats, although I suppose it is only really true if the public eventually misses the Democrats.

To be honest, I haven't kept on top of the Australian political scene this year. Mostly because I've been consumed by my law degree, but I do know that after almost a year of governance under Kevin Rudd, Australia doesn't look all that different. I do realise that a year is not a long time, but I also realise it is also around one-third of the Government's term. Perhaps it is a problem with Australia's electoral cycle, but I'm sure you'll excuse my skepticism about the possibility of change for the good under Rudd.

This year, Rudd has already ruled out the chance of Australia becoming a more egalitarian country by refusing to give any meaningful acknowledgement to same sex couples. It saddens me that neither of the major parties can see that mandatory detention is an abhorrent way to treat refugees, and that nothing will change under Rudd on that front either. I could go on to detail a number of policies that do not separate the major parties, but I think the worst of it all is that it doesn't appear that there will ever be meaningful change in Australia, failing an alternative government party arising. The ALP and the Liberal Party can squabble over inflation and home loan rates, but I want something more for Australia, other than just a strong economy.

While there is a bit of a mix in the Senate causing the Government pain (which provides me with some solace), I'm beginning to question how effective a 'balance of power' party can truly be. While the Greens have self promoted their way to this status, I'm not sure how safe it can be. I wonder how they'll cope when it comes to making the tough decisions, and whether they'll have their own GST moment, a sort of 'existential crisis' that will contribute to their eventual downfall. And while I'm not their number one fan, I wonder if such a disaster will only further cement the de facto two-party system that we have in Australia, causing me further distress.

It appears that the Democrats have failed at cracking this two-party shell, and I doubt that any party currently in existence will do so. A party that does needs to convince Australia not only that it needs to be cracked, but that they're the ones to do it. It seems like an impossible task, but one that I don't think I can give up on. I do not stand for inequality, I do not stand for maltreatment of society's weakest members and I do not stand for second best. That is why I'm not a member of the ALP or the Liberal Party, and why I never will be.

I don't usually use my column space to directly promote involvement with the Australian Democrats, but if there are people out there who feel the same way, please send me an email. It would be good to gauge if people share these opinions.

Liberal

The last twelve months have been a good twelve months for conservatives on campus, in this state, nationally and internationally.

On campus, the Liberal Club has increased its membership, provided a credible alternative voice of reason, had a good showing in student elections, dramatically increased its bank balance and is growing stronger every day. At the same time, the Labor Club remains divided, the factions warring for desperate internal control.

Nationally, despite the disappointment of losing the last Federal Election, the Liberal Party has re-energised and under our new leader Malcolm Turnbull is taking the fight right up to the Rudd Government, which has already lost its gloss and is increasingly appearing lost, irrelevant, hollow and socially heartless. Its dithering over the Murray, it refuses to support Pensioners despite admitting not being able to live on their income levels, its not sure how to handle the global financial crisis, its taken up the ideological assault on regional Australians, the education revolution has fizzed out, climate change will be 'solved' by an ETS that attacks business and it is bogged down in process, reviews, committees, inquiries. Of greater concern, is the engagement with its two famous past times: increasing taxes and increasing government debt.

In South Australia, the Rann Government is severely on the nose, they have run out of puff and have ceased governing - they are struggling to keep up with just managing the day-to-day business of government. The polls indicate their Primary Vote has plummeted and the best thing they could do now is to get rid of Mr Rann - although we know no one has the guts to challenge the National President of the ALP. In the last twelve months, it has brutally attacked country health, continued to waste time (that we don't have) to fix our water security, slashed the entitlements of injured workers, lost the respect of teachers, doctors and nurses, overcharged water users and with each day the economy is increasingly faltering (our unemployment rate is now the highest in the nation). At the same time, bikies rule the streets and weekly news of a gunfight along Gouger Street has become a common occurrence.

Internationally, the Conservative Harper Canadian Government is likely to be returned and more significantly the Gordon Brown New Labor UK Government is forecast to be turfed out in what can only be described as a landslide, no wait an annihilation.

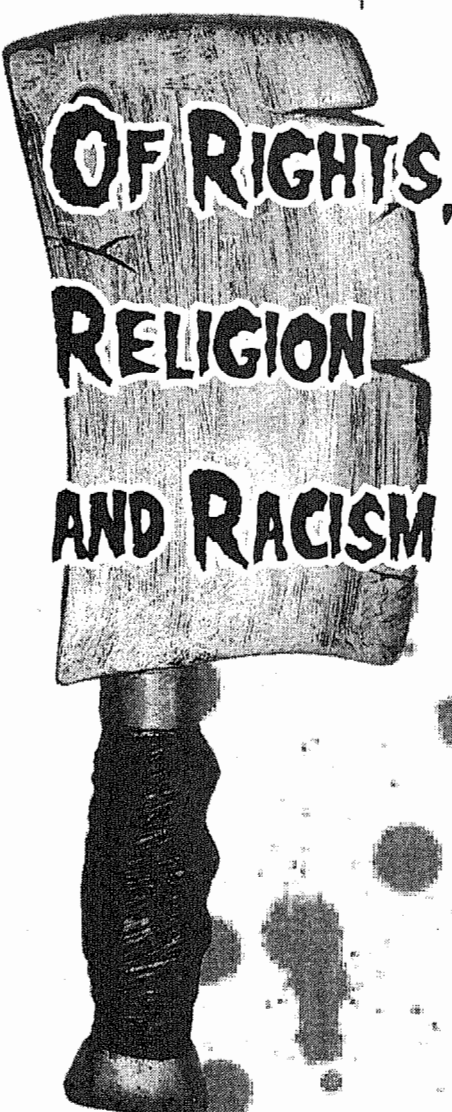
This being my last entry into *On Dit* before I jet off to the real world at the end of the year - I hope you have found my contributions amusing, informative and to the feral Lefties confronting and insulting. I hope each contribution has been read with the level of tongue-in-cheek with which it was written.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Nicholas, Jake and Aleisha for their contributions and a special mention to *On Dit's* Editors, especially Mike, whose deadline leniency and harassment was warmly welcomed.

Later.

Todd Hacking
President
Adelaide University Liberal Club

Aleisha Brown
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Australian Democrats



OF RIGHTS, RELIGION AND RACISM

In 2001, a major UN Conference on Human Rights ended in utter shambles. Will next year's meeting be an improvement? By David Kaezan

Unfortunately, the problems that confront Israel and her adversaries never move far from the front page. When the United Nations Human Rights Commission convened a world conference against racism in 2001, few would have expected it to erupt in flames. Yet the event held in Durban, South Africa, ignited tensions between pro and anti-Israel countries, prompted boycotts from many Western nations and slashed deeply into the cause of multilateralism. In the process, it exposed the world's highly divided opinions on what truly constitutes a human right.

Thus it is likely that the Durban Review Conference, to convene next April in Geneva, will open old wounds. It is hard to imagine

that a summit dedicated to combating racism could cause such division, yet the circus of the last conference demonstrates just how far racism is from a consensus issue. Already Canada and Israel have flagged their intentions to boycott the meeting, and the RSVPs of the USA, France, the UK and the Netherlands hang in the balance.

At the 2001 event, the high ideals of tolerance were quickly derailed by what Western nations saw as an unfair focus on Israel. The Americans and Israelis stormed out within the first few days. On the streets, anti-Semitic protestors handed out inflammatory leaflets: Hitler should have "finished the job" claimed some. The South African Police were forced to close the Durban Jewish centre for fear of mob attacks. A powerful block of Islamic countries, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), successfully manipulated vacillation by Western nations to promote an anti-Israeli agenda. The final text was refused endorsement by the chief organiser, Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robinson, and many Western countries also including Australia. By any measure, a disaster all round.

There were many reasons for this descent into recrimination and bigotry. At heart was disagreement on whether specific violations of human rights should be discussed. Even if that was to be within the conference's brief, the OIC was not prepared to discuss other specific human rights abuses. The leadership of the USA was also weakened by the Bush administration's belittlement of multilateralism. On the streets, clashes between one-eyed NGOs provided a dramatic backdrop to the controversies inside the meeting.

Unfortunately, the lead up to next year's Review Conference gives little cause for optimism. The organising committee is chaired by Libya, a country with a dubious human rights record. Suspiciously, two sessions have been scheduled over major Jewish holidays, assuring minimal Israeli attendance. But most significantly, a move to target religious hate speech is high on the agenda. Whilst this appears to be a noble endeavour, the call represents a readjustment in the balance between free speech and free religion. This issue, the "defamation of religion," looks to be more controversial than even the Palestine-Israel conflict, given its broader philosophical ramifications. To what extent is it fair to mock, criticise or attack a religious idea?

Western tradition argues that rights belong to individuals, not ideas, and to protect religion from criticism is to open the door to anti-blasphemy and -apostasy laws. Last month a 23-year-old student in Afghanistan

was sentenced to death after downloading internet material critical of Islam's treatment of women. Those concerned with the IOC's agenda believe that such occurrences would be sanctioned under the proposed religious defamation laws. The IOC on its behalf feels besieged by anti-Islamic sentiment, partially as a result of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, harsh anti-terror laws in the West and the Danish cartoon scandal.

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights strives to encompass 'a-cultural' rights only. However, when The Declaration clashes with a country's domestic policy, protestations are issued - often based on the claim that the charter is a form of Western imperialism. But rarely substantiated (albeit convenient) these arguments are, there is at least a difference of degree. The West considers the rights of the individual paramount: speech, religion, political voice and economic opportunity. Other cultures (such as China) consider 'collective rights' more important: to housing, sustenance and an orderly society. 'Religious defamation' looks to be a similar point of difference, flaring between Islamic countries and the West.

Yet grounds to legislate against religious defamation are thin, and it would be a tragedy if the multilateral environment of the Durban Review was hijacked to push through such divisive resolutions. Statements against the incitement of religious hatred are already enshrined in UN Charter, as are those protecting freedom of religion. Ironically, freedom from religious defamation and freedom of religion can be mutually opposing: if one is to evangelise in order to win converts, does this constitute criticism of the competing religions? Furthermore, if it is considered unacceptable to defame an idea (such as a religion), a government or a court must make a decision about whether that idea is worthy of protection - a dangerous ask.

Thus human rights remain points of 'in principle' consensus only. The anti racism cause was dealt a terrible blow at the 2001 Durban conference, and the reputation of the UN Human Rights Council shredded. Ironically, a conference dedicated to combating human rights infringements was one of the most overt displays of racism ever seen at a UN conference. At the Durban Review in Geneva next year, it will be Islam in the spotlight, with more than a little politics from pro Israel and pro-Palestine countries on the side. It already looks far from promising.



FOREIGN AFFAIRS

FLASH-BACK 2008

It's hard to believe that this is the final On Dit for the year, and there's so much that I could say to conclude my Foreign Affairs stint. The theme is horror and every time you watch the news, the majority of events occurring could probably be put into this category. So instead, in a totally cliché way, I thought I might take a look at some of the biggest news stories for 2008.

• Presidential race

By the end of this year we'll know who will be at the helm of the world's most influential nation for the next four years. Both Obama and McCain face innumerable challenges - Iraq, the financial crisis, higher unemployment to name a few. I think McCain may also have some problems with his running mate Sarah Palin, who despite a strong performance in the debate has been making gaffes left right and centre. I love the SNL sketches about her, Tina Fey is hilarious. After eight years of George Bush, both sides have acknowledged the need for significant change. I hope that the election turn out is at least higher this year, with so many ad campaigns pleading for voter participation.

• Georgia

The Georgian conflict was short but a serious development in Russian relations with the West. Troops have now started to withdraw from Georgian territory; however the problem of recognition for South Ossetia and Abkhazia still exists. Russia of course has acknowledged the breakaway states, with Georgia insisting they remain under its sovereignty. Russian troops still occupy these regions, and authorities have refused to guarantee EU observers access. This situation will carry on into the New Year, and will remain a source of tension for already strained Western relations with Russia.

• Olympics

Aside from the fact that the Olympics are always big news, the 2008 Games drew extra attention due to the host nation China. There was the heavily disrupted torch relay, reports of the government bulldozing citizens' homes that were inconveniently in the way, and the constant media censorship. Then of course there were the protests in Tibet and the Free Tibet campaign, which eventually faded into the background once more. The Olympics themselves have really been forgotten, with China's first spacewalk, the leadership being involved in a poisonous milk scandal, in addition to fears about China's possible moves in reaction to the financial crisis. In the future though the Olympics will be remembered as a fantastic success in terms of organisation and execution, but also a warning of what China will do to present a powerful face to the world.

• New Israeli Prime Minister

This hasn't dominated news, but will have wide reaching consequences. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert resigned after corruption allegations, and the new leader of the Kadima Party Tzipi Livni is facing great challenges building a governing coalition. Israeli leadership is always concerned with issues of conflict, and Livni had been on the front line as Foreign Minister. She is supportive of a Palestinian state which could perhaps provide some hope, if she can overcome party politics in any case. There is also the issue of negotiations with Syria - will the nation stop its support for enemies of Israel such as Hezbollah in return for the Golan Heights? Finally, the last major issue of concern for many Israelis is whether a Prime Minister would be willing to go to war over a potential nuclear Iran. All of these decisions clearly have implications for the wider world.

• Mugabe and Zimbabwe

After decades in power, Mugabe hasn't been fully ousted but at least has now been forced to share power. The situation has been evolving over the entire year, since the disputed elections and consequent revotes. Mugabe is still an international pariah, except with nations such as South Africa (although the chief mediator Mbeki is no longer President). However he now has stated that he expects more international cooperation and assistance because of his power sharing agreement. Zimbabwe still has an incredibly long way to go before it can attempt to establish any kind of stability, with insane levels of inflation and food shortages still existing throughout the country. It will be very interesting what happens in the former bread basket of Africa and whether any improvements in living conditions will occur.

• Financial crisis

I won't pretend to be an expert in economics, but I think the current financial crisis is a serious problem that will only become worse. The US economy hasn't been strong for a long time, but the cracks are really starting to show. The sub-prime mess, the amazing level of US foreign debt and the perils of incompetent and self-serving economic management have combined to create a panic across the world. This is definitely not going to be solved in the short term, with the bail out only serving as a Band Aid.

• Burma

After Cyclone Nargis and the shameful rejection of international assistance, focus finally shifted to the brutal military junta. The UN Secretary General was eventually allowed to visit some of the devastated regions, but not much progress was ever really made. Despite a supposed vote on a constitution paving the way for democratic reform, the military have made no serious efforts at reform. Australia now takes the largest proportion of its refugee quota from Burma, acknowledging the terrible situation that exists over there. I just hope that with other issues occupying the minds of world leaders, Burma won't be forgotten again.

With the end of this year, the end of the decade is in sight. We really are in turbulent times with worries extending from a financial melt down to a man made environmental disaster. However I don't think it's all horror. Those feel good stories are always out there, and I like to think the best of humanity will triumph in the end.

***Eds - We would personally like to thank Barbara 'The Klomper' Klompenhouwer and David Kaczan for ALWAYS getting their articles in on time. Much love.*

THE SLIGHTLY POLITICAL PARTY MELBOURNE CUP EDITION*

*SPP wish to advise the contents of this document have nothing to do with the Melbourne Cup.



The Dub. Hon.
Will Martin.
MP

HATEMAIL to SPP@live.com.au



Minister
for Defence
and Policy
Undevelopment.

"I am Alpha and Omega 3: What is, what was, and with a healthy supply of fibre."

Canberra can be a lonely place, and sometimes a photo of my wife and a watermelon just isn't enough to keep the depression at bay. So whilst having my weekly 'informal parliamentary meeting' with secretary 'Maid Madison', my door was suddenly barged down by a stampeding group of journalists, snapping away at a horizontal tango that would have received perfect 10's on 'Dancing with the Stars'.

I immediately called in my political advisors to help me slip out of this bombshell and into something more comfortable. After much deliberation, I donned a modish lacey crimson number, which was recommended for its "extra support". I then summoned my spin doctors to rectify the other problem - the journalistic infidel. Once again I had been caught with my pants down, however this time I was not assisted by the chains, whip and 'Tweety-Bird' gag stuffed in my mouth. Four hours passed and there seemed no way this wouldn't get to the public, and worse, my wife, and even worse, my ostrich 'Eliza'. It was futile "Not even a \$10 billion rescue package could bail me out of this" I exasperated in defeat. "Aha!" cried Kevin Rudd who had been hiding under my desk, and he scurried out of the room yelling "Wayne! Wayne!" into his phone.

As I moped to the breakfast table the next morning I was called by one of my advisors,

who excitedly informed me I was not in any trouble. Could it be the press decided to have mercy and withhold the photo? "No, they published it, but in *The Advertiser!*" he hollered. And sent back to page 3 as well! Thank goodness for a bird with plumage resembling Jesus Christ and a rumor Kylie was coming to town!

In light of this my advisor told me to focus on the financial epidemic, which like most of the English language had been shortened by the Rudd Government apparently as the 'GFC'. "WTF?" I said. "I thought it was GRT?" "TTYL" said my advisor and he BRB'd to research the issue. When we were on the same acronymic page I scanned both the domestic and international papers for information. Rudd was everywhere; encouraging the US to vote for a bailout, recommending other nations to copy Australia's bailout, and telling banks in Krakow to lower their interest rates. The man was taking charge! Curiously, his name wasn't mentioned in any of the international papers - they must be taking his advice privately instead. It all seemed very melodramatic, a bit too much doom and gloom for my liking. However having no assets but for a few crates of whisky it wouldn't affect me in the slightest. I smiled, shut the paper, and went to the markets in search of another watermelon.

MAD SHITHOLE: SPP REVIEWS UNITED STATES

The US Supreme Court surprised all last week as it lifted a long standing ban against the SPP from entering America's borders. Incompetent supervillains Dub. Hon. Will Martin and Dub. Hon. Harry Dobson made their way across the Pacific Ocean to weigh in on the biggest political campaign of all - the US Presidential election. The SPP were previously banned from the US because of previous indiscretions involving the President, a badger and some



dropped a full 9% since this measure has been in effect. A measure desperately needed since scientists recently discovered dolphins cannot tell the difference between a child's severed head and a beach ball.

"This is a tremendous achievement for the Party" Said Martin. "Love would have wanted it this way. But this article has digressed significantly..."



Arriving in Washington DC early last Friday, senior SPP officials rushed to the Whitehouse to discuss urgent measures to address the crashing stock market and the dismal ratings of 90210. Vice-President Cheney, Dobson and Martin held discussions for four hours but came to the conclusion that no remake should have been juggling balls. Although originally the entire party was convicted, the evidence suspiciously turned toward the late Andrew Love. Love's stuffed corpse now stands as a reminder to children to behave at San Diego's 'Sea World' as a height restriction on waterslides. Indeed, waterslide related decapitations have





THE SLIGHTLY POLITICAL PARTY UNITED STATES EDITION*

*SPP wish to advise the contents of this document have something to do with the United States.



made and it was pointless trying to reconstruct the early 90s teen hit.

In the afternoon the SPP were invited on a moose hunt with VP nominee Sarah Palin. The crowd was thoroughly entertained by the party's famous 'Bullwinkle' joke. Palin was overheard as saying "mooses are for shootin" and

counter the demand of the increasing obesity rate. The SPP then met with important American lobby groups such as the KKK and the NRA and were greatly impressed by their acronyms.

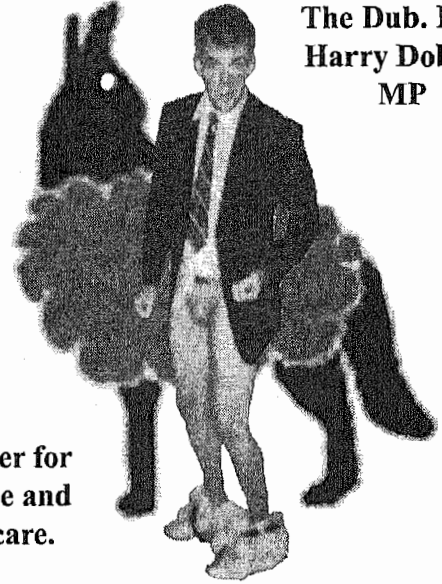
Before departing on a nationwide tour, the SPP paid one last visit to McCain in order to ensure their Christmas presents had been recorded correctly. McCain assured the Party he would not die in office due to an advanced cybernetic implant placed into his abdomen. Smiles were shared by all, and Obama was given a generous tip as he delivered the Party's Bentley to the airport. The SPP will return next year, unless something ridiculous happens, like, they're burnt at the stake. But that couldn't happen... could it?



"where my grenades at?"

Friday evening was spent dining with John McCain and Barack Obama, where the SPP mused on successive questions regarding frozen corn cobettes, and healthy choice dinners, whilst Obama was congratulated on his promotion from the cotton fields. To the SPP's surprise, the candidates left before their dinner had even arrived.

The SPP then proceeded to a public address, informing the nation that their election would guarantee a 30% raise in McDonalds venues, to



The Dub. Hon.
Harry Dobson
MP

Minister for
Offense and
Haircare.

"...Je ne sais qouis..."

HATEMAIL to SPP@live.com.au

Turmoil, crisis, storm. These three words meant literally nothing to ordinary Australians until a few short weeks ago when they became preceded by two other words - 'global (and) financial.' The walls on Wall St. crumbled as they hadn't for nigh on twenty years much as if they had been made of gingerbread.

However, despite the panic amongst Prime Ministers, Presidents, bankers or perhaps anyone with a dollar invested who should show us some stiff upper lip; none other than the citizens of Iceland. Those familiar with Icelandic banking will readily associate them with being ready to lend some cold, hard cash. Unbeknownst to us in this wide brown land; Icelandians have been riding a halcyon wave of prosperity as they surreptitiously climbed the rankings to the 132nd largest economy in the world. The people rejoiced and the population ballooned to an unheard of 300,000 inhabitants early this century. So what exactly can we learn from the tiny nation that brought us that ear-splitting songstress Bjork? It is to go back to the wild and embrace our survivalist instincts. This sentiment has been championed by well known Reykjavik resident Kristinn Johanssen who was quoted as saying: "we can live off the land as there are not so many of us; we have heating,

clean water and fish." The SPP welcomes the irreverent spirit of Iceland's people as so many others watch their lives go down the tubes. Perhaps a socialist agrarian society was the way after all? Will this rejection of consumer capitalist ideals catch on throughout the world? Indeed, who can give answers to these mind-numbing questions in such a chaotic time?

As a senior official in the SPP I was eventually tracked down, subpoenaed and called to answer such questions. Hoping to wash my hands of such decisions I invested in Cussons as I was reliably informed they were a soap manufacturing company. To my dismay its bubble burst and I now faced the probability I would be indicted for fraud and embezzlement - yes; those old chestnuts. Attempting to draw on some Icelandic courage to ride out this crisis, I headed for the parliamentary bar again to drown my sorrows on some harsh vodka. Everywhere I turned my head weary politicians and Canberra's finest businessmen sought happiness at the bottom of their glasses to escape their woes. I thought for some reason the bar staff had turned the television to the financial reports as all I heard was: "falling, falling... faaaaaa!!!!!!lllllllllling!" This however, referred to yours truly as I descended from my bar stool on to the cold tiled floor. This certainly was the bitter end.

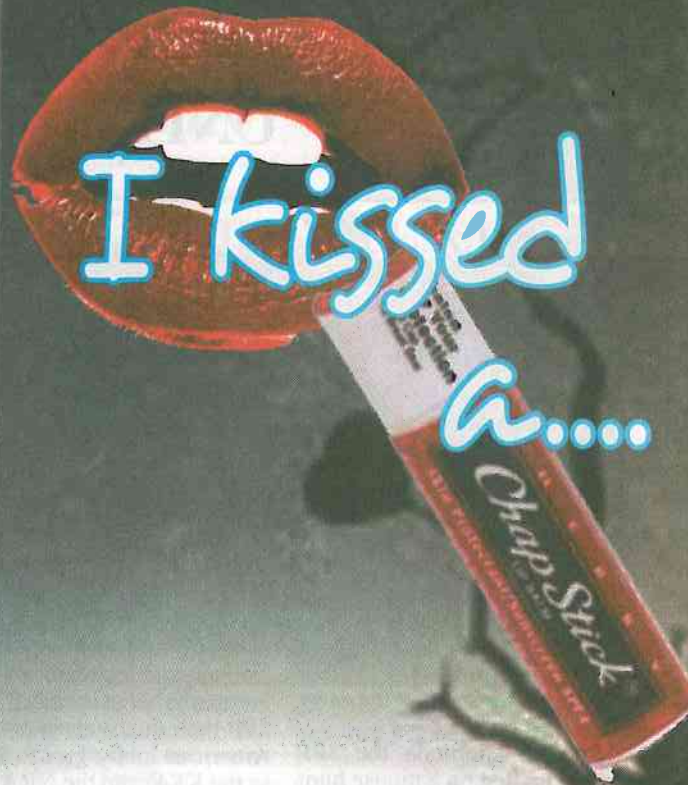
I'm the first to admit, when I commit myself to a night out, it is a Night Out with capital letters. Because this requires stamina, a certain willingness to always say "yes" and the safety of strangers, I don't do them very often. However, when I do, they're a doozy. I find that all kinds of strange and wonderful adventures happen. The only downside is often I end up with bruises in weird places and memories of a whole lot of groping and other things happening in bathrooms of bars/pubs. I call these episodes "Lost Evenings" and once they're done, half the time I vow never to speak of these events ever again. The other half gleefully revels in the debauchery that occurred and looks forward to planning the next one. With Christmas coming up, I find myself thinking that actually, this is the perfect time to begin planning for the next one.

It is in the lead up to these "Lost Evenings" I find myself contemplating sexuality. In my general life, I am straight in the straightest way possible. I love guys. If you don't believe me you could ask any person who works with me. They would attest to the fact I am boy crazy to the point that all I can think about are boys. However on my "Lost Evenings" I don't mind kissing boys or girls. In fact, my kissing on these nights tends to be 50% girls and I'm okay with that. In the words of Katy Perry, 'I kissed a girl and I like it'. While kissing and other amorous things may occur with girls on these nights, it only happens on these nights (so far). I don't find myself contemplating a relationship with any of these girls and half the time I'm sure they're just using me to get a guy hot (for some reason girls kissing each other gets guys hot - they should also know it's really rather sexy when two masculine guys kiss too) but that's ok. It's a new experience every time. I may kiss girls, like it and perhaps may decide in the future to pursue a relationship with another woman, but I don't see myself as being a lesbian, while I know I will be classified as bi-sexual, I dislike the fact I have to be classified as anything.

The whole issue surrounding sexuality that I have a problem with is that once you've classified yourself as straight, gay or bi, you're expected to stay in that category. You can't change from gay to straight, you have to be bisexual. This concept was raised in the little known British show by Russell T. Davies, *Bob and Rose*. It centres around a gay man who falls in love with a woman. This caused uproar and controversy in the UK with gay rights activists, as they believed that this would cause people to believe that homosexuality is a choice or a phase. I can understand this, but I also think that because we, as a society, are so scared of things that we can't label, that we try and strike at things we can't place into neat little slots. I know that this is something that is hard to wrap your mind around. How can someone who is gay fall in love with someone of the opposite sex when they're supposed to like only their own sex? And if they did, they would be bi-sexual, wouldn't they? Not always. What if, hypothetically, a man who is normally straight falls in love with another man? Now, this relationship may last for a few months, years, whatever. If this relationship ends, the man will remain classified as bisexual, even if he never enters into a relationship with another man ever again. This is what constantly causes me to get annoyed. That one relationship puts him somewhere he may never have gone if he hadn't fallen in love with another man. We place so much emphasis on the fact that it was another man he was in love with, not the fact that the man could have been handsome, kind, intelligent and witty. It is this emphasis that is frustrating.

I like to flirt with anyone and everyone when I'm in the mood for flirting. I place a lot of emphasis on personal appearances. Lust can strike for men or women on these "Lost Evenings". But I don't always just "make out" with them. Conversations do happen also and some of the people I meet and say "yes" to are some of the most alluring and charismatic people I have met, the women especially. So all I can say is don't cut yourself off from having a romantic interest in someone of the same sex. Don't allow yourself to be blinded by the sex of a person. Open your eyes and explore. You might find that the girl-on-girl (or guy-on-guy) action could blossom into something more. Or not.

Steffi is planning her next "Lost Evening" to take place around Christmas, so look out for a girl in a slutty elf costume making out with random people around Adelaide.



Brought to you by
Steffi LaBelle
YOYO

Imagine every cliché about travelling. I'm talking voyages of discovery, inner realisations, scaring yourself, expanding your consciousness, growth, realising you're capable of more than you ever thought possible, you don't know what you had until it's gone. And now imagine every cliché coming true and the only reason it's a cliché is because it's so apparent to every person that's ever left home before and didn't know when they were coming back.

Clichés have a stigma about them, as if they're something bad, but a cliché is only a cliché because it gets talked of a lot and that's not necessarily a bad thing. I've only been gone for a little longer than six months and to this day it's been the most profound era of my entire life. It hasn't been easy all the time (don't forget, clichés are ok) but it was always worth it and I wouldn't have had it any other way. To come out of a difficult situation and despite the result being good or bad, I've grown from it, and that's all I want.

In any case, ease is the scourge of existence. If you wanted ease, you could be put in a white room hooked up to a drip with the vital nutrients you require to survive and live out your days, that's easy, but it sucks - what would be the point of your life? Naturally that's an extreme example but it is true and comparable to any situation where you choose an easy option over your own dreams and desires.

For the longest time I've wanted to travel. I felt like I couldn't get on with the greater part of my life until I saw the world, saw what else was out there, what I was missing out on, what I could find out. But I was stuck, I thought that I wasn't capable of leaving home; I was one of those people that said, "I could never do that, that's for other people". It's not true! I am other people and so are you. I'm not an amazing person, I'm the same decaying flesh as every other person, but I've had amazing experiences.

And you can too.

My main motivation out of writing all of these lies in the hope that someone who reads this feels the same way I once felt, and identifies with it and changes accordingly. I want you to do what you want to do. I write about travelling but my realisations and my passion flows into every direction of life. Travel was my passion and I can't recommend it highly enough to you. You can read all you want and know about every place in the entire world but if you remove yourself from your day-to-day existence and experience it for yourself, see it with your own two eyes and become completely immersed in a different way of life or culture, you will see and feel things that you can't get anywhere else.

There's nothing quite like the present; for too long I've lived in either the past or the future, I've only just learnt that. Everything I didn't know would happen to me has happened since I left home. Regardless of how long it's for, travel changes you. It's not something that happens and then you return to your normal life, you change. For either a brief time or a long time, you were there and you experienced it and you change accordingly.

So do you want to travel?

Well, it's either a yes or a no, and only you know, so be honest. If you do, then you've already got plans. Either that, or you're like I was; you merely know you want to but don't know how. My main motivation for travelling came from the overwhelming realisation of the implacable grandeur of my own life, that I wasn't going to be here forever and that I wanted to experience as much as possible in the time I have. I've since found that this philosophy runs strong in most travellers' spirits. I realised that before I left Australia. The other advice I have has come to me since, which is, 'just leave, the rest will see to itself'.

I think the prospect of travelling can be a little too much for people some times, but it's not something you can always prepare yourself for. The majority of your learning and your preparation happens on the road, that's why I'm a big fan of the saying, 'never discount the present'.

Oh, and if you do decide you want to travel and you want some extra fuel, read Jack Kerouac and listen to Bob Dylan.

That's all from me.

Until next year, be well.

alex rains

ALEX'S FAREWELL



HANG ON, HAVEN'T WE PASSED THIS WAY BEFORE?

ON DIT FINANCE TAKES A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

Banks failing! Public fear, no make that panic! A bailout bill reluctantly passed, costing the taxpayer billions...

Sound familiar? Many have compared the subprime crisis in the United States to the Great Depression. Such a comparison greatly irks me, for there is a much better historical precedent in the savings and loans crisis (hereafter known as S & L) of the 1980s (not to be confused with the Australian credit union). Sure it's understandable, after all, the depression of the 1930s is the one covered in high-school history, while the S&L crisis belongs not to the masses but to those with long memories and finance types. The Great Depression, however, evokes an emotional response (*oh the horror of it all*) entirely unhelpful when it comes to understanding the current crisis

Both crises occurred at a time of aggressive financial innovation, partly relating to home ownership. The subprime crisis is primarily a result of the proliferation of sub-prime mortgages (an invention previously praised as allowing poor families to break the 'rent trap'), and the packaging and selling off of this debt, which allowed banks to keep their balance sheets clean and keep making dodgy loans. Some, like madam of the economists Anna Swartz, claim that low interest rates following the collapse of the IT bubble encouraged such financial creativity as a way to shore up revenue. Deregulation of the sector, in response to these changes in the way business was done, allowed such packaging and the associated 'predatory lending' to continue unchecked.

Likewise, the S & L crisis occurred in a time of change. S & L's were financial institutions that had occurred in some form since the 1980s. They are best described as 'community-based organizations' for savings and loans, including home loans. Their assets were insured by the US Government. They were able to offer low interest, fixed rate home loans due to their ability to pay back lower, guaranteed returns to their depositors. During the high interest-rate, high inflation environment of the 1970s and 1980s, many families discovered they could make much more money placing their money in other investments, leading to the drying up of the S & L's incoming stream. In response to this, the tightly regulated market was relaxed, allowing S & L's to lend out more of their money (to capitalize on the, hopefully, incoming payments plus interest), and increased the actions covered by insurance so that more risky behaviour was encouraged, including speculative real-estate financing.

Crisis is imminent. Throughout the early 1980s S & L's greatly increased in size, but many were technically bankrupt. Those that did go under

had their assets insured, but the insurance fund was rapidly running out. As house prices fall or fail to rise as fast as expected, loans weren't paid back, and the bankruptcy rate went skyrocket. The number of banks collapsing was (damn, here I go using *that* as a yardstick) four times the number as during the Great Depression. Congress has to act! A bailout you say? Brilliant, it'll solve everything! Well, not quite, the financial crisis took years to get over, but the cash helped. The government-formed 'Resolution Trust Corporation' resold assets and tried to get everyone's money back, at a cost of \$124 billion. In today's terms, that figure wouldn't be far off the latest such bailout.

Understand my déjà vu? Another thing worth mentioning was the amount of dodgy-dealing and litigation that resulted from both periods. Just as institutions such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have come under fire recently (whose success throughout the decades has been described by Slate as '*the vast bipartisan conspiracy*'), so in the 1990s did disrepute stick to a group of Senators known as the Keating 5 (no relation to Australia's firebrand former leader), four Democrats and one John McCain, who were accused of corruption and of putting pressure on the regulators to be less stringent in their application of the law. McCain was cleared for impropriety but criticized for poor judgement.

The Great Depression on the other hand, could not have happened as it did without several factors missing from the latter two crises. Namely, mercantilism present in the form of economic nationalism (trade barriers erected in response to foreign financial difficulties only compounded the situation by drying up sources of income), and a dogged insistence on balancing the Government budget and seeing to it that all loans were repaid. Needless to say, such budgetary prudence is not in fashion among our rulers.

Wondering how on earth this relates to you? Very little unless you're a finance student. But for the rest of you, it's still important to know these things! It's brilliant cocktail chatter and will make you sound very wise and knowledgeable. Now you know why Obama shakes his head in exasperation whenever McCain talks about how pro-regulatory he was in the past. But by far the best advantage is that you'll be look bemusedly at the next guy in a suit brought on the news telling you how it's just like the Great Depression. It's a novice's mistake, but now that you've read this article, that ain't you no more.

Toodles, see you next year,

Myriam Robin



HORROR, SHOCK! THE SH
MARKET IS TERRIFYING! T
WORLD IS ENDING!



IT'S OK! FIRE MAN WILL S
THE WORLD FROM ULTIM
DESTRUCTION!



OH... NO. THAT'S JUST A
ON FIRE.

SCIENCE WITH GOLDY

**Eds: Goldy's Theme Song
(to the tune of The Grates'
'Science is Golden')

Science, science, science with GOL-DY
Science, science, science with GOL-DY
Science, science, science...

"That's gold...Y!"

THE GOLDIE

PHOBIAS

OUR GOLD

- A phobia is a persistent and irrational fear of a particular type of object, animal, activity, or situation. Symptoms include:
- Exposure to the feared object provokes an unease reaction.
 - The anxiety and discomfort is out of proportion to the real threat of the feared object.
 - Excessive sweating, poor motor control, or rapid heart rate.
 - Avoiding situations in which contact with the feared object or animal may occur.

Although researchers have not yet determined exactly what causes a phobia to develop, we know that phobias are rooted in the normal fear response.

The full list of phobias is almost limitless, consisting of anything that someone could fear. However, here are a few:

ACROPHOBIA - Fear of heights

Acrophobia (from Greek, akros, meaning 'summit') is an extreme fear of height. Sufferers can experience a panic attack in high places and become frantic to get themselves down safely.

CLAUSTROPHOBIA - Fear of enclosed spaces

Claustrophobia can range from mild to severe. In severe cases, the sufferer may develop discomfort from simply closing a bedroom door. Many sufferers find that their claustrophobia is specifically triggered by certain common situations such as entering an elevator or riding in an airplane. Some people discover undiagnosed claustrophobia when undergoing an MRI.

OPHIDIOPHOBIA - Fear of snakes

Ophidiophobia refers specifically to snakes. If other reptiles are also feared, then the more general herpetophobia (fear of reptiles) is used. People who suffer from this phobia are not only afraid of touching snakes but also show fear when viewing pictures of snakes or even talking about them.

ARACHNOPHOBIA - Fear of spiders

A very common animal phobia. Sufferers generally fear spider webs and other signs that a spider may be in the vicinity. They also fear pictures of spiders.

ASTRAPHOBIA - Fear of Thunder and Lightning

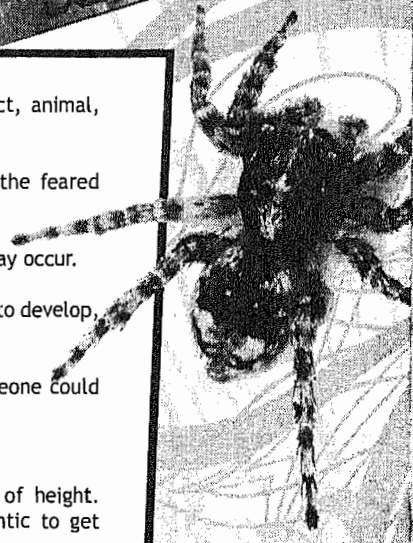
This is a common fear among children. Both adults and children tend to deal with the fear by seeking "shelter," securing themselves in windowless areas or hiding in places where the storm cannot be seen.

TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIA - Fear of the number 13

There is some controversy regarding triskaidekaphobia as many it is seen as a superstition rather than a legitimate phobia. Nevertheless, triskaidekaphobia is so pervasive in Western culture that it has actually influenced the modern world. It is rare to see a 13th floor in a hotel or office building. Many people refuse to live in homes with a 13 in the address. Even public transportation is affected, with airplanes skipping over the 13th row.

-The only thing we have to fear is fear itself-

Goldy Yong





ASK GORDON

SPIRITUAL ADVICE FROM A LORD OF THE AETHER.

To avoid the invasive probing of your unconscious mind in the future, e-mail your questions to Gordon.nordstrom@live.co.uk.

Master Psychic, Gordon Nordstrom delves deep into the aether, lifting questions from the unwilling minds of troubled souls and publishing them for all to see. At the climax of this psychic battle for spiritual wellbeing, Nordstrom answers your unasked questions in a medium understood by all.

Q Gordon, is it possible to travel through time?
Kislevia

A Yes, Kislevia, it is. Magic doors abound on the astral planes, each addressing a different period in time. These doors can be difficult to locate, though it is possible with some psychic experience or the help of an Aether Lord such as myself. Alternately, if you only wish to observe past or future events, then Eastern medicine is your bag. I've lost count of the number of times my acupuncturist has sent me rocketing back to previous incarnations during a session.

Q Gordon, why do men always leave me? Is there something wrong with me?
Sarah

A Sarah, nothing is wrong with you and if you had consulted your horoscope you would know this. Men leave you because you are mediocre in the spiritual affairs. Remember, balance is not everything. Discover success in the world of extremes; if the glass is half full, you're doing it wrong. Personally, I would disregard reason, as scientists seldom achieve anything of merit. Pursue witchcraft and the black arts until the soothing spirit of the occult draws men to you like harpies to Greek sailors.

Q Dear Gordon, my boyfriend has been coming home later and later of late, claiming to have been spending time studying in the library. However, last week I noticed toothmarks on his neck while he was shaving. What do I do?
Hannah.

A Listen up, Hannah. Avoid confrontation at all costs. Your boyfriend has become a vampire. Contact me at the address above and I will try my best to exorcise the demon which has taken him, though it may be too late. Dark days are coming, be prepared for the worst. In the meantime, you can avoid being attacked by your erstwhile boyfriend by serving curry dishes at mealtimes, to drown his bloodlust in the Indian spices.

Q Dear Gordon, I've lost my USB drive and two of my major assignments are on it. Can you do something to get it back for me?
Tom

A Hello Tom. The loss of those assignments is unfortunate, but not as bad as those incriminating photos, which might surface at an inopportune time in the future. I advise you to change your identity and move as far away as you are able, possibly to Brazil. I can't speak for the rest of the world, but after seeing those photos in your unconscious, I know I wouldn't associate with you. I am sickened writing this paragraph and while it is not usually my preference to do so, I recommend psychological help. The USB Drive is beyond my sight, as it has passed into another realm.

Q Dear Gordon, my soul is heavy with the suffering of my peers. When exam time comes around, I find myself inundated by the negative emotions of all those around me. How can I alleviate this problem and focus on my own studies?
Edward

A Crystals, Edward. It's clear to me from the tone of your aura that you have far too few crystals in your life and some of the ones you do have require recharging. Crystals are not free and are hard to finance on a student's budget, but quarries are often poorly guarded and are an excellent source of newly discovered crystals, the less refined the better. If the crystals don't work fast enough, enrol yourself in a bead-weaving course. Remember, your spiritual health takes precedence over your academic success.

Q Gordon, my home is infested with all variety of vermin and I am ashamed to invite my friends inside. However, the idea of exterminating the vermin makes me cringe. Should I take steps to remove them, or learn to cope?
Ben

A Ben, do not kill anything. I can't stress that enough. The negative vibrations generated by the mass murder of these vermin would make your house a veritable Hell on Earth, even more uncomfortable than it is now, if that is possible. You should attempt to reason with these uninvited guests and reach a consensus through which you can cohabit happily, if not healthily. In regards to your friends, invite them in! The vermin are attracted to you due to your strong positive aura. Wear these animals proudly as a spiritual badge of your overwhelming positive energies.

THERE'S A SNATCHER IN MY BODY

BY MR. METAPHOR

In their track entitled 'Bodysnatchers', Radiohead say, "I have no idea what you are talking about; I'm trapped in this body and can't get out." Ironically, it isn't Bodysnatchers that Thom Yorke is talking about, but Us. No one can ever get outside of their own heads to judge the world on its own terms. We have Subjectivity as a certainty; thus, Objectivity is an impossibility. To be a Pod Person, however, is to be different. As a Bodysnatched Daniel Craig says at the end of the 2007 version, "In our world, no one can hurt each other or exploit each other, or try to destroy each other. Because in our world, there is no other."

There have been three film versions (1956, 1978 and 2007) of the 1955 novel *Invasion of the Bodysnatchers*. Very different films politically, at their core, the philosophical nugget is the same: people suspect that their sisters are not their sisters, that their children are not their children. People are being changed in a way that the remaining humans cannot explain, but which their instinct cannot deny: "There is no emotion - only the pretence of it. The words, the gestures, the tones of voice, everything else - but not the feeling." That's why dogs go apeshit at Bodysnatchers; dogs are made of instinct. Whatever Pod People are made of (at least psychologically) is unknown, but physically they're "the same in every thought, memory, habit and mannerism, right down to the last little atom of your bodies." But something's missing; something we can never put a finger on.

Although it is instinct that detects a Snatcher (or 'Pod People'), we can fight them with our reasoning. Technically, we could walk among them indefinitely if we simply don't show emotion; if we don't sweat from stress; if we mind over matter. At the end of the 1978 film, we see an unchanged human living discreetly amongst the Pod People for so long that the leaves have started to fall from the trees. This 1978 adaptation is the best of the bunch, for the fact that it rubs its own subtlety so much in your face. We actually start the film from the plant's point-of-view, seeing dandelion-like seeds drifting away from a doomed and desolate planet before drifting to earth and taking root on our trees, soon sprouting a red flower that is plucked by the invasion's Patient Zero. There's a sinister ambiguous element to the whole of San Francisco in this film, and it's sinister because it's ambiguous. Passersby run down the street in the background, fearfully looking over their shoulder. People press their faces up against windows of frosted glass, and we never know if they've been Bodysnatched or are simply strange strangers. We never know how far the podism has spread until it's too late.

As soon as we see our first pod, the invasion is certain and Pod People are no longer singular threats. They are more like a force; a collective crowd of shadows that stretches back into the night. Because Pod People aren't people, they're a single entity of non-entities. Because they are plants, they are paradoxically like robots. But on the outside, they are just like us. Pod People even listen to music, and in the 1956 and 1978 versions, it is music that draws our heroes out of hiding, to their doom. Human, all too human.

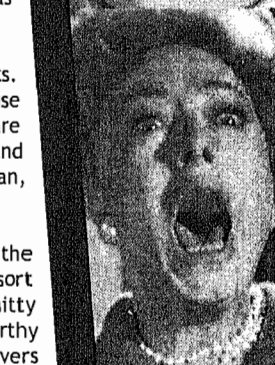
In fact, the only film that doesn't have Pod People listening to music is the latest 2007 version, and the stark differences don't stop there. In this film, Pod People no longer come from pods. Instead, a sort of lichen covers your face and body while you sleep: no duplication; only transformation. The shitty drawback is that Snatchers spread the lichen to new humans with an excessive projectile vomiting worthy of *Two Girls, One Cup*. But maybe that's a small price to pay for the metaphor that this lichen first covers our eyes and mouth during sleep: our most human of organs. Vision and Voice. The things we know exist because we give them to each other every day, but which we can nevertheless detect or define.

In the novel, when Dr Bennell asks a Pod Person why they do what they do, the duplicate responds:

"What do you do, and for what reason? Why do you breathe, eat, sleep, make love, and reproduce your kind? Because it's your function, your reason for being. There's no other reason, and none needed."

Of course, here lies the difference between plants and people. We do more than simply try to survive. We try to thrive, and knowing the bigger picture futility of our survival, we try to leave pieces of ourselves behind. So in the end, Bodysnatchers, or the difference between Bodysnatchers and us, is that ineffable element of humanity that we've all been trying to articulate in cave paintings, music and philosophical essays ever since 'we' began.

Hit www.metaphorism.net for a longer version of this article that goes into the politics of the first and second films a little more. If not, you're a Commie bastard.





Techno-Fix: That which strikes fear into all hearts

If there is one thing every person should know about computers, it is this: hard drives fail at completely random times. I've had them crash after three months, and I've had them live forever. Some people will tell you that some brands are better than others because they've never had one of a certain brand crash, but absence of proof is not proof of absence. There are few things that can fill you with as much dread as turning on a computer full of years of photographs and family videos only to hear a clicking or clunking noise as some mysterious error appears on your otherwise black screen.

The fact is that modern hard drives (HDDs) involve very fast moving (5000 RPM to 12000 RPM) and fragile parts. It takes very little for one of them to go wrong. There are a couple of ways to recover data from a crashed hard drive, but the cheap ones rely more on software errors or relatively minor hardware problems. Generally speaking, if your hard drive is making alarming noises and not loading your operating system, the only way you can get anything back is by sending it off to a lab that takes it apart and scans it for about a few grand, and even then there's no guarantees. Clearly, prevention is better than the "cure" so let's go over a few backup solutions here.

If you're a total cheap-arse, you can't go past CDs and DVDs. Optical drives that double as burners have been standard for quite some time now, and even if you don't have one, a top quality DVD burning drive will set you back about all of a maximum of 30 bucks at MSY Technology. The catch to this method is that you have to actually:

- a) Remember to make copies on a regular basis.
- b) Write down what's on them.
- c) Keep them in a safe place (When CDs were launched, there was a huge amount of hype about how resistant they were to damage, while they actually turned out to be arguably the most fragile medium yet).
- d) Either throw old ones out or occasionally completely wipe rewritable discs and copy over them.

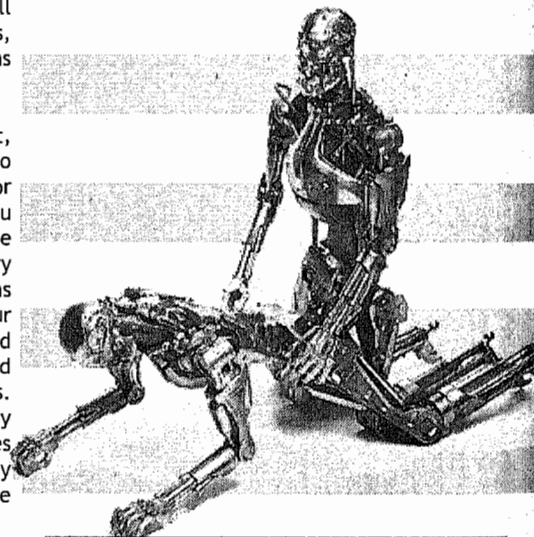
The next step up is those wonderful successors to the horror that was floppy disks: USB drives, flash drives, memory sticks, thumb drives or whatever the heck you want to call them (just don't call them USBs or somewhere a geek/English enthusiast dies). Flash memory has been very true to Moore's Law with capacities increasing exponentially while prices fall through the floor. It is now possible to obtain models that contain 32GB of storage. The fastest drives I've come across by far are the Corsair Voyager GT. You can nab a 16GB model for around a hundred bucks off eBay, and to boot they're quite resistant to damage to boot with their thick rubber coat. In fact, rubber seems to be what they mostly consist of. The actual chips involved are amazingly small. Flaws with using flash drives are that their size makes them losable even while their price doesn't. Depending on the amount of important data needing backing up, one may also not be enough at this point in time. Flash memory-based hard drives are starting to appear, offering the advantage of no moving parts which allows for very accurate prediction of when failure will occur and potentially much higher speeds, but currently costs and capacity limitations are prohibitive.

The bottom line is that in terms of cost, capacity and convenience, you just can't go past having another standard hard drive for back up purposes. A whole 500GB will set you back less than a hundred dollars and while just dragging and dropping makes for very easy backing up, there are plenty of programs to do it automatically for you (Google is your friend). External hard drives have added benefits, allowing for dramatically increased storage space over flash drives and DVDs. External hard drives are not special in any way. They are actually just normal hard drives in a separate enclosure. You can usually buy the two items separately for much more cheaply than a pre-assembled model.

The two types of HDDs available are 2.5-inch which are for laptops and 3.5-inch which are your standard desktop models. The laptop HDDs are miniaturised, so they have lower speed and capacity with a higher cost but they have the added bonus of being able to obtain all the power they need from a USB

connection, negating the need for an extra power cable, which is always a blessing. Desktop HDDs give you the fastest speeds, highest capacities and lowest cost. They can also just be installed into your desktop computer rather than connected externally where they can get in the way. If you do go external, modern computers also offer external SATA connections (e-SATA) that provide speeds of potentially 3Gbps as opposed to USB2's relatively meager 480Mbps. As for the question of what brand is best, the only real difference is likely to be the warranty. When the warranties are all the same, I just go with the cheapest brand. As long as I'm backing up all my important data, the worst I'll suffer is a temporary inconvenience. I've been through the horror of critical hard drive crashes twice before and I'll be damned if it happens to me again. Trust me, as far as thrill-seeking or frugal behaviour goes, it's really not worth it.

Joe Roberts



Send all blood-soaked questions, complaints and death threats to cyanara@gmail.com

For the cheapest possible computer hardware check out msy.com.au, but be warned, their website may cause permanent insanity. Still, what they lack in customer service, they more than make up for in 'fallen off the back of a truck' prices.



MTV'S DARREN McMULLEN SPEAKS TO CLAIRE E. KNIGHT

Ever wondered what it would be like to have a job that takes you around the world and introduces you to the rich and famous? Ever wondered how to get into the Playboy mansion? Ever wonder what a Scottish gangster sounds like...?

"Ferr Shizzle. Nay bother ma nizzle" Darren McMullen, host of MTV's *The Lair*, fills me in on life as a popular Scottish-Australian VJ, pashing Pammy A, getting loose in Adelaide and living the rock star lifestyle without, uh, actually being a rock star...

If you were at the Adelaide heat of MTV's Kickstart competition at Rocket featuring the likes of Zeta, The Battery Kids and Skye Harbour, you probably witnessed Darren's on-stage antics, attire and um...lack there of. He might've even drunkenly called you a 'cunt' or indecently exposed himself to your unsuspecting eyes. "Its part of our national makeup the Scots, eh...is drinking lots of whisky, abusing people and getting naked." Darren reasons. "As you said before, it was pretty loose in Adelaide," he cheekily laughs when I bring up a certain local artiste he'd been eying off, and well, publicly macking on the D-floor. Female and alcoholic splendour aside, the host of the evening did have a few words to say about the triumphant musical act, "The thing I loved about Skye Harbour was that they really put on a fantastic live performance. It's all very well going into the studio and having a highly produced album but ultimately, what people want to see is bands that just fucking rock it. Not many bands are fucking rocking it. And they fucking rocked it...at Rocket Bar" He so articulately enthuses.

When I spoke to Darren, aka Bobby Dizzle Dazzle, he was in LA hanging out at the MTV Music Awards and the Playboy mansion. "I've got a lot of friends over there who are in the industry, actors who are trying to crack into the scene so I always go and have a few days of partying with them every few months...up in the Hollywood Hills" Darren casually explains. "I like LA. A lot of people say it's really pretentious. But it's got nothing on Sydney." He's also managing to take the time out of his hectic MTV touring schedule to pay a visit to Hugh Hefner and party-on, Playboy style.

And how does one get an invite to partake in the bunny filled splendour that is the mansion? "I had the pleasure of interviewing Pamela Anderson the other day and uh, just did a bit

of sucking up..." Sucking up or sucking face I wonder...? "Ha ha, both actually...don't worry I did wash my mouth out with whisky afterwards to avoid catching any diseases," he reassures me.

So how does a Scottish dude end up on Australian MTV, kissing Pamela Anderson and talking to rock stars? It turns out that Mr McMullen emigrated with his family as a child; "I was thinking it was all kangaroos and crocodiles and all that...fuck yeah, I'll go." After finishing school and doing the token Australian spot of backpacking, TV was still far from this kid's mind. "I was going to be a multimillionaire by owning a bunch of companies...corporate whore with a suit and tie working Monday to Friday and have no life and no family and you know, that kind of stuff. I was in sales and marketing for Optus, I managed to get quite high up in the food chain. I was the state sales manager by the age of 21. They thought I was 28 because I lied about my age. It just wasn't right for me...creatively I wasn't getting my fix."

It was actually when Darren was back in the UK, and found himself watching programs every morning when his epiphany struck. "I was like 'why the hell am I watching this?' And then I realised, the only reason I was watching this kids show was because the presenter, Vernon Kay, was fantastic and funny and awesome. And I thought, 'that's great'. I'm actually tuning in to watch this 'cause of the presenter. There's no one really like that in Australia; there's nobody you'd tune into just because the guy was presenting as opposed to the show itself and I thought, 'I want to be that guy'."

Despite being known as the host of a music show, Darren also gets to interview his fair share of actors through his work with Arena and Greater Union. "My first job on television was for Arena TV and I was doing a show called Exclusive, an Entertainment Tonight style show." Basically, he got to interview all the A-Listers when they were in town. Intimidating much? "They have an entourage... It can be quite daunting sometimes, say Jennifer Aniston who carries about thirty people with her at any time... she was a fuckwit."

Darren then proceeds to tell me stories of all the 'fuckwit stars' he's come into

contact with. Needless to say I was laughing to the point of suffocation at some of his revelations. "It's always the ones that you think are going to be amazing who aren't really that great or are a bit of a disappointment...or idols and then you meet them and they turn out to be fuckwits. And the ones that, you know, maybe you didn't think much of, turn out to be amazing." At this point I advise Darren that we firmly encourage name-dropping here at *On Dit*. To which he gladly responds: "Robert Downey junior was fantastic, he was just completely off tap and loose. Apparently, according to his publicist it was double espresso but I've spent a fair bit of time with people under the influence before and I don't see it that way. Jack Black was exactly how you'd picture him to be. Kate Hudson was someone who I didn't think too much of at all, then I met her and she was absolutely gorgeous, a gem and a total pleasure. Jennifer Aniston was guarded, but maybe understandably, she was over here doing a movie called *The Break-up* and she'd just had one of the most publicised break-ups in history, so I guess it gave journals ammunition to ask about her personal life... Vince Vaughn wasn't that funny at all."

Movie celebs aside, Darren's come across his fair share of wannabe rock stars on MTV program, *The Lair*, a show designed to bring unsigned and local acts together with larger international bands, giving them a stage to show off their skills. "So you might have Xzibit on the show and then a young unsigned Aussie hip-hop artist on the same show so it's a real good opportunity for them to be out there and be seen," explains Darren, before launching into another glut of anecdotes à la McMullen. "Bands tend to be a lot harder to deal with... The Killers were absolute fuckwits, but just because they've got no personality. Their outlet is their music and their art" he mocks, "social skills are lacking. For someone of The Killers' size, perhaps you could say it's semi-understandable, or some people would, I still don't think its understandable to be rude to anybody, but its the young indie bands that tend to be the worst...[they] tend to have so much fucking attitude. You only have an EP, you dickheads, wait 'til you've actually made it 'til you start rocking around with an attitude."

You can catch Darren on *The Lair* every Thursday at 7pm on MTV.

1. Scarlet Johansson, a dead sex-doll monster
2. *The Mummy*
3. Drinking
4. Hide
5. I turn into a werewolf and attack nubile young girls

1. Charlie Sheen
2. *The Witches* by Ronald Dahl
3. Being poked in the eye
4. Fight
5. I get my man period

1. Keifer Sutherland
2. *Scream II*
3. Stepping on cracks
4. Flight then, if not successful, fight
5. I fear the sun has exploded



Sammi



Michael



Keelie & Stuart

1. My Classics lecturer
2. *The Brady Bunch*
3. People touching my neck
4. Fight
5. Hormonally



Astrid

1. John Travolta
2. *Heartbeat*, especially the mad cow disease episode
3. When people sneak up on me
4. Fight - stand in a creepy place and play the same game as the killer
5. I don't sleep well



Cassie

1. Sarah Palin on a moose's body
2. *Fern Gully*
3. Student polities
4. Fight and hope it's Dexter
5. A nurse friend caused two cardiac arrests

1. Dr Ian Hall- adored by all as the good monster
2. *Scream*
3. The *Scream* mask
4. Fight - if you run they get you. Don't lose your virginity, take your top off, run upstairs or hide in a cupboard. Most importantly, if you're a girl, make yourself ugly.
5. Struck by its awe; I'm the anti-werewolf



Sarah & Raushan

1. David Bowie's Ziggy Stardust
2. *Terminator II*
3. Rock music makes me scream with joy
4. Fight
5. Not at all



Trent



VOX POP

1. WHO'D BE THE HEAD OF YOUR DR FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER?
2. WHAT FILM HORRIFIED YOU AS A CHILD?
3. WHAT MAKES YOU SCREAM?
4. A SERIAL KILLER IS ON THE LOOSE. YOU ARE HOME ALONE. THE POWER HAS BEEN MYSTERIOUSLY TURNED OFF AND YOU HEAR OF ONE OF YOUR WINDOWS BEING SMASHED. FIGHT OR FLIGHT?
5. HOW DOES THE FULL MOON AFFECT YOU?

VOX POP

p o p s t h e e d s

Questions

1. What was the favourite page you layed-out, why and what was your inspiration?
 2. Favourite font?
 3. What's the best music to listen to whilst *On Dit*-ing?
4. Who or what is the one person, animal or inanimate object that was integral to you time as Editor?
5. What is one crazy, embarrassing or disgusting fact you have learnt about your fellow editors that they wouldn't want you to put in print?
 6. What is *On Dit* most like? (We want similes kids!)
7. What are you looking forward to doing most of all when the final edition is on the streets?

Cat



1. I never feel any strong sense of fondness for my own pages, I think I got sick of them after seeing them on my screen for such large amounts of time. Mostly I like other people's pages better than my own - like the Cla(1)res' Vox Pop in the Nemesis edition. Oh, and some of the covers were super lovely.
2. ~~peach sundress~~. A little too pretty-pretty but I've never pretended not to like that. Well, not since my 'I think I'm a punk because I listen to the Sex Pistols and the Buzzcocks' phase when I was about sixteen...
3. It depends on my mood and on whether there's anyone else in the office...Tellingly, the two most played songs on my computer are by Pulp. Lovely. Today I've been into The Fall.
4. Coffee. Though it's a substance rather than person, animal or object, it has been my best friend, my saviour, my life force. Without you, dear coffee, I am nothing.
5. That Natty and Mike have much more flamboyant sneezes than I do. And yet, mine are the ones people laugh at. I suppose mine are über tiny and usually quite large in number, so they are slightly silly. Oh, and also Natalie and I share a crazy and slightly cruel love for animals that have been dressed up or posed and put on the internet.
6. *On Dit* is like the panelled, kangaroo-fur, circular cushion we bought from an op-shop for the office: old, sometimes forgotten and a bit wrong, but fairly aesthetically pleasing and generally nice to have around. You know I'm only saying that because the cushion was in my line of vision, right?
7. Sleep, fewer bus rides and hopefully less of a (mostly unconscious) desire to dress like a member of the Junior Gazette.

Mike



1. Alright, first of all, I want to get something straight...At the beginning of the year I had never used InDesign or Photoshop (was it not obvious?), yet I was the butt of all 'bad layout' jokes the entire year. My poor creative ego. I must admit that I was the genius behind the Conspiracy edition front cover which I thought was quite effective and eye catchy.
2. **BADABOOM**, Courier and for Natty, *Cue!z* MT
3. I like listening to the soothing sounds of the clubs association's tomfoolery and horseplay. But late at night, when no one is around, I'm prone to pump out a bit of the 80s or anything that I've been told is "in" or cool. I need to keep up the façade of *On Dit* editors being cool, when we are quite clearly not. Special thanks to YouTube for your countless music clips.
4. The bane of my existence, yet also an integral part of *On Dit* were late subbies/contributors. I loathe thee. I'm looking at you student polliés. But can I just add, my relationship with our new computers is the kind of thing you wish Australian law would recognise; the sanctity of hardware. *hugs the Mac*
5. To make sure that Cat and Nat don't get in first, I pretty much, burped, swore, phlegmed, announced bowel movements and crazy diseases (most of which were self diagnosed), coughed, wheezed and did many other gross things in front of them. There's your story!
6. *On Dit* is like your crazy, boozey Uncle passed out in a chair at Christmas. Everyone gets a laugh out of him; he smells like alcohol and has food stains all down his clothes. You know that when he's sober he's actually an intelligent kinda guy but those occasions are rare and most of what he has to say has already been said. And, at the end of the day no one wants to go near him, but of course, you still end up prodding him till he does something entertaining like farting. That's *On Dit*.
7. Getting back to killing my brain cells with alcohol and TV. Drink responsibly.

Natalie



1. The Wedding Page in Elle Dit (76.11 pg 35). The idea for the page came from high school where Mike and I used to spend our lunches dissing the uglies in the wedding pages of *The Advertiser*. We decided to carry on the tradition in *On Dit* where we are actually allowed to publish any shit we please.
2. *Sexy Cote* - because you can write anything in it and it looks really cool. Ahhhh refreshing. Mike, I hate you! We almost made it a whole year without using *Curlz Mt* once. I hate that font with a passion, it reminds me of poodles and birthday invitations from ditzzy chicks. Poodles are stupid.
3. Classics from the 60's and 70's.
4. My Pah-pee who would come and pick me up at all hours.
5. Mac Daddy knows that he can't drink too much milk but still insists on drinking a whole loed coffee and then sits rubbing his stomach announcing at each stab of pain, plaguing his bowels... "Milk Belly!" He also goes into too much detail about his adventures in the toilet, leading one to believe (apparently mistakenly) that he pees sitting down. We also like to go indepth about what our burps taste like and what flavours make up a 'good burp'. Catty is always very prim and proper and usually tunes us out or squirms in disgust. She does however sneeze very unsatisfying sneezes.
6. *On Dit* is like dumplings (from D.K.). With a little bit of that incredibly unhygienic special sauce (but one eats it anyway) and some good company, you'll forget the world outside exists and the MSG will ensure you'll always be back for more!
7. Getting my slim, svelte summer figure back and re-announcing my existence to long lost friends.

Vox Pop would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who featured in our pages this year, even though the majority of you were uncreative and not very photogenic. Goodness me people, put a little more effort in to your personal presentation, you barely had as much insight as the girls on *Beauty And the Geek*; at least their stupidity was funny. We would also like to add that our favourite font is American Typewriter (we gave you a clue with this particular page). Oh and thanks to Nat, Cal and Mike for putting up with us. Although we think our company is always a pleasure, they often didn't agree. xoxo, The Clackers

TV's Best & Worst of 2008

with Sammy Boy Stearne



The horrors of broadcast television were as evident as ever this year, and given this is the last edition for the year, I felt it necessary to do a run down of the horrific and horrendous, as well as the bright stars in television's sky. Its been a great year writing about my favourite shows (I must admit, it was difficult to sit there and watch TV) - and I see it a necessary task to let you know what you should've stayed away from, as well as a few of the shows you'll be sorry you missed.

The Worst of 2008

Saturday Night Live: After another deplorable year, I have to wonder if this show was ever funny. I've seen more sketches than ever fall to pieces live on the air, and I can't help but feel that the current cast are just wishing they were in with the Judd Apatow crowd instead.

Two And A Half Men: This show is simply not funny. The piped-in laughter is just so *Family Ties*. Charlie Sheen is over the hill. Why does this show rate so well? Way to make us all miss *Everybody Loves Raymond*.

America's Next Top Model: Tyra Banks.

Shot of Love with Tila Tequila: Okay, so it's difficult to know where to start. Tila Tequila is famous for no good reason. She's bisexual (at least for the purpose of increasing her fame). She's tiny (which isn't really her fault). She looks like a goblin, and in true VH1 style, is an incredibly bad actor. Now, *Shot of Love* is meant to be a reality show. But we all know how diastrously fake every detail is in these shows. So for Tila to fail at performing in a show like this, we know something is up. Shit, even Flava Flav was able to do it.

That 'Global Financial Crisis' show hosted by the *Sunrise* team, a few weeks ago: Holy shit. This was amazing. So obviously slap-dash, thrown together and overestimating the common Australian's concern with this issue. The best part was when an old man simply asked "I don't have any money, and I'm 65: how much money do I need to retire?". Kochie and the panel of experts simply froze, and the show went to an ad break. They never answered him.

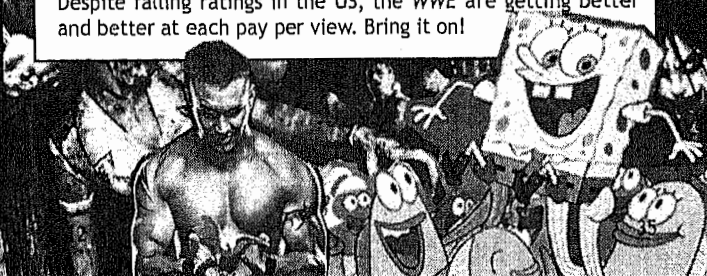
The Best of 2008

Rage: The quality of music videos this year has been top notch, mainly in the trendy section of Friday night *Rage*. Makes it worth staying in every week. Plus, it's broadcast digitally, so Foxtel IQ subscribers can record it and watch it all Saturday morning. Five stars every week.

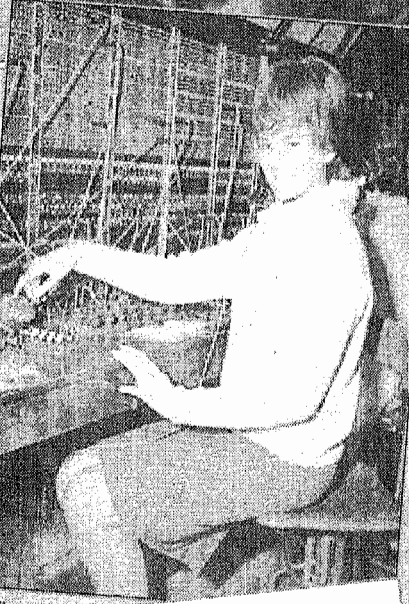
Spongebob Squarepants: This show hasn't let up since its strong first season in 1999. Like its teen-genius equivalent *South Park*, the show has really hit its stride after nine years of being on the air. 'The Original Fry Cook' is definitely one to look out for. I don't care who you are, this show is great for a giggle every now and then.

Late Night with Conan O'Brien: This show has been really solid this year, with Conan insisting upon sticking with dadaist gags and incredibly dumb sketches...and poking fun at La Bamba. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. Also, most musical guests and Max Weinberg are always going to be great.

No Mercy 2008: The WWE stepped it up with the most recent PPV, happening just this Sunday past. Triple H versus Jeff Hardy was an absolute match for the ages, and the ladder match between Shawn Michaels and Chris Jericho was spectacular. Despite falling ratings in the US, the WWE are getting better and better at each pay per view. Bring it on!



XOR: OH THE HORROR



There is admittedly no shortage of horror in this world, from brutal slaughtering and oppression of innocent civilians in what seems like 9/10 countries on this planet, to the fact that you can't walk five steps anywhere within Uni or the Adelaide CBD without breathing in someone else's bloody cancer-stick smoke for them. I mean, for God's sake, it's not like the health warnings are ambiguous or hard to find. If you drew up a list of pros and cons for smoking, the pros column would only have something in it because the cons column ran out of bloody space. I'm still tossing up between enforcing a progressive ban on smoking that raises the age limit by one year every year, once XOR comes to power, or simply shipping all smokers off to aforementioned countries... But I digress, for the darkest horror I face every day is none other than monopolistic corporate greed. To be more specific, the fact that in this day and age I am still stuck on dial-up Internet. Oh yeah, that's right. Don't be afraid to scream now.

In an age of glorious political apathy, where politically active uni students are forced into the shadows to engage in their passionate debates, gross incompetencies of political leaders are quickly forgotten. Nonetheless, the decision to privatise the sole phone network in Australia all those years ago remains gravely unforgivable. 'Broadband' is an ambiguous term, but in some countries with strong high-speed Internet infrastructure it is known as an Internet connection of speeds 10Mbps (10,000Kbps) or faster. In Australia, Telstra has successfully downgraded that definition to anything faster than your standard 56kbps dial-up. Now Australia certainly does provide unique problems in implementing a fast nation-wide data network due to the sparse distribution of our relatively tiny population, as all signals degrade over distance, regardless of the medium, and faster Internet connections tend to use higher frequencies that travel shorter distances (similar to AM versus FM radio). However, this in no way excuses Telstra for their many crimes against humanity.

From my earliest years at school I recall demonstrations of the amazing new technology known as optical fibres and how they were going to change everything for the better through their dirt cheap production costs to their unrivalled signal-carrying abilities. A couple of decades on however, it appears that little has changed, with Australia's phone network remaining an archaic mess of copper wires and conflicting technologies. Optical fibres are still the number one way to send data as nothing travels faster than light and the only limiting factor is how rapidly the technology at either end can blink and receive lights. They are best suited to backbone services however, as they cannot be easily bent or curved without ruining the total internal reflection of the light beams. There are new types of optical fibres under development that may some day overcome this limitation, but in the meantime, it is easier to convert the connection from fibre to copper before it enters a premises. This still provides a very fast connection as the lengths of copper wire required suffer relatively little from interference and signal degradation. How the connection is changed over can be very important though.

When Mawson Lakes was being developed, it was supposed to be a technology hub showcasing the future. Consequently, it was to have a fibre-optic phone network. Telstra won with the lowest bid. They proceeded to make the backbone optical fibre and then installed RIMs (Remote Integrated Multiplexers, devices to extend phone service cheaply) to convert the lines to copper before running them into the houses. This was economical and allowed for ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) Internet connections, which many people in Australia would gladly settle for, but this was limited to 1.5Mbps (although this has recently been boosted to 8Mbps for a premium cost). Telstra have long had a policy of upgrading telephone exchanges to ADSL only. If ADSL+ was desired, it had to be installed by a third-party. The up-side to this was that third parties don't charge other ISPs (Internet Service Providers) anywhere near the obscene amounts that Telstra does for access to this equipment and as a result ADSL+ is usually much cheaper than ADSL as well as several times faster (up to 24Mbps) with much larger download limits. The downside was that because Telstra didn't invest in ADSL+ technology at all until recently, most RIMs can only provide ADSL. Thus, Mawson Lakes was actually stuck in the past from its very beginning.

This raises concerns about Labor's plan to bring Australian Internet into the future. Throughout the election period they claimed that they would install fibre-optics up to all of the nodes (points at which backbone connections are divided into individual connections, eg. RIMs) throughout Australia. Therefore Internet and phone signals would be carried with minimal degradation close enough to the vast majority of Australian homes and businesses that all the pre-existing copper connections from the nodes would be short enough to provide upper ADSL2+ speeds, without the vastly increased expenses of replacing individual connections to every home and business. An admirable plan, but as it seems to rely on parts of the existing Telstra network, one must wonder if all nodes are going to be upgraded in order to be compatible with ADSL2+. The network is to be open to all Internet and phone providers at least, so we should be able to look forward to drastic drops in Internet plan prices, that is, once we actually see anything happen towards this goal. I haven't really heard a thing since the election, except for just the other day when the Government suggested they wanted to spend the \$20 billion fund set aside for this purpose to protect the Australian economy from recent turmoil. Talk about a lack of priorities. Who gives a damn about some economy? I need my broadband! I've got so many games sitting on my shelf that have been waiting *years* just so I can play the best part of them. I'm pretty sure getting their arse into gear with the whole FTTN (Fibre to the node) thing would strengthen the economy anyway.

In the USA (which is actually far from the world's leader in Internet implementation), it is currently the norm for Internet plans to be unlimited. Not as the term is used in Australia where upon reaching a certain download/upload limit your connection is slowed down to approximately dial-up speeds, but *actually* unlimited. This is in even further contrast to common plans in Australia where you receive a pitiful allowance, such as 200MB, that you could easily use up on dial-up, let alone a fast, always-on connection, and then charge a nominal sum for every *megabyte* you go over. This can easily result in outrageous bills and yet it is a scam commonly used by Telstra as well as a handful of other ISPs. Telstra's main tactic is to offer a special price for a limited time that hides their actual horrifying regular prices, but only if you sign up for a several-year contract that locks you in long after you realise you've been taken for a very expensive ride. Being the most identifiable, and therefore "safest" phone and Internet company to the average person, they commonly rely on the relative technological ignorance of these people to suck them in. None of the ADSL plans offered by Telstra are remotely competitive, and their 3G wireless plans are several times worse by an order of magnitude, reading like a very bad joke. Other 3G ISPs offer wireless plans that are actually *cheaper* and much better value than Telstra's ADSL plans. Naturally, Telstra show no more compassion to "competing" businesses forced to pay whatever price demanded of them for access to their equipment and network. So, like the only strip club in a mining town built on swamplands, Australia's Internet status continues to stagnate while costing everyone a fortune. (Okay, that metaphor was a bit of a stretch, but I reckon I made it work). And that's if you're lucky enough to even get it.

My family waited for years for our local phone exchange to be upgraded to ADSL under the Australian Broadband Guarantee with our neighbours being wired up the whole time due to their enviable luck to be on the neighbouring exchange. Then, it was finally upgraded and turned on...For one whole day, at which point the Broadband Guarantee funding ran out and Telstra decided to hold a whole bunch of exchanges hostage for a couple of years until they got "their" money. So we had to weather that until finally the precious day came when we could order ourselves an expensive corner of Heaven. We signed up with Adam Internet, an SA-based ISP that has installed a large number ADSL2+ DSLAMs (Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexer) on telephone exchanges, allowing them to provide the cheapest Internet plans around. It was around then that Heaven turned into Hell with a never-ending stream of back-and-forth between Adam and Telstra as to why the hell our modem wasn't getting any signal. Apparently Telstra shouldn't have approved our line for ADSL as we lived way too far away from the exchange, but it was apparently easier to admit this after swallowing up around \$500 in accumulated fees and expenses. Bottom line: If trick-or-treating ever takes off in Australia, I'm dressing up as Telstra's CEO, 'Sol'. I can't imagine a costume that would invoke more horror in the average Australian than your average vampire.

Joe Roberts

Looking for expert help with broadband choices and issues? Head to <http://whirlpool.net.au/>, helping frustrated Australians (and potential XOR rebels) for years.





Performing Arts 2009 Preview

Performing Arts sub-editor Edward Joyner surveys what's on offer in 2009 from the big players in the performing arts scene..

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Imogen Cooper, the ASO, Piers Lane, Simone Young and Marc-André Hamelin are among the big names featured in the 2009 Adelaide Symphony Orchestra season. In addition to the star attractions, the orchestra and its Chief Conductor Arvo Volmer (who has just signed on for another term - great news!) also confirmed that the ASO will continue its Mahler symphony cycle in 2009, performing Mahler's first and fourth symphonies as part of the Master Series. It was also revealed that Volmer, who was appointed Chief Conductor in 2004, will conduct eight of the twelve Master Series concerts as well as two of the ASO's Gala concerts - i.e. "blockbusters" - and apparently one of the orchestra's popular Showcase performances, too. This is great news, because everyone agrees that Volmer is a great conductor. The ASO's search for a concertmaster is heating up too, with some impressive candidates rumoured to be in the running.

The Master Series opens with Mahler's Titan symphony, in a concert also featuring Paganini's virtuosic Violin Concerto No. 1. Australian works punctuate the season more obviously than in previous years, with works by Nigel Westlake, Ross Edwards, Carl Vine, Matthew Hindson, Richard Meale and Peter Sculthorpe making appearances. Of course, the classics are all there too, and audiences will be treated to Elgar's 'Enigma' Variations, Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 'Pathétique' and Piano Concerto No. 1, amongst others. For those looking for something less popular, there are relatively unknown works from the Baltic States, Walton's Symphony No. 1 and a smattering of Prokofiev.

The Gala Series (which features the much-publicised José Carreras concert) also includes a performance of Handel's Messiah, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the first performance in South Australia, Verdi's Requiem (which is a must see event featuring the combined forces of the Adelaide Symphony Chorus and Brisbane Chorale) and a feast of Saint-Saëns, Rachmaninov and Brahms featuring the husband and wife team of Pinchas Zukerman (violin) and Amanda Forsyth (cello). The Showcase Series is back, and features the usual mix of more popular music.

An interesting addition to the 2009 season is the "Classic Hour" series, to be held in Elder Hall. The two concerts both feature works by Haydn, but also some interesting choices by the likes of Pärt and Respighi. Conducted by Arvo Volmer, these are sure to be a hit with connoisseurs of orchestral music. Of course, Symphony Under the Stars is also on again with the 1812 Overture and fireworks - it's always a great start to the year.

The ASO is yet to introduce a cut-price subscription rate or a set under 30 ticket price, but they do have good 'student rush' deals for their Master Series concerts. Tickets are available at the box office one hour before the concert and sell for under \$20. Further information about the ASO: www.aso.com.au.

Musica Viva

Lovers of chamber music are in for real a treat with Musica Viva's 2009 offering. The National Concert Series season opens with a real blockbuster: legendary violinist Gidon Kremer and his chamber orchestra, Kremerata Baltica. Described by Herbert von Karajan as "the greatest violinist in the world", Kremer hasn't visited Australia for 23 years. As the name suggests, his orchestra is made up of the finest young musicians from the Baltic States. The programme boasts works by Beethoven and Mendelssohn, but ventures into less-travelled repertoire with Penderecki's Ciaccona and works by Carl Vine, Chick Corea and Astor Piazzolla. Incidentally, Vine, who is also Musica Viva's artistic director, is the featured composer for the 2009 season.

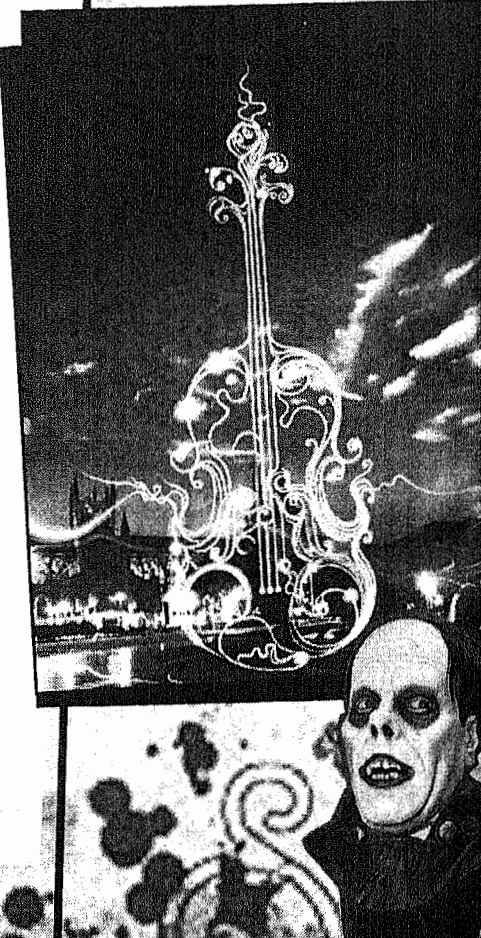
The second concert in the season will delight both Baroque buffs and fans of vocal music. Emma Kirkby's protégé, young Australian soprano Miriam Allan, will present works by Purcell and Handel, together with new Australian early music group Ironwood. Allan has been in London since 2003, where she has performed with a number of fine ensembles; before that she had a successful singing career in Australia.

New to Australia are Greek-Russian pianist Katia Skanavi and the UK-based Elias String

Quartet. Skanavi has had rave reviews in Europe, and her programme of Schubert, Chopin and Vine promises to deliver. The Elias Quartet's programme boasts works from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic and 20th Century eras, with works by Purcell, Haydn, Mendelssohn and Vine.

Of course, the finest international stars are the bread and butter of Musica Viva's seasons, and 2009 is no exception with return visits by the Tokyo String Quartet, cellist Steven Isserlis (with pianist Dénes Varjon), and the Jerusalem Quartet's final performance as part of their four-year residency - they perform with cellist Zvi Plesser. Similarly, the programmes on offer are a pleasing mix of masterworks from the chamber music repertoire, combined with new works by Vine - who is one of Australia's leading contemporary composers.

Musica Viva has great deals for students and young people. Subscribing to all seven concerts costs a tiny \$98 for students or \$182 for under 30s. Alternatively you can pick four concerts for \$60/\$112. Single tickets are \$33 for under 30s and student rush at the door is \$15. For more information, visit: www.musicaviva.com.au.



Opera Australia

Opera Australia is a favourite of mine, and after all, you aren't a real Australian until you've seen an opera at the Sydney Opera House! OA's 2009 season features thirteen operas, ranging from Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas* to Britten's *Peter Grimes*. Of those, five new are productions: the Sydney premiere of Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, a new *Così fan tutte* from Jim Sharman, a grand vision of Verdi's *Aida* from Graeme Murphy, Handel's *Acis & Galatea* by Patrick Nolan - and Grimes is a new one, too. The stars are out in force, and new international artists for 2009 include Susan Bullock, Susan Gritton, Simon O'Neill, Orpha Phelan, Claire Rutter and Tamara Wilson, while a number of international artists make their return, including Sir Richard Armstrong, Jonathan Darlington, Andrea Licata, Jorge Lopez-Yanez, Shao-Chia Lü, Dennis O'Neill, Teddy Tahu Rhodes, Dongwon Shin, Andrew Schroeder, Pamela Helen Stephen and Jennifer Wilson.

Of course, OA's pride and joy is showcasing Australia's greatest singers, and next year's season includes Cheryl Barker in *Madama Butterfly* and Manon Lescaut, Lisa Gasteen and Peter Coleman-Wright in an inspiring

Fidelio, Yvonne Kenny in *Dido & Aeneas*, Stuart Skelton in the title role of *Peter Grimes*, Daniel Sumegi as Sarastro in *The Magic Flute* and John Wegner as Boris Ismailov in Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth*.

There's also a host of special events including a special concert performance of Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Strauss's beautiful *Four Last Songs* and Respighi's *Pines of Rome* by the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra. Plus, there's a free performance of *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Pagliacci* for Opera in the Domain. If that sounds like a lot, that's because it is - but it means you can usually fit something in to a quick interstate trip. Oh, did I mention that's just the Sydney season? Check the website for the shows in Melbourne.

Tickets to the opera are more expensive than most arts events, there's no denying it! But think of it as a special treat - and you never know, a \$60 ticket could be the best money you spend all year. You can buy tickets online at the OA website, which also has information about all their productions: www.opera-australia.org.au

Australian Chamber Orchestra

Richard Tognetti celebrates his twenty year anniversary as leader of the Australian Chamber Orchestra in 2009 with a really exciting season of music. The ACO will present seven national tours in eight Australian cities. Legendary soprano Dawn Upshaw opens the season with four centuries of song, including music by contemporary composer Osvaldo Golijov, of whom she is the foremost interpreter internationally (you may recall Golijov wrote the Festival opera at this year's Adelaide Festival). Snagging Dawn Upshaw is a real coup - and apparently she even asked to perform with the ACO after hearing them at New York's Carnegie Hall!

Described as the "Paganini of the flute", Israeli flautist Sharon Bezaly makes her Australian debut ahead of a recording with the ACO. Bezaly will perform two premieres by South American composers José Serebrier and Adina Izarra, Croatian pianist Dejan Lazic returns to Australia for an all-Beethoven programme featuring his Piano Concerto No.4 and Symphony No.4.

Two of the ACO's favourite guest directors also return in 2009: Finnish violinist Pekka Kuusisto (who performed in Adelaide in 2009, but for *Musica Viva*) will mix Bach, Sibelius and Finnish folk music, accompanied by a Swedish harmonium player - his performance this year was excellent, so this is one for your diaries. It's great to see that Kuusisto will also work with the ACO's Emerging Artists. English

violinist Anthony Marwood also returns, and brings with him a transcription of Schumann's much-loved Cello Concerto - but for violin.

To commemorate Richard Tognetti's 20th anniversary, the ACO has commissioned the eminent Latvian composer Peteris Vasks to compose a work for violin and orchestra which will be premiered in October. In addition to this, five of Australia's most successful and distinguished composers will also mark the anniversary by composing short works for violin and orchestra to be premiered through the year: Peter Sculthorpe, Carl Vine, James Ledger, Andrew Ford and Ian Munro - an impressive line up! Other Australian premieres include a new arrangement of Finnish folk tunes by Timo Alakotila, a reworking of Adina Izarra's Flute Concerto and a new concerto, also for flute, by José Serebrier, written for Sharon Bezaly and the ACO.

The ACO has great deals for young people and offers a range of under 30 subscriptions priced from \$186 to \$198. They also offer student rush tickets (usually for about \$20) and under 30 tickets (usually for about \$35). Subscribing makes sense, as ACO concerts regularly sell out. For more information, visit: www.aso.com.au.

NOTE TO READERS:

At the time of printing, the State Theatre and Opera Companies were yet to release their 2009 seasons - but check their websites soon for updates. The State Theatre Company offers great rates for young people, particularly if you subscribe to all their shows. Going to the opera is pricier, but look out for student rush deals.

State Theatre Company of SA:
www.statetheatrecompany.com.au

State Opera Company of SA:
www.saopera.sa.gov.au





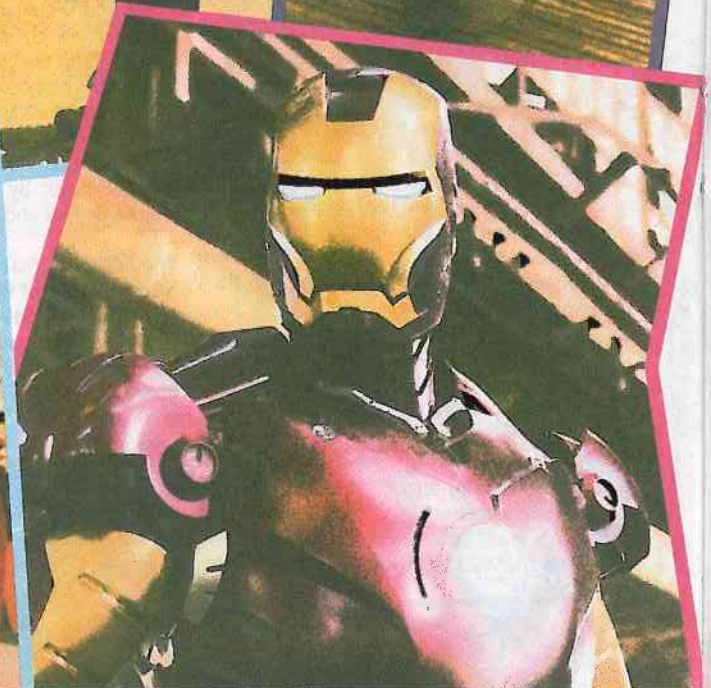
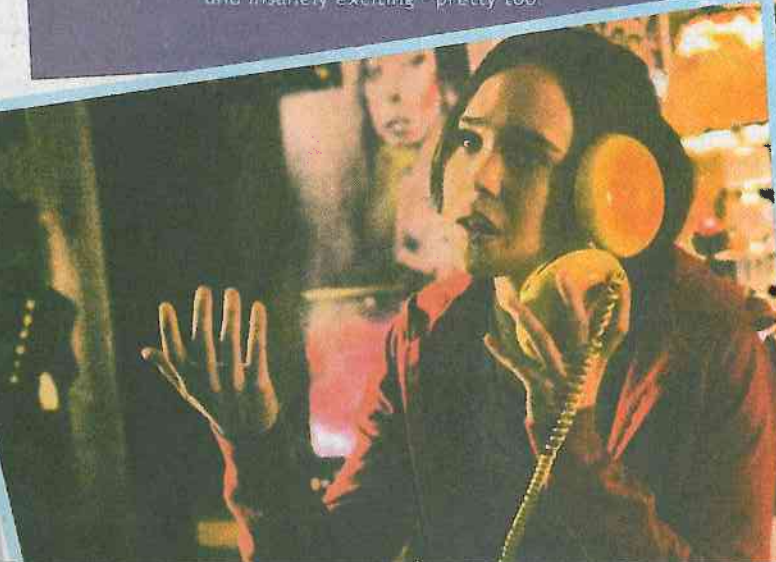
As the last edition of *On Dit* hits the stand with a heartbreaking thud, it seems important to look back to the year of film that was. Ah 2008, so many good films, so many fantastic failures! Let's go and take a look, shall we?
Yes, lets do that.

Editors:
Aslan Mesbah, Steph Walker & Vincent Coleman

2008, you had me at 'hello'

The Top Five Films of 2008 according to our reviewers

1. *The Dark Knight* Directed by Christopher Nolan. Admittedly it was over-rated, and hotly debated by the reviewers, but *The Dark Knight* was scary, dark and exciting.
2. *Iron Man* Directed by Jon Favreau. *Iron Man* is in IMDb's top 250 films of all time. When wealthy industrialist Tony Stark is forced to build an armored suit after a life-threatening incident, he ultimately decides to use its technology to fight against evil. Robert Downey Jr is everyone's hero.
3. *Juno* Directed by Jason Reitman, Written by Academy Award Winner Diablo Cady. Another film considered over-rated, but worthwhile. *Juno* was picked up at The Toronto Film Festival, and if it were not for that success, we wouldn't have been inundated with the film here. Ellen Page and Michael Cera are adorable, the soundtrack is awesome and Jason Bateman is hilarious.
4. *No Country for Old Men* Written and Directed by the Coen Brothers. Possibly one of the most nerve-racking films of the year. Violence and mayhem ensue after a hunter stumbles upon some dead bodies, a stash of heroin and more than \$2-million in cash near the Rio Grande. It is now in the list of top 250 films of all time.
5. *Not Quite Hollywood* Directed by Mark Hartley. One of the most decent documentaries of the year. It covered Ozploitation films of the 70s and 80s and was both informative and insanely exciting - pretty too.





Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn

Four Films we're not writing home about

1. *The Other Boleyn Girl*

Get three decent actors, Natalie Portman, Eric Bana and Scarlett Johansson and you think it would be easy to make a good film, but this one is nasty and wrong. The cinematic equivalent of Sarah Palin's campaign.

2. *The Love Guru*

This tragedy scored a woeful 14% on Rotten Tomatoes. To quote from an online newspaper review, "The puerile levels to which it sinks make even *Goldmember*, the crudest of the *Austin Powers* movies, look like *Brief Encounter*."

3. *The Happening*

First of all, it's a horror movie about 'natural terrorism' - the environment hates us for not treating it well so it has devised spores that make humans want to kill themselves. Most of the horrific scenes are just scary breezes stirring up spores in the direction of actors. And the tag line: 'We've Sensed It. We've Seen The Signs. Now... It's Happening'. Pure class.

4. *Mad Money*

Three female employees of the Federal Reserve plot to steal money that is about to be destroyed. The most perfect and funny quote to illustrate the experience of this film; "Ocean's Eleven if it were geared to the drones at the Oprah Winfrey Book Club".

Eight Films for Summer

(Check out the trailers, they're spectacular)

We're more excited about these films than the dancing audience on *The Ellen Show*

1. *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* (Fantasy/Drama). Directed by David Fincher (*Fight Club*) to be released on the 26th of December, starring Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett and Tilda Swinton. Tells the story of Benjamin Button, a man who starts aging backwards with bizarre consequences.

2. *Quantum of Solace* (Action). The new Bond film, directed by Marc Forster (*Stranger than Fiction*) to be released on the 19th of November, starring Daniel Craig. Seeking revenge for the death of his love, secret agent James Bond sets out to stop an environmentalist (those guys are the worst) from taking control of a country's water supply.

3. *Australia* (Epic Drama). Directed by Baz Luhrmann (*Moulin Rouge*) to be released on the 13th of November, starring Nicole Kidman, Hugh Jackman, David Wenham, Bryan Brown, and every other Australian actor. Set in northern Australia before World War II, an English aristocrat who inherits a sprawling ranch reluctantly pacts with a stock-man in order to protect her new property from a takeover plot. As the pair drive 2,000 head of cattle over unforgiving Australian landscape, they experience the Japanese-orchestrated bombing of Darwin firsthand.

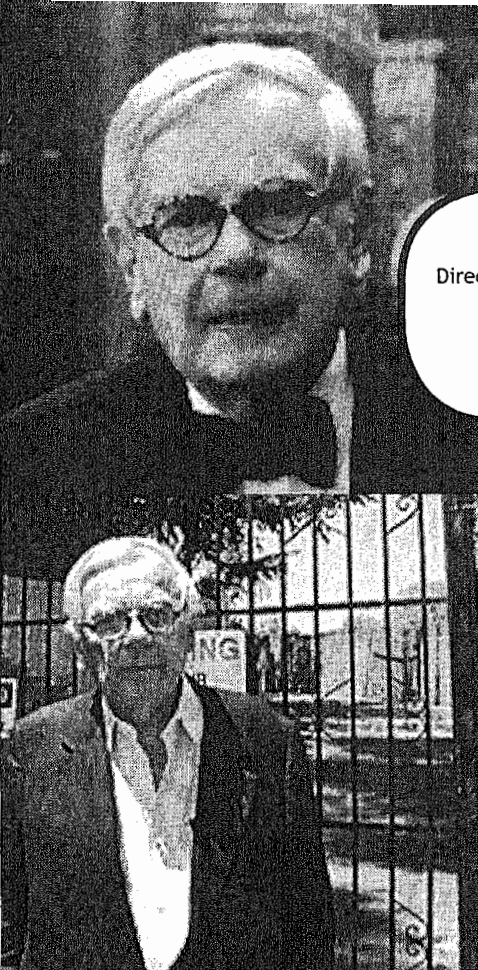
4. *Zack and Miri Make a Porno* (Comedy). Directed and written by Kevin Smith to be released in the near future. Lifelong platonic friends Zack (Seth Rogen) and Miri (Elizabeth Banks) look to solve their respective cashflow problems by making an adult film together, to the theme of *Star Wars*. As the cameras roll, however, the duo begin to sense that they may have more feelings for each other than they previously thought.

5. *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (Dramedy). Directed and written by Woody Allen to be released on the 26th December. Two girlfriends (Scarlett Johansson and Rebecca Hall) on a summer holiday in Spain become enamored with the same painter (Javier Bardem), unaware that his ex-wife (Penelope Cruz), with whom he has a tempestuous relationship, is about to re-enter the picture.

6. *Revolutionary Road* (Drama). Directed by Sam Mendes (*American Beauty*) to be released on January 22nd. A young couple (Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio) living in a Connecticut suburb during the mid-1950s struggle to come to terms with their personal problems while trying to raise their two children. Based on a novel by Richard Yates.

7. *Synecdoche, New York* (Dramedy). Directed and written by Charlie Kaufman (*Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*), release date pending. Starring Phillip Seymour Hoffman, Catherine Keener, Samantha Morton, Michelle Williams, Emily Watson and Hope Davis. A theatre director (Hoffman) struggles with his work, and the women in his life, as he attempts to create a life-size replica of New York inside a warehouse as part of his new play.

8. *New York, I Love You*. An offshoot of the fantastic *Paris Je t'aime*, this film follows twelve different love stories all set in one of the most loved cities of the world, New York. Directors range from Natalie Portman and Scarlett Johansson to Brett Ratner and Mira Nair. Actors include Kevin Bacon, Orlando Bloom, Natalie Portman, Julie Christie, Chris Cooper, Ethan Hawke, Christina Ricci to Olivia Thirlby.



Celebrity:

Dominick Dunne

Directed by Kirsty de Garis and Tim Jolley

Playing at Mercury Cinemas:

6:00pm Thursday 23 October

7:00pm Friday 24 October

Vanity Fair writer Dominick Dunne, a journalist who has been following the trappings of fame for decades, opens up his life as the infamous reporter on famous murder cases from OJ Simpson to the Menendez Brothers and Phil Spector. In doing so we learn of Dominick Dunne's own loss, the murder of his daughter. Dominick Dunne was a social climber, a journalist, a Hollywood producer, a drug addict, a best-selling author and a soldier in WWII. The death of Dunne's daughter, a result of domestic abuse at the hand of her boyfriend changed the course of his life. The anguish of the trial, ending in a prison sentence of only six and a half years, translates noticeably into Dunne's work as a watchdog of the rich and famous who commit terrible acts. *Celebrity: Dominick Dunne* was directed by Kirsty de Garis and former Adelaide resident Tim Jolley.

As a journalist and crime specialist, Dunne produced fairly subjective accounts of celebrity trials, repeatedly supporting the viewpoint of the victim. His coverage was and is highly influential, often providing leads for other commentators. Dunne also repeatedly struggles with the principle of perpetrator rights, frequently telling the camera how unfair it is for celebrities to use expensive lawyers, and other questionable means to change the course of justice. However, Dunne is not exempt from a considerable amount of bias, and he was called out on it in 2001, falling for an account that implicated a congressman in the Chandra Ann Levy murder.

The directors were lucky enough to speak and follow Dominick Dunne around New York, LA and Connecticut as a result the audience see him speak candidly and eloquently about his childhood, broken marriage, loss of his child, and complete obsession with celebrities. For a man with such a tumultuous life, he is seems deeply interesting and honest, not just as a renowned journalist but as a man who has experienced so much.

3.5/5

Steph Walker

Dream of Life is a rough and experimental documentary into the singer-songwriter, poet and artist Patti Smith. Wiry-haired, thin, androgynous and perpetually dressed in skinny jeans, coats and boots, Smith is instantly recognisable. Referenced as the godmother of punk, she arrived in New York in the late 60s. Her music is a synthesis of punk rock and spoken word poetry.

Predominately filmed over eleven years by Steven Sebring, *Patti Smith: Dream of Life* only covers the life of the private Patti Smith since her re-emergence in 1996. Although nominated for the Grand Jury Prize of Sundance, this seems not to be due to its direction, but due to Patti Smith's large fan base. You can see Patti Smith, but at an arms length.

To make the film harder to navigate, there is hardly any historical or extra information regarding her life and work. The film covers some of her international travel, and specks of her life, as we listen to her spoken words, performances, interviews, paintings and photographs. We learn that Patti is a bereaved wife and mother who has taken long sabbaticals from her public career to immerse herself in living; she is a woman with dear siblings and sweet parents from a happy childhood.

Patti Smith:

Dream of Life

Directed by Steven Sebring

At Mercury Cinemas:

7:30pm Sunday 2 November

Dream of Life is a stream of consciousness type doco; if you don't know a lot about Patti Smith, it might be enjoyable film, but it'll be hard to get a grasp her life, or even the past eleven years. At times, *Dream of Life* can feel like an elongated music video with an audio commentary over the top. There are booms in frame, camera reflections in anything than can reflect light. *Dream of Life* is engaging to the generous and open-minded cinema-goer, unlikely to win over an audience that has only a peripheral understanding of Smith. It's a shame that the film doesn't serve as more of an informative introduction and discussion of her life's work. That being said; Patti Smith fans will always enjoy a Patti Smith doco.

3/5

Steph Walker



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In *Burn After Reading*, an ensemble cast including George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Frances McDormand and Tilda Swinton do their best to act like a group of bewildering idiots who all find themselves caught up somehow in a very serious situation. Or at least gym junkie Chad (Pitt) and the lonely Linda Litzke (McDormand) think it's a serious situation. They stumble upon the memoirs of CIA agent Osbourne Cox (John Malkovich) - the only halfway intelligent person involved in proceedings who is driven somewhat insane by the stupidity that surrounds him - and try to blackmail him for it.

Burn After Reading is a film which positively wallows in its own inanity. This spirit is summed up in two great scenes with a nameless CIA superior (JK Simmons) which essentially serve as the halftime and post-film summary of events that have transpired throughout the course of the movie. These scenes have a matter-of-factness that puts what you've seen into a very funny perspective.

The film openly and laudably mocks and satirises the seriousness of other spy-themed films, through its writing, its ridiculously melodramatic soundtrack (whose gravity never suits what is portrayed on screen) and through building suspense over matters that generally turn out to be trivial. It also gently satirises those ensemble cast movies with various plot threads that like to dovetail towards the end, acknowledging the fact that

Burn After Reading (MA15+) Now Showing

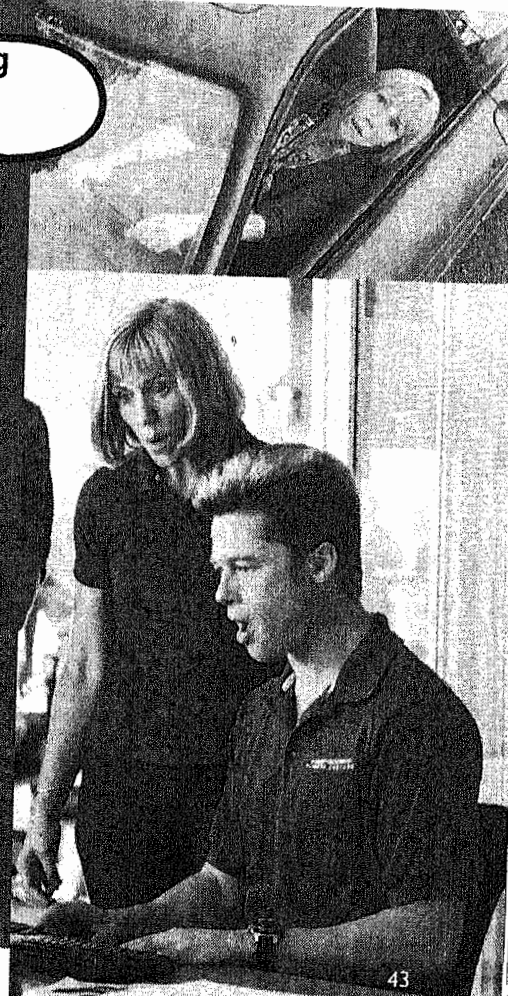
they can lead to very entertaining movies but also pointing out how absurdly contrived they can be.

It's probably one of the few comedies that has emerged as a consequence of the post 9/11 socio-political climate in the US. Make no mistake, while the Cold War is often mentioned and alluded to as a result of Cox's involvement in it, the genesis of the movie and its themes are predominantly formed in this decade. The film parodies a paranoid America obsessed with 'intelligence' and with knowing as much about people as possible. Thankfully it's not a nasty parody and it never feels like a point is being made obnoxiously.

A typically eccentric Coen Brothers comedy that is consistently witty without really being uproariously funny, *Burn After Reading* is a stupid movie, and I mean that in the nicest possible way. It features uniquely stupid characters written and acted by clever people that are always fun to watch in action.

4/5

Angus Chisholm



Choke is a twisted and dark satirical film, directed by Clark Gregg and based on an excellent novel by *Fight Club* author Chuck Palahniuk. This black comedy stars Angelica Huston, Sam Rockwell and the enthralling Kelly Macdonald. *Choke* takes you on a journey of sex, scams and an interesting pseudo second coming of a particular religious figure. It premiered at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival and was purchased by Fox.

Sam Rockwell plays Victor Mancini, a historical re-enactor, sex addict con-artist who is working to keep his aging mother Ida (Huston), who suffers from dementia, in hospital. Victor's mother no longer remembers who he is, but he visits her and plays the people she thinks she's actually talking to. As a child, Victor's mother would frequently kidnap him from foster homes, a result of her issues with drugs and crime. Visiting his mother in hospital, Victor endeavours to learn who his father is. In order to get the answer Victor asks his best friend Denny, a chronic masturbator, co-worker and re-enactor, to pose as Victor to get the information out of his delirious mother. During this period Victor meets with his mother's care-taker, Dr Paige Marshall (Macdonald) and develops feelings for her, or tries to at least. Paige talks optimistically of cures and experiments and then rushes to succeed when Ida's health declines.

The title of the film refers to an ongoing activity of Victor; his scam. He attends nice

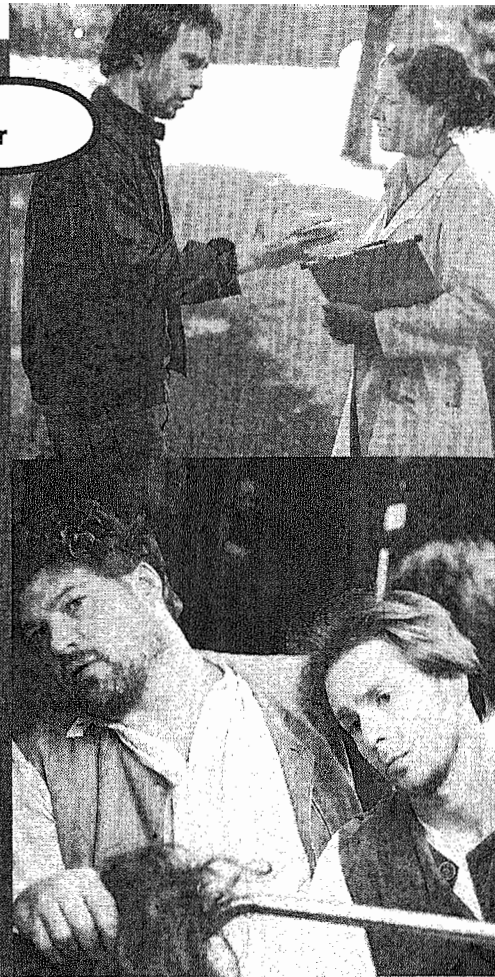
Choke (TBC)
Out 30th October

restaurants with Denny and deliberately chokes on his food, knowing that whoever saves him, will feel honour bound and connected to him for saving a life - he then writes to them and asks for money. He does this a lot.

The movie *Fight Club* was so beautifully stylised and re-created by Fincher that some may feel cheated by Gregg's adaptation of *Choke*. Ultimately, the film doesn't compete with the novel. Unlike *Fight Club*, where large chunks of dialogue was cut and pasted from the book to the screenplay, *Choke* has been adapted and altered. This adaptation, while necessary, fails to encapsulate the comedic timing and blend of tragedy and comedy. That's not to say it isn't a fun and enjoyable movie. Palahniuk even has a cameo in the film. Clark Gregg also gives himself a frightfully entertaining character, Victor's uptight colonial boss. *Choke* is a solid film for it's low budget, the acting is good and aside from its deviance from the novel of the same name, it is rather enjoyable.

3.5/5

Steph Walker



The Duchess (M)
Now Showing

Based upon a true story, *The Duchess* follows the sordid complexity within the marriage of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire (Keira Knightley) and her husband the Duke of Devonshire (Ralph Fiennes). [10% spoiler warning!] It begins with Georgiana excited at the prospect of marrying the Duke. Yet as time goes on and she fails to birth a male heir for him, he begins to welcome other young ladies into his bed. Realising her reserved heartless husband will never become the companion she hoped he would be, she finds a kindred soul in Bess, a woman who has also been wronged by her husband. All is happy for Georgiana until Bess and the Duke wind up in the sack! As the film goes on, lust, political complexity, the need for a male heir and simple self-absorption continue to victimise Georgiana, whilst spinning a tale of aristocratic sauciness!

It's hard not to compare this film to *The Other Boleyn Girl* given that it shares the similar genre of a powerful king type busy in the bedroom to ensure the survival of their kingdom! (How noble!) *The Duchess*,

through less characters and better frilly hats, carves itself memorably into the mind of the audience by focusing on the interaction of a select few in a confined environment.

On a personal note, I should point out that NP fans such as myself often refer to Keira Knightley as the poor man's Natalie Portman! In fact what originally attracted me to this film was that Portmanesque picture of Keira Knightley on the movie poster! Oh such fraud! But alas, Keira Knightley was impressive as the flamboyant Georgiana! She really, really seemed to fit this role more so than the other prissy pseudo aristocratic roles she has played in the past. She not only carried the film well but also brought out the strengths of her character. It's always good to look at the screen and see the character not the actress. Ralph Fiennes was entertaining as the dry Duke. At times his self absorption was quite shocking, including one of the most awkward, clinical bedroom scenes live ever seen!

This film is for anyone who enjoyed *The Other Boleyn Girl*, who likes 18th Century intrigue or who watches the *Bold & the Beautiful*.

3.5/5

Michael





Literature

Editors: Alicia Mořaw & Connor O'Brien

"It's like a poetry Mecca or something": into the underbelly of Adelaide's Friendly Street poets

by Connor O'Brien

As a middle-aged woman (dressed entirely in black, with that very distinguishable 'hip-older-generation-supporter-of-the-arts' bob haircut that you see at least once at every gallery opening) makes her way through her second page of rhyming verse, two guys saunter from the free goon table and begin to taunt her. I can't hear what they're saying because they've drunk too much to remain comprehensible. Immediately a very nervous man tells them very politely to, "Please, be quiet, please, for I cannot hear the poetry." The girl sitting next to me with an oversized birdcage laughs at the politeness of the very polite man. Eventually a beefy biker (at least, he looks like a biker - he's wearing leather, and he's got the tats and flowing, unkempt Hell's Angel locks) towers over the two guys and says, "Let's take this outside, shall we?"

It's the first Tuesday of the month, and I'm sitting in a grand old room at the SA Writer's Centre (2nd Floor, 187 Rundle Street). I'm in the process of losing my Friendly Street virginity. Friendly Street is an open poetry reading night that has been running since (and I have been told this repeatedly) the exact day Gough Whitlam was dismissed in 1975. It's probably the biggest regular poetry meet in Australia - some ex-Melbournians tell me that there is nothing like Friendly Street anywhere on the East Coast. On the night I go to Friendly Street there must be at least seventy people in the room, which is approximately sixty-five more people than you would normally expect to turn up for a mid-week poetry get together.

Jacqueline Clark, who lectures at Adelaide University, and is a member of the Friendly Street board, admits that the standard of poetry performed can "range from scraping fingernails across chalkboards to the really great" (just like in *On Dit*). Gaetano Aiello, a legal practitioner and the convener of Friendly Street (he has since retired from that position), recalls one poet who brought terracotta pots on stage and "worked with the vibrations".

Because Friendly Street is an open poetry night, and there is no content-checking, heartfelt odes to recently-deceased pets are performed alongside heartfelt odes to vibrators. But late last year, the limits of acceptability were publicly tested. In August 2007, the *Adelaide Review* ran a cover story about the 'porno poet' Robert Cettl, who, apparently, was hijacking the Friendly Street podium to spout his own brand of 'explicit pornography'. The *Adelaide Review* refused to publish any of Cettl's work alongside the article, ostensibly because it was too hot to print, and journalist Lachlan Colquhoun concluded the piece telling interested readers to attend the September Friendly Street meet to 'judge for themselves.' The 'controversy' was clearly an overblown and manufactured attempt to revitalise the Adelaide arts scene, because Cettl's poetry is about as shocking as a bunch of seven-year-olds swapping sex jokes in the playground. (The most provocative of Cettl's passages? Probably, "Lolita baby, with your shaven snatch / come here and salute my; / Bald eagle", from *Cum Shot, Looped*).

In Cettl's own words, Friendly Street is a "nursing home of poetry". I can see Cettl's point but then I wonder, *is there anything wrong with that?* There are plenty of places to read and publish sex poetry to receptive audiences, is it really so bad that Friendly Street wants to keep everything clean and pretty? I ask Adam Klimkiewicz, an Adelaide University student who reads regularly at Friendly Street, what he thinks about Cettl's claim that the artistic direction of Friendly Street is determined by reactionary retirees. In Klimkiewicz's view, "there is a lot to be learnt away from the mainstream, from the older generation." Gaetano Aiello adds that Friendly Street is unique and valuable precisely because it is an environment in which younger poets can interact and engage with the work of older poets.

I watch as Clark, Aiello, and Klimkiewicz work themselves into a passionate discussion about the role of poetry in the 21st Century. Klimkiewicz goes silent for a while and then asks, "If the question is 'does poetry matter?', maybe the better question is 'does *anything* matter?'"

(Friendly Street reading nights are held at the Adelaide Writer's Centre - 2nd floor, 187 Rundle Street - on the first Tuesday of every month, and begin at 7pm. Entry is \$5.)

Summer Reading

The Literary Summer Read

Everything I Know by Peter Goldsworthy

Out 27 October, 2008

Robbie Burns is fourteen years old and the only child of the only local policeman. It's 1964 and the people of the small wine producing township of Penola, in South Australia's Coonawarra are about to have their quiet contented lives shattered.

Up until this year, Robbie lived a quiet, boring life, only livened up by rabbiting and carrying out experiments in his back shed, often producing very explosive results. However, 1964 brings a change, in the form of Miss Peach, the new English teacher. She's a thoroughly modern woman, in Capri pants and driving a sky blue Vespa. She also holds the 'city' views on poetry and art which overwhelm the small town of Penola. However, this only encourages Robbie's imagination and lust. Eager to please Miss Peach, he writes outlandish science fiction stories for her and these have an odd biographical feel to them. But the more he imagines, the less control he starts to have over his own actions.

Goldsworthy takes the ideals that we have of childhood, and argues that it was much less innocent than we want to believe. He explores the extremely taboo relationship of Robbie and Miss Peach and illustrates that obsession can be the downfall to life.

A powerful and intriguing story which not only draws you in, but forces you to re-examine your childhood memories. It moves from moments of comedy to moments of great tragedy. A worthy summer read for all.

Alicia

The Summer Blockbuster

Without Warning by John Birmingham

Out now

America is destroyed...in an alternate universe. In 2003, the American forces are assembled to invade Iraq. However an inexplicable wave of energy slams into America and destroyed it instantaneously. Around the world this has caused a shock wave that will change the course of history forever. Now allied forces are fighting in a war without command. What's left of the American government is scattered and the jihadists believe Allah has performed a miracle.

In the traditional style that Birmingham is known for, *Without Warning* is fast paced, witty and extremely detailed. The details that are in this are unparalleled. Birmingham gives the most factual accounts of the lead up to the Iraq War (the second one). It is the fact that real people are incorporated into the narrative and his ability to keep the novel moving along at a good speed that makes this an entertaining and intriguing summer read. Fans of the *Axis of Time* trilogy will love this.

Daniel

The Summer Read that Expands Your Mind

Biting Anorexia by Lucy Howard-Taylor

Out now

At eighteen, anorexia almost killed Lucy. During her struggle with anorexia, Lucy wrote much of this book, which details the agony that she went through to recover. The easy part was having anorexia, recovering was hardest. Anorexia is one of the most fatal psychiatric illnesses which can affect both boys and girls from as young as eight. A difficult thing for many people to sympathise with, anorexia gets stereotyped. However, what Lucy tries to explain expands your mind to venture past all known stereotypes, and gain understanding of what is going on.

A moving and poignant memoir about what it means to struggle with a mental illness that people don't understand. This is a story that should be read if you have a loved one who suffers from this condition. This is intensely compelling and brave.

Francesca

The Gritty Summer Crime Read

Crooked by Camilla Nelson

Out now

Set during the late 1960s when corruption was rife in Sydney, Camilla Nelson has written a gripping novel filled with darkness and corruption that reveals the seedy side to Sydney. Nelson is a former reporter, whose experience is very obvious in this novel when it comes to writing style. This is not a novel that inspires you to continue reading it in the first few pages. But perseverance will be well rewarded as it gives the ability to step into another world and another time. For fans of true crime, this is a fiction book for you as Nelson's writing style and plot lends itself to the true crime aura.

This is a dark and strangely unsettling book which is compelling and a worthy read for a cool air-conditioned room of a cafe somewhere drinking a frappe latte. A good read.

Anthea

The Chick Lit Read for Summer

The Independence of Miss Mary Bennett by Colleen McCullough

Out now

When we last left *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth and Darcy, Jane and Bingley had all gotten married before riding off into the sunset to live happily ever after. We all knew the ending to Lydia's story and were pretty sure that Kitty was going to eventually get married also, but the middle sister Mary... Well, what can you say? No one had any hopes for her.

This story begins with the death of Mrs Bennett. Mary has been with Mrs Bennett for seventeen years. While her sisters have been living their own lives, Mary has been taking care of her mother, just waiting for the day that she can begin her own life. However, she is not the Mary of old. Rather, over the years she has improved and let go of the affectations that made her unbearable in Austen's novel.

This is the story of her adventures in a time when women were very restricted. This is a darker story, with imperfections and flawed characters. It is a look at what happens after 'happily ever after'. A fascinating take on the characters from *Pride and Prejudice*. Great for a lazy day at the beach.

Alicia

Islamic Greens and Int. Klein Blues

By Steph Walker

Who walks with me?
Walks, when we're alone.
Leaves blow across seas
It seems like just us two
But there was something,
Imitating our steps
just left of you.

Where Islamic green trees
And sick mottled eucalyptus
Burn against international klein blue sky.
Where dark nights cry upon
Toothless motionless pillars,
Wrecked by movement
And wind-torn gestures.

Where environment is enough
To mock recreation and longing
And memory,
Prolonging the tint of the past
And fear of future;
Blazing bright colour with
Cool degrees of difference

Wind ripples sand
As hands turn cards
Dialogue resumed and stretched,
Stretched over the faintest mask of self
Warm dust and granules,
As we walked together.
Walks, when we're alone.

As stars appear and
Beach waves beached
Along limited shores.

Rich rations ripen
with hands that turn cards,
The greenest tarest apples fracture
Amongst voices
Known and violently unfamiliar.
The whitest of noises
As gravel rests on grass
With cold dust and
Sand-smoothed glass.

Flutter of wings meeting,
Torn-torsos and warm hearts beating,
Clawing, competing.
Clawing young stems with floating leaves,
Rising to the sun,
Atop the eaves

Water lashing warm faces
The high-pitched wail,
Like the sound of soil-wrung hands,
Wringing themselves, to no avail.
Water in the pipes
Hands and ears ringing
But never clean
And always clinging.

But to dream of time
Before you knew,
Of such raw assertion.
Only in recollection
Of past steps could you recall
Such moments before,
Fractures, steps of elevation, or falls.

Hands once draped
Upon bodies slipping out of reach
Towards the next step.
Steps over swollen beaten territory,
Borders running courses,
Running from one end
Of the atlas to the other, like absinthe;
Through the heart and stomach and self
Permeating and excreting.

As broad dusty hands stretch -
Hands stretch - over books
And bodies and stretch
Over thoughts and time.
The way you think of wings,
And shoulders, and jaws
As broad and powerful

Soil rungs hands,
Beach waves beached,
Upon cards that reach,
With the softest murmur of words.
Known steps, stepped
Over sea and dust and gravel, loud -
Louder over the flutter of hands,
Whispers, water or sand.
And the silence,
Of toothless motionless wind-torn jetties
Amongst the deepest of dreams
Dreams without recollection
Dreams without hope nor despair

Soil wrung hands
Once draped and wrenched
And clawed down,
Swollen beating - beatless
As hands stretch
And stretch and fracture,
Stretched without ever a grasp.

Incident on Henley Jetty

By Terry Hewton

You leapt out into the cold night air,
Knowing they would have trouble finding
you there.

The alarm went out:
'It's cold - be quick!'
But by then you were gone -
Too late to bring you back.

You sent the night gulls whirling
Up, up into the air,
While you went down in the darkness -
Down in black despair.
The night birds signalled the urgency
Their forlorn cries renting the air.
'Young woman overboard -
Emergency assistance needed here!'

Was it for love -
Or out of fear?
What dark depression drove you here?
What brought you to the abyss?
What tragedy as bad as this?

Now the frogmen cannot find you.
They, too, are young.
Young men who will never court you -
The chance for ever gone.
The surface light flickers fretfully.
Moving now here, now there.
As the young men search for you.
But you are not there.

POETRY

Bovine

By Jimmy Gartner

My hands feel empty
When not shackled to spatula and
vacuum cleaner
My children cultivated into inoffensive
catalogues
Lured out of my womb with the sweetest
of treats
Sometimes I see the Sputnik, some
nights it's a plane crash
Looming above my spinal cord fence
Like sheep skin on my lens

With polite disdain, I mould the future in
my image
Of dull eyes and udders like empty
hotels
A kitchen for the satiated
And a shower for the compulsive
I wake up just for the daytime talk
shows
I am the stationary wagon
Fuelled by triviality
and servility
Am I the only one who sees the
mammoths?

Wordy Poem

By Steph Walker

With misplaced grammar and expression
Emphasis is wrong
Vocabulary used without discretion
Content dull and prolonged
Words drip from my lips
Rights are worded wrong

Everyone minds their epithets
'With guard or planned rejection
While looking for the friends
Who insist on words connections

I spell my words phonetically
But learn of the romantics
And try to speak poetically
But I've lost all the semantics

To bleed the ink, to hit the keys
and write down all the dramas
language is such a tease
with wrongly placed commas
and on the ground, next to the curb
grammar that I'll never use
unknown nouns and useless verbs
are the type that I will always choose.

not quite a king

malcolm walker speaks about arthurian legends and 'the stone crown.'

with natalie oliver

Malcolm Walker
THE STONE CROWN

Having tried to write adult novels, Malcolm Walker moved into the genre dominated by Rowling; children's books that adults love, and he may just have written a success.

Malcolm Walker is currently the writer in residence for people with disabilities at the South Australian Writer's Centre. He studied his Bachelor of Arts and Honours in Creative Writing at Flinders University and later did his PHD at the University of Adelaide. He was offered a scholarship at Adelaide University to write a novel, and so it began.

The Stone Crown is largely based on semi-historical events. Arthur is said to have existed in 500AD but Walker's rendition is a "contemporary reworking of the Arthurian legend." You can forget the romantic traditions tied to Arthur - generally including Camelot, knights, Lancelot and damsels - this Arthur is a ghost of the past, a brutal, dark version and a warlord never thinking twice about shedding blood.

The novel however predominantly focuses on two teenagers, Emlyn and Maxine, whose curiosity lands them in more trouble than anticipated when they unintentionally steal an artefact guarded on the land of the McCrossan family. Their simple mistake lets loose the dark Arthur and his men who have the ability to wreak havoc in the small town of Yeavesburgh. They have to solve the mystery tied with the cosseted knights and what the protective McCrossans are hiding, not just in Sleeper's Spinney, but also within their history.

Walker's interest in mythology spawned from having learnt the stories of Arthur and Camelot as a child. He negated the traditional idea of the heroic Arthur: a warrior and someone alleged to have killed over nine hundred men. "I think a lot of lads of my generation grew up with that set of stories and I didn't really like the idea of knights in shining armour, and Guinevere and the rest being all it's cracked up to be. I did a bit of research and moved away from the romance stories. I just wanted to tell a different story." Having read a lot of texts, Walker collaborated the grander ideas and came up with his own idea of Arthur; a flawed and power-hungry character, influenced by Merlin, incorporating more fantasy elements into his interpretation. It was this idea that inspired him to write the text, "I've always had an interest in Arthur, and thought - why not do something with it?"

Walker admits that many writers have written books on Arthur, saying that at last count there were approximately 11,000 texts on Arthur in English alone. "People who picked up the text said; 'Oh no, not another rendition of Arthur,' but I think it's the contemporary teenage side of the novel that makes it a little different." The teenagers face issues like loneliness, guilt, separation from parents, bullying and isolation. "I tried not to write in too much detail about the teenagers, because we live in such a global society, where at least in Western culture, the characters translate so that they're identifiable in the UK, or America, or Europe." The teenagers are believable and modern, probably because Walker's representations are drawn from observing his son and his friends. The interaction and reluctant relationship between Emlyn and Maxine, carries along the plot, and successfully unlocks the parallel world from the past that intrudes on the present: incorporating the historical fantasy of Arthur.

After a stint of travelling the world, Walker came out of London to live in Australia in 1973 and still holds his accent today. After reading *The Stone Crown*, and speaking with Malcolm, I couldn't help but draw parallels between himself and the main character, Emlyn. Walker's accent brought back the descriptions of the landscape from Emlyn. "Yeavesburgh is actually a compilation of about four or five borders and towns. It's a fictional town but is based loosely on a whole range of places. The landscape is actually in southern Scotland and that landscape looks and feels almost identical to the Welsh Marches. Those landscapes in which the historical Arthur is situated are very, very old - I know that landscape because I lived in the Welsh Marches." There is a sense of fondness in his narrations and you can't help but draw parallels between he and Emlyn and wonder how much of Malcolm Walker appears in the book. "I'm immensely fond of that landscape and I'm not surprised that it turned out that that bit of me appeared in Emlyn."

Asked if there is another book in the works, Walker responded, "I don't want to give too much away, the ending to *The Stone Crown* is very open-ended, but I probably wouldn't write a sequel unless a publisher absolutely begged me." He is however, working on a two-novel project entitled, *The City of Thieves* which he says is "more of a historical fantasy where most of the action is set in a parallel world, a city run on an economy of theft," again, based on two teenagers that find themselves caught between worlds.

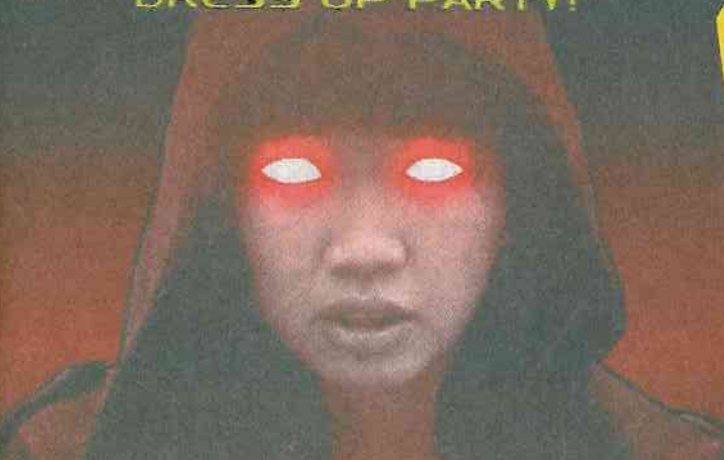
True to the young adult, fantasy genre, the themes appeal to teenagers and those who remember being that age. Writing for the same demographic as Rowling, it's hard not to have his historical fantasy compared to the magical world of Potter. "We had to be careful not release the book around Christmas time or before or after Potter came out because those books are like a small atomic explosion and I wouldn't have even been a blip on the radar." It's hard to crack those foreign markets so it's all very exciting.

The Stone Crown will be published in the UK in November 2009, and later in the US in 2010. Walker is now just hanging out to see how it goes.

The Stone Crown is available through Walker Books (no relation to Malcolm Walker himself).

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Halloween Fashions

Fashion

with Jennifer Vazgaly

Keeping in line with the horror theme of this issue, the fashion team is bringing you the closest thing that we could think of which combines horror and fashion - it's Halloween! Unfortunately it's not as big here as in the US, but it's a great holiday which brings out the best of fashion which can be unusual, weird and wacky, and often features horror as a key theme in the best of party outfits.

I am originally from the US, so hopefully I can bring you some interesting insight into the wonderful world of Halloween fashions. Firstly, Halloween costumes are big fashion items in the US. Everyone goes to a Halloween party of some sort, and everyone wants to have a great costume. Especially for the ladies, it can often be quite a difficult fashion task to find an interesting outfit, which is clearly themed, and is also super sexy. No one wants to wear a bear costume or dress up like a dinosaur, but to be a saucy devil or a not so innocent Alice in Wonderland will achieve great things in the Halloween fashion stakes.

The other potential issue is that, if you are popular (and obviously as an *On Dit* reader you surely are), you will on average be invited to three Halloween parties per year, and unless you want to be a total loser and repeat your outfit, this also means that you will have to be even more creative and fashion oriented in order to find yourself three great outfits!

The first thing to decide upon is tone. Let us assume that you are going with this issue's horror theme, in which case you will be looking for creepy, scary costumes that can give your friends a bit of a fright when you jump out of the closet. Your hair, makeup, and shoes must match your outfit for maximum effect. If you want to be scary the optimum colours to work with are black and red. Primarily black, but also red as for any blood or horn accessories it will do nicely.

Funnily enough, in the US, popular fashion stores (and all stores that want to make money) bring out Halloween ranges in October. You have to get in quick so that you don't need to copy or follow the ideas of your friends. And it does not count if your costume is only unique because it totally sucks and no one else would be caught dead

wearing it. For example, people who do not even bother to get a proper costume and just wear a hat. This does not count as a costume and is not a horror fashion or Halloween fashion. A good outfit requires effort people! Bring on the examples:

1. The good - A friend of mine had an inspiring costume of the Phantom of the Opera, complete from head to toe, inclusive of freaky mask.
2. The bad - At the same party, another friend came in a school uniform, and tried to pass this off as a costume.
3. The ugly - A girl wore an old pair of jeans, a denim jacket, and a witch hat. Perhaps not so much ugly as lacking in effort.

However, for those who remain unenthusiastic about Halloween fashions in general, and think them too juvenile to partake in, there is always inspiration to be found with the fashion designers. For example, designer John Galliano (pictured as The Queen of Hearts, below) recently brought out a Fall/Winter collection featuring costumes; one of his runway outfits was Viking inspired! So if you happen to have a few thousand dollars burning a hole in your pocket get out there and get yourself a fashion piece as well as a Halloween costume - two for the price of one. What value indeed.

Giorgio Armani can also serve as an excellent example of Halloween high end fashions, as his spring/summer 2008 range featured genie and gypsy looks which are perhaps only ever going to be fit for the runway or your best friend's Halloween party. Either way, you can't go wrong with Armani.

But if you're still not convinced, then surely the pinnacle of all Halloween fashion lies with Dior. Dior's recent range features a peasant/farming look. So if you would like to go as a peasant or farmer, secretly in ridiculously expensive clothes, then Dior is the range for you!

Whatever your preference, get out there, make like a poorly directed horror movie, and make this Halloween one to remember, even if for nothing else but your outrageously expensive or horrifying costume!



Fashion Horror Tales



Well, where to begin; perhaps it would be prudent to start with the infamous story of the 'Emperor's New Clothes'. Yes, you all know it. The poor guy was so over-the-top and pompous in his efforts to be sporting the latest fashions in all of the empire that he found himself in the middle of the town, in a parade...naked! This fun story doubles for a common nightmare, as most of us have dreamt that we were naked somewhere too. So why all the fuss about clothes and fashions? Perhaps Mark Twain put it most eloquently when he stated that, "Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society."



Then even once you get past the first step of recognising that fashion is important, is necessary and helps to make you unique...things are still difficult. It is one thing to *think* that you look fashionable in your own mind, but quite another to actually *be* fashionable. Take it from Paul Rudd, and his fashion horror story: "I was very fashion conscious from eighth grade through most of high school. I had no interest in trying to blend in. There was a youthful confidence about it. I prided myself on never owning a pair of jeans. I wore ties to school and assumed that everyone thought I looked great. Then I was at my friend Jeff's house, and I was wearing a black shirt with gray sleeves, a thin pink tie, and pink socks. His mother said, 'I love your outfit.' Then she asked me if it was Space Day at school."

And then who can forget the shopping horror story from *Pretty Woman*? Poor Julia Roberts walking into that super posh store, and getting treated like absolute dirt! If any of you have shopped on Fifth Avenue in New York City or Rodeo Drive in LA, you may have had similar experiences. Unfortunately, as Edward (Richard Gere) explained to her; "Stores are never nice to people. They're nice to credit cards."

And finally, for all you boys out there who have ever attempted to shop without the companionship of your friends or really any girls, there is this polgnant example from our dear friend Jerry Seinfeld: "Buying clothes is always tricky. But when there's loud music playing, it really throws your judgment. You look at stuff like, 'Hey, if there was a cool party and I was a cool guy, this might be a cool shirt.' You get it home, there's no music, there's no party, and you're not a cool guy. You're the same chump, seventy-five bucks lighter."

So go forth, prosper, shop, be fashionable, and hopefully you can avoid some of the historic fashion horror tales we've brought to you from fairy tales, history, the movies, and a comedian.

To conclude, don't walk around naked, don't dress up like a dork, don't shop at Versace if you're dressed like a prostitute, and don't shop at stores with trendy music unless you have good fashion judgment (which, as you have been reading the *On Dit* fashion pages all year, you surely would have developed by now).



THE BACKPACKERS GUIDE TO THE IMAGINATION, IN WHICH THE WORD 'HORROR' IS USED THREE TIMES.

LAUREN SUTTER INSPIRES AND AWES US ONE LAST TIME FOR 2008
WITH VISUAL ARTS

When we are young we are ruled by our incredible imaginations.

What may look nothing more than an empty tissue box to an unassuming adult (how foolish they are to live so blindly!) is, in fact, a super ginormous fire-blasting, deep sea diving rocket tank! And, yes, all you know-it-all adult readers, fire-blasting tanks *do* work under water - after all, this is the beautiful world of the imagination, where everything is not only possible, but *is!*

From tissue box tanks and toilet roll rockets we slowly grew into a bigger world of bed monsters, goblins and ghoulish, cruelish, squeamish and frightening things. Our imagination traveled with us, spurring on stories, covering for us when, at times, a well-researched assignment went mysteriously astray. Our imagination slowly pulled us through high school, projecting all sorts of images upon us - utopian visions of the future, horrific memories of the past that continued to spread gnarled, twisted roots, growing ever removed from the fact and blooming carelessly into new, bitter fruits on which to nourish our justification of 'self', our mistakes, our ever-expanding need for growth, adulthood, failure, change.

Our imagination was a gift, an instrument that we could explore, gently learning when we molded it a little too far, slowly finding some sort of equilibrium with the beast that it was, that it could so easily become.

We succumbed to our imagination in the only way we knew how - the 'right way', the educated way - and enrolled at art school. And suddenly 'imagination' was not imagination anymore. How foolish and immature to think that art was a thing of freedom and fancy! How young and naively green we were! No, it was a thing of long standing traditions, a delicate network of leashes, ropes, pulleys. Rules, regulations. Little threads that allowed us to stray... but never too far. Not that this was always bad - a little discipline never went astray.

Our imagination became a graph outlaying how much should be created, in what amount of time - a structuring of the hours, a measurable 'creativity'. And slowly but surely, our imaginative creations became a feeding ground for imagined fears. The horrors of childhood superstition came nothing close to the monsters that lurked under academy desks, that waived red pens in the face of

'worthless' artworks and students that would be 'more successful dropping out and getting a job at McDonalds!'

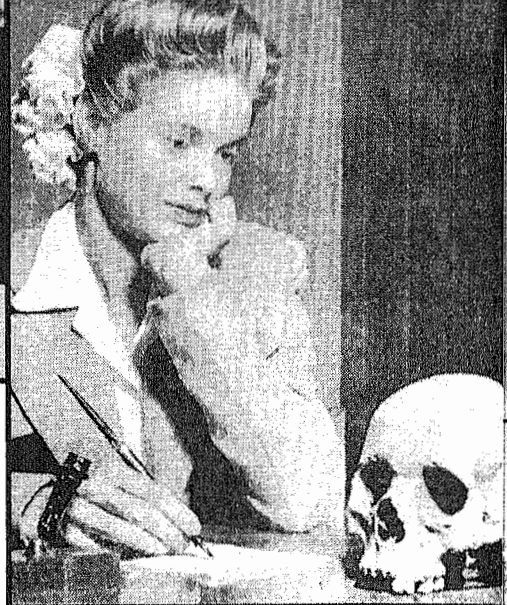
Of course, our logic outweighed our imagination and forced us to smile, bite our tongue, study hard. In one last sacred ceremony we sacrificed the innocent imagination that we had nurtured from such a tender age, and turned to an art of strategy, perfect scores, and the glistening goal of head counts at openings, pats on the back, acknowledgements in the right places. And we learned that happiness was a little red, round sticker on a gallery wall - the universal symbol of success. So simple! So primal! The American Dream incarnate! The Great Gatsby of art! Oh, the bubblings of joy and jealousy, the politics of industry and institution! The Grand Business of High Art! The headiness, the Horror!



It took four years after leaving art school for the first fresh shoots to sprout from the rotten roots of creative paralysis - after the burnout, the disillusionment and the tiring fact of academic apologia. Even now it is a tender thing - easily swayed, easily crushed under a destructive touch, susceptible to sluggishness, substance and boredom.

I write this from a hotel room in Newcastle, wondering if I will regret it one day, faced with the possibility of a nine to five arts admin job and a steady income that, in one foul swoop, ever so swiftly nourishes the pocket and drains the soul. I listen for the buzzing of crickets in the humid night air, the wonderment of rain, and worry that every word is becoming more and more self-absorbed: I, me, mine, we. The mystery of strange places, the hum and static of trains past the hotel window. A diet of sachet coffees, crisp sheets, and the sticky, awkward silence of sharing rooms with strangers.

But the festival atmosphere is electric and, away from the big names of arts industry madness, harbours a community of thinkers, doers, friends. And from the ability to laugh in the face of academicism and forthrightly declare 'This is Not Art!', makes way a new space cleared for fresh thought, without the stripping back of imagination, freedom and control. In his keynote address, author Frank Moorehouse investigates the confusing bundle of existentialism that is 'imagination' (while I sit here still trying to untangle mine). Art, he



declares - perched on a decorated stage with glass in hand - should go deeper than the "fog of politics and academic jargon". It should lead to a less competitive, destructive exploration of the human condition. "Optimism comes in seeing the 'new bohemia'" - that is, the challenging festival goes - "the 'new arts' .. or the valuing of freedom of expression!"

I worry that I am being too poetic, too narrative in my approach to what is usually a rather dry account of the local arts. But, as Moorehouse states, "story making is a way of breaking the silence between us ... it permits us freedom ... in the face of the labyrinth of existence". And, finally, it brings "relief from our own pervading self".

I worry, too, that I am boring this imagined, invisible readership with these wholly selfish words, muttered in ink at a time of creative nostalgia (rather than in the logical laws of text to which I usually succumb, dry as the Adelaide plains). As Phil Elvrum (The Microphones/ Mt. Eerie) stated shyly in yesterday's breakfast forum, "attention is a commodity ... and we can choose how to spend it." Whilst we drank black coffee and fanned ourselves from the pervading Newcastle heat, he went on... "We're spread thin ... by the glut of things to pay attention to".

Don't get me wrong as you read these awkwardly passionate paragraphs (clumsy as a young lover pulling at stubborn buttons) - my intention is not to instill some kind of polemic outcry against high art, successful artists, or the bustling industry that is art. In a way, all of these things are a highly valuable and necessary part of this larger creative being. At the same time, though, it feels wonderful to wake up and remember that our imagination is still alive and that nobody has any right to control or shape it except ourselves. It is we who own the authority over our imagination, not the institution, the academy or the government. That is why our imaginations are so powerful, so horrific, so gloriously ours!

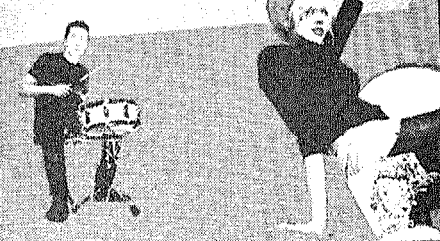
* Actual quote from unnamed undergraduate photography teacher.

Video Watch

Angus Chisholm tells us what's what in the music video world



THE TING TINGS



The Ting Tings 'That's Not My Name'

The Ting Tings are annoying me because I can't decide if they're a genuinely talented electro pop outfit with potential or just another British flash-in-the-pan Glastonbury/Radio One breakout success story that'll fade into obscurity in a couple of years. I guess we'll have to wait for their second album to make that kind of judgment, given the hit and miss nature of their first. What I can say a bit more assuredly is that 'That's Not My Name' is really a pretty good pop song. It's witty and it builds toward an irresistible, energetic conclusion that looks like it'd go down well live. The video doesn't really do it justice, although it continues their interesting video aesthetic of being colourful but still feeling strangely muted. Anyway, not much happens, they perform the song which is an excuse for lead Katie White to rounce about looking pretty and the band's other half, Jules De Martino, to sit behind his drum kit looking like a douchebag. Take the sunnies off man, honestly.



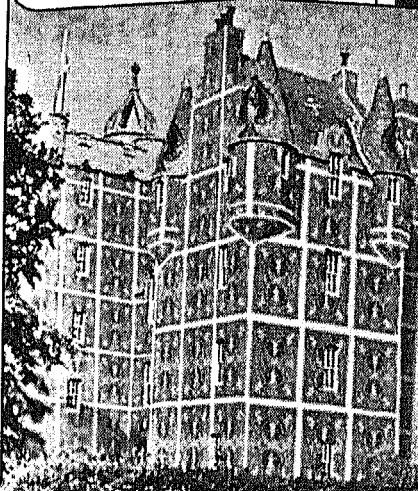
Katy Perry 'I Kissed a Girl'

I wasn't going to write about this song because it's been around for a while but I was tempted to when I read it described somewhere as a 'lesbian anthem'. Come again? I don't profess to be au fait with gay or lesbian culture, but it would be surprising if this song was an anthem to anyone but skanky attention seekers. I'm pretty sure she doesn't even lay so much as a finger on another girl in the video, which is quite prudish in this post-Britney/Madonna pushing era and with lines like "I kissed a girl and I liked it; hope my boyfriend don't mind it" and "it felt so wrong; it felt so right; don't mean I'm in love tonight", it's hardly breaking down the walls of heteronormativity is it?



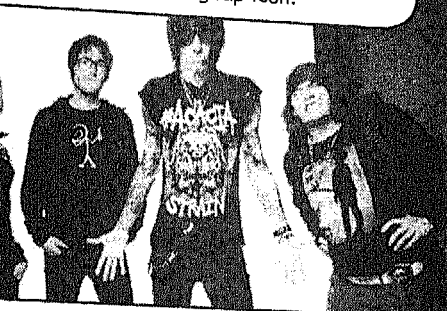
Radiohead 'House of Cards'

If this video was by any other band the reaction would be something like 'heh, nice visual gimmick'. This is Radiohead though, so the reaction is more like 'HOLY FUCK! RADIOHEAD ARE AMAZING! THIS VIDEO IS AMAZING! THE LAYERS! THE DENSITY! THOM YORKE'S WONKY EYE CAN SEE THE WORLD IN WAYS THAT US MERE MORTALS COULD NEVER BEGIN TO COMPREHEND!' etc and so on. The reality, as it usually is, is probably somewhere in between (well, I'd probably lean towards the more understated reaction). The song itself fits in with a sizeable chunk of the tracks in Radiohead's oeuvre, in that it's beautifully arranged and technically excellent, but just not particularly interesting. In the eyes of hardcore Radiohead fans, that statement probably makes me seem like a pleb. But hey, at least I've never owned *Pablo Honey*.



VH1 Flavour of Love

Even though it's not a music video, I can't really resist the urge to talk about this show, which I find deeply annoying. It probably wouldn't bother me to such an extent if it wasn't for the fact that the focus of the show was Flavor Flav, hype man for one of the most incendiary acts in contemporary music history (Public Enemy). It might even be an instance of passable car crash reality-TV, but it doesn't matter. Flav was always the court jester of Public Enemy, the perfect balance to Chuck D's carefully measured fury, but that shouldn't undermine his role in the group in their heyday: he was a vital part of making PE what they were, and that was relevant, exciting and interesting, even if you didn't necessarily agree with their politics (this is in the late 80s and early 90s, I'm deliberately neglecting, y'know, everything they've made since). Maybe he has fallen on hard times since, which would explain why he's doing this show, but it's still incredibly dispiriting to see one of the people involved in the track 'She Watch Channel Zero?!' on a trashy TV show like this. His trademark clock-necklaces are turned from an icon representing a catalyst for community awareness into an ironic piece of tragic bling for a fading rap icon.



Metro Station 'Shake It'

Jesus, this is a terrible song and video. Has hip-hop culture not been sufficiently, rapaciously exploited in the last 20+ years for commercial gain that these dickheads feel the need to go and make a video that features equally badly dressed dickheads break dancing to a song that no b-boy in their right mind would dance to, just to make a bit of a flash video? I don't get it either. I can't recall from the top of my head, but haven't there already been just short of a million music videos that feature people break dancing and little else, occasionally in slow motion. They're not even good (the dancers, I mean). Their lead singer is an ugly, charmless mofo too. Just saying, like.

Oh right, the song. By the time you get over the atrociousness of what you're seeing, you vaguely recall hearing some kind of song with petrie-dish shallow production and vocals delivered in a barely pubescent squeal. Really fucking horrible stuff.

Matt Devine Spills the Blood

Having just recently become aware of Kill Hannah, I was very excited to get the chance to chat with lead singer Matt Devine. Back at home in Chicago after a lengthy US tour, a relaxed Matt was happy to talk about the bands prospects in Australia. "There's a lot of really cool things happening for us in Australia" he says, and he's right. 'Lips Like Morphine', the first single from their only album released in Australia (*Until There's Nothing Left of Us*) has reached number one on Channel V and is getting radio play across the country.

"What we want more than anything", Matt says, "is a tour down under, and you know, we heard these rumours about this tour that were up for in February" he adds coyly. After making him promise that they wouldn't be

another band to skip Adelaide, Matt said that he actually prefers playing shows in smaller towns. "The people party like they have nothing to lose, they're not too cool to move and shit like that", and besides, he adds, "we don't skip anything, you should see our US tour. If there's a gas station we'll play," he laughs (although I'm not entirely convinced he was joking). Kill Hannah are playing almost every single night up until November, "I'm trying to clone myself so I don't have to sing every night... but it's awesome, it's exhausting but it's what we've always wanted".

This upcoming tour will take them through the UK and across Europe, a trip they have embarked on several times before. So what's it like to play in countries where half of the

crowd probably doesn't understand what you're saying? "Don't say that! I'm sure they know what I'm saying" insists Matt, "the cool thing about speaking English is that you can be lazy your whole life, the rest of the world has to learn your language".

His use of the English language allows him to create poetic lyrics that circle around such themes as love and despair. Although some of his lyrics come purely from his imagination, the rest stem from events in his personal life. "I feel that the most interesting art is made by the most interesting people and I try never to go to sleep before five or six am every night, I tend to seize the day and so I just throw myself into unique experiences, and that's good inspiration for lyrics". According to Matt, one of the reasons that Kill Hannah are embraced by their fans is that the stories told by his lyrics really matter to them. "I think we relate to our fans a lot", he says. "We've spent a long time building our fan base one fan at a time in Chicago and we were rejected by every major label so many times

Parklife 2008

When the Parklife line-up was finalised I was more than a little unimpressed. My misery was compounded when I learnt that Goldfrapp were not including the 'arduous' journey through Adelaide as part of their 'busy' schedule. Despite all this, on Saturday 27th of September I still found myself at Botanic Park soaking up the sights and sounds of Parklife '08. So how was it?

When we entered we were confronted by Grafton Primary on the Air Stage. The Melbourne based act warmed up the already warm crowd, who were basking in the un-seasonally warm sun, with some of their better known offerings.

Next up was Neon Neon over on the Water Stage, one of many international acts on the bill. Things were going very well for this Swedish outfit until a large shirtless man stormed the stage, grabbed the mic and commandeered their set. Although this was all part of the act, it left my friends and I feeling a little cold.

The day meandered on and people were beginning to wilt in the heat. But the moment the cool change blew through, the quality of the music seemed to step up a notch. Following the advice of people who knew better, I headed back to the Air Stage and caught the tail end of a DJ set from Ajax. The Aussie DJ produced one of my highlights of the day when he dropped Metallica's 'Enter Sandman' into the mix. But the moment was short-lived and he was more than upstaged by the act which followed.

Soulwax, which as far as I could tell, comprised at least one half of headline

act 2ManyDj's, really was the point at which the day began for me. Playing as a hybrid act with some live instrumentation and other electronic, these guys produced some amazing sounds and rocked the crowd.

We then trundled back over to catch the end of Diplo and get a good spot for one of the co-headliners. Peaches was an experience for the eyes and ears. Despite some 'slight' technical problems at the beginning of her set, which one of my friends believed was attributable to the gimp masks she and her band were wearing when they came on stage, she recovered well and delivered. Between scaling the scaffolding and multiple costume changes, the Canadian reversed sexual roles and told the crowd that 'she never goes home without a piece of meat' and 'two guys for every girl' is her preference. Female gender studies students across the land rejoiced.

The main event soon followed and 2ManyDj's appeared to little fanfare. Once the crowd however realised what they were witnessing, they soon went wild. The headliners did not disappoint and dropped some solid mixes for over an hour. At this time, unfortunately, I was tiring of the Water Stage slightly and thought I might soak up the festival vibe a little more before the early finishing time caught us out.

Over to the Earth Stage we trundled where we were subjected to Dizzy Rascal and some of his mediocre 'music'. Although this was not my cup of tea there certainly were plenty of people there who thought otherwise. Having decided Mr. Rascal did not need our support (which we wouldn't have given anyway), we decided to check out Does it Offend You, Yeah?



That the group took their title from an episode of *The Office* was enough to elevate them in my eyes. But the sounds they produced cemented their standing as my favourite act of the day. Even though the singer was forced to play the set sitting down, after breaking his leg during the previous show, it was still easy to see that the music was capable of making people throw themselves around...violently.

After being blown away by their set, we were surprised to see that 2ManyDj's were still playing! After almost two hours this was impressive. We meandered over and witnessed the end of the festival which comprised of the Belgium based DJ's dropping in Blur's 'Parklife' into their set. Undoubtedly it was a fitting end to a very impressive day.

Mitch Waters

that we just stopped relying on anyone except ourselves. So I think that mentality and that attitude carries over to the fan base. They know that we've earned what we've got".

And what they have got is a world wide legion of die-hard fans, with over 200,000 Myspace friends, sold out shows across the world, and chapters of the Kill Hannah Kollektive (their official fan club) springing up in countries they have not even visited yet (including Australia). Despite the level of success they have achieved, Kill Hannah are still relatively unknown in mainstream media. "I definitely consider us underground. I really like still having our roots", he says. "We're very happy with the level of success we have at this point, it's barely manageable. I can't really even imagine what it's like to be kind of a household name, but you know, we're ambitious too so we're going for that".

Although Kill Hannah have only released one album in Australia, in the fourteen years they have been together the band has released



four albums, seven EPs, three compilation albums and a DVD in America and the UK. They are currently writing material for a new album, which they plan to record at Christmas time. The writing process for Matt is different with each song, "some songs start with a drumbeat, some songs start with a word, they're all different... it can really start anywhere with any one instrument". According to Matt, the new songs are "a little more daring", taking their sound to the next level. "It's a little more artistic I think.

it's hard to say that though... I don't want to make the record label panic!" There's little chance of that though: "we'll always have a commercial streak to our sound", he says, "but I want to start thinking a little more outside the box on this record". The band's signature sound is often compared to The Cure and Smashing Pumpkins, and although Matt admits that they have greatly influenced their music, he lists other underground bands as their "unsung heroes". The Psychedelic Furs, Catherine Wheel and Ride, just to name a few. "I've always thought of these bands as kind of household names, but I guess they aren't", he says. Along with music that inspires the Kill Hannah sound, Matt listens to music that has nothing to do with them, "sometimes I listen to metal just because it's hilarious to me, or even reggae or classical... just things to clear my head". But, showing just how much he does have in common with his fans, Matt says "I listen to a lot of Kill Hannah actually, I just enjoy it when we're home".

Erin Veide

Holly Throsby, Hear her Call

The voice of Sydney singer/songwriter Holly Throsby is unmistakable. Fragile and delicate, while at the same time utterly unique and interesting, the music of Holly Throsby certainly captures you with its beauty. After her first two albums, *On Night* (2004) and *Under the Town* (2006), Holly now brings us her latest creation *A Loud Call*. While her first two albums were recorded in a small house on Saddleback Mountain on the south coast of NSW, Holly decided to head to Nashville to record her third album. I had the chance to chat with Holly about *A Loud Call*, which features special guests including Bonnie 'Prince' Billy and members of Lambchop and Silver Jews.

"I went to Nashville specifically to work with a producer called Mark Nevers," Holly explains. "I guess the reason I wanted to work with Mark in the first place is because he's made some albums that I really love, including *Master and Everyone* by Bonnie 'Prince' Billy and pretty much all the recent Lambchop records and I was really lucky in that those guys are all locals. Will Oldham just finished recording the Bonnie 'Prince' Billy record the week before we got there so he was still around, and the Lambchop and Silver Jews guys are all Nashville locals and friends of Marky's so when I said I needed various instruments played, it turned out to be those people which was a real thrill for us."

While Holly has worked with various artists during her music career, and has sung duets with Sarah Blasko, Glen Hansard (The Frames), Jack Ladder, New Buffalo, Hayden and Andrew Bird among others, her duet with Bonnie 'Prince' Billy (Will Oldham)

on *A Loud Call* was certainly a special collaboration."

"I think the highlight on this record is the duet with Will Oldham because he's a real hero of mine and I think he sounds so perfect on that song," says Holly. "I've done a lot of songs with other people and sung their songs or cover songs and it was amazing to have someone like that sing a song that I wrote, that was a real highlight for me."

A song which particularly grabbed my attention on the record is 'The Time It Takes' (Track 5), because of the rather erratic combination of instruments jumbled together at the end of the track. I asked Holly about the creation of this song...

"You know that song was mainly played by me and Bree van Reyk, who is my drummer," says Holly. "Her and Mark had this idea to get this bicycle wheel out in Marky's back garden and put a playing card in the wheel and spin the wheel so it made this kind of flapping noise with the playing card. And at the end there, Bree and I play two different piano parts and she overdubs with glockenspiel and all kinds of crazy instruments. But that song was really kind of ridiculous in its creation and one of the least live kind of played songs on the record. It was more of a patchwork effort in the end there."

Another cool thing that I found out about Holly Throsby is that she's not only a talented singer and musician, but she is also quite an artist, and has written and illustrated a couple of comic books! Although Holly was very modest about her photocopied and stapled together comic



books sold at merchandise desks after shows, I was impressed nonetheless.

"I do them to go with the records," she says. "They were a bit of a runaway merch success a few tours ago and we've sold hundreds and hundreds of them... I like drawing and for this tour coming up we've got some new T-shirts done of a drawing that I did and you know it's just something I enjoy doing in my spare time... it's my little hobby."

And if you want to grab one of these nifty comic books, or just listen to the beautiful songs on her new album, make sure you catch Holly Throsby during her national tour, or snap up a copy of *A Loud Call* out now in record stores.

Amelia Dougherty



The Butterfly Effect

The Butterfly Effect are one of the premier hard rock acts in the country. Since their self-produced EP was picked up by Triple J they have consistently filled the airwaves—and Australia's medium sized venues—with their distinctive and destructive brand of melodic hard rock.

I spoke to drummer and founding member Ben Hall in between rehearsal sessions for the impending national tour. "We're all really pumped for this national tour. I mean we haven't properly been on the road for almost an entire year." For The Butterfly Effect, this hiatus is clearly too long to bear as touring has played a massive role in the initial and continued success of the band. Ben tells me how in the early days they would jump in a van and hit the road nearly every six weeks. "This tour is pretty short, really, at only six or so weeks. For the second LP we were on the road for almost 12." Although touring is important, Ben primarily puts the band's success down to the national radio airplay they received. "Our big break was obviously when Triple J picked up the EP. I mean touring is fun, but it's difficult if you're not getting any airplay."

The rise of The Butterfly Effect can be put down to good fortune and hard work. After their self-produced debut EP was picked up by national radio in 2002, the band toured extensively building up a loyal fan base and eventually signed a deal with Roadshow. 'Crave', the first single off of their debut LP *Begins Here*, was released to a positive response at the end of 2002, reaching number 1 on the Alternative Music chart, and number 59 on the Aria charts.

In August of 2003, the band released their much anticipated debut which peaked at number 24 on the Aria chart and has sold more than 30,000 copies to date. The success of *Begins Here* was quickly followed by an extensive overseas tour which took the band through continental Western Europe and the UK. The all important sophomore release, *Imago*, was a resounding success for the band. The LP debuted at no.2 on the Aria charts and was certified gold in less than nine weeks. Needless to say, The Butterfly Effect responded to this success in the only way they knew how, by embarking on another national tour which included a slot on the 2007 Big Day Out.

Dedicated music dude, Mitch Waters, speaks to The Butterfly Effect's Ben Hall about metal, metal and more...

The band have spent the better part of the last year working on material for a new album holed up in NSW's Grove Studios with producer Forrester Savell (Karnivool).

Clearly the success of the band cannot be understated. I asked Ben if such success was a double edged sword, and if the pressure had changed the way the band approached the new CD. "I mean you're always going to pick up some new fans and lose some old ones. But I'm confident that the core group will remain. At the end of the day the pressure is only ever from yourself."

Although Ben is a devoted fan of several classic heavy metal outfits, he stops short of labelling the band as 'metal'. "I think we're probably closer to heavy rock." Ben emphasises the similarities between his group and the burgeoning group of Australian hard rock acts like Karnivool, COG, Dead Letter Circus and Trial Kennedy, the last of which the band will be taking out on the road this October. "They (Trial Kennedy) are a really nice easy going bunch of guys. And for us it's really important to have a good vibe on the road."

The large number of live shows that the Butterfly Effect has played in the last few years has made it difficult for Ben to isolate a favourite live moment. He tells me that the regional centres tend to be a little more responsive than the larger centres. "Having said that, Adelaide is always very good to us. We're looking forward to getting back there." Adelaide's small yet devoted group of hard music fans no doubt feel the same. 'Window and the Watcher', the first single from their third LP *The Final Conversation of Kings* is already on high rotation ahead of the September 20th album release date. If 'Window' is anything to go by, then the new album will surely live up to the high expectations of the bands loyal fans.

The Final Conversation of Kings will hit the shops and the net on September the 20th.

The band will play HQ on November 9th.

Mitch Waters



Children Collide

For a relatively new band, releasing a debut album is your defining moment. Like a 16-year-old-boy losing his virginity, they could be forgiven for feeling nervous anticipation, like their lives are depending on it - after all, there are record label executives so hungry for their money that the band went into a three-month recording binge over in La La Land with a shit-hot producer. But Children Collide seem to be taking it all in their stride, not letting the formalities get in the way of what should be an exciting time for a band hitting their stride. Through the crackling of an almost-out-of-range mobile, Children Collide's drummer (incidentally their fourth in three years), Ryan Caesar spoke with the excitement of a kid at Christmas when explaining the thrill of working with legendary producer Dave Sardy (Oasis, Wolfmother, LCD Soundsystem) on their new album.

"Yeah it was awesome, he was also in one of my favourite bands called Barkmarket when I was growing up so it was pretty cool recording with him. He's into a lot of the same music as us so when we first met him we just sat down and talked about our favourite bands and he instantly knew how we wanted the album to sound."

"We were staying right in the middle of Hollywood and it was cool for about the first two weeks, actually probably the first week and then it got a bit too hectic so we had to get out into the suburbs to stop from going insane"

Needless to say he had a big influence on the overall sound of their debut. "Yeah, especially with a lot of the tones on the album y'know, that's his thing so we listened to him a lot," Ryan recalled with a laugh.

Speaking from a rehearsal room in inner-city Melbourne I get the impression that Ryan feels like a kid in a candy shop as the newish drummer for Children Collide, as he reminds me of their current tour with Australian heavyweights, The Living End.

"Man, the tour's pretty much been sold out across the country so it's good to know that you're walking out to a packed room every night. They're lovely, lovely guys and we've got the same manager so it's a bit of a family affair I suppose. Plus our rider also increases in size on larger tours!"

So what can you expect in a Children Collider rider? "Well, a bottle of Jameson's Whisky which leads to fights if we drink too much of it, a bottle of vodka, plenty of beers, cider, yeah we're looked after!"

'Looked after' does seem a bit of an understatement when you note

that there are only three members in the band, although you wouldn't figure it after listening to their tracks on record. They have a sound that could fill out a stadium, yet possesses an earthly charm that has yet to leak to a more mainstream audience. To capture that sound, the boys packed their bags and flew to LA to work with Dave Sardy, feeling the need like many big Australian acts, to leave home to produce their best work.

"Well we definitely went over because of Dave, but I think we could have done just as good a job over here if he had come over, but I mean his studio is full of incredible equipment that would have been extremely hard to find in any studios in Australia."

"I think it took us something like three months to record everything but I was finished my drum parts after a fortnight. I tracked my drums at this place called Sunset Sounds where they did all The Doors albums and Led Zeppelin albums, The Rolling Stones. I think Prince used to live there, it was weird. Then we moved to Dave's studio which is unreal - it's a mansion in the middle of Hollywood hills, so I just got to hang out in this mansion for a couple of months, it was awesome!"

Living the dream of any young wannabe rock star, Children Collide shackled up in an apartment in the dead centre of Hollywood, and despite rubbing shoulders with some A-List celebrities (including an eagle eye spotting of "Professor Lupin or something from Harry Potter") it all became a bit too much.

"We were staying right in the middle of Hollywood and it was cool for about the first two weeks, actually probably the first week and then it got a bit too hectic so we had to get out into the suburbs to stop from going insane. We played a couple of gigs while we were over there just to make ourselves feel more comfortable. We played some shows at the Viper Room, actually we were the last band to play there before it got refurbished which is a bit of a claim to fame I suppose."

With the album, *The Long Now* due out October 11, Children Collide are about to embark on yet another national tour, this time as headliners, and if Ryan's genuine excitement for this band is any sort of gauge, these shows will go off. And as our conversation draws to a close, I ask him his plans for the day...

"Oh, I've got a practise for this other band I'm playing in for a Brisbane Festival on the weekend and I don't know any of the songs. It's Ella Hooper's new project so I should get cracking!"

Any bands in need of a drummer, just give Ryan a call.

Eddy Sheens

CD REVIEWS



TIGERCITY
PRETEND NOT TO LOVE
STRANGE FEELING

In our day and age, dance music has evolved into a dirty, crunchy beast, and the aesthetics which accompany dance music have changed into a mess of post-ironic references and bad headbands. Brooklyn's Tigercity are striving to bring the "earnestness" back to dance music - they make songs that dudes would probably serenade their new wives with at wedding receptions, in front of all the guests.

Their most recent EP, *Pretend Not To Love*, is a colourful, falsetto-filled smorgasbord of smoothness that answers the age-old question: what if Prince sung for Hall & Oates? On opener 'Powerstripe' frontman Bill Gillim sings "I don't wanna be alone tonight", and actually means it, as sweet synths are played, which remind one of twinkling stars. The twangy guitar on 'Are You Sensation' is so smooth and processed that it sounds almost plastic - kind of Strokes-by-way-of-Bee Gees.

The EP's highest point is the pop masterpiece 'Other Girls'. The opening synth riff is like butter melting in rhythm, while the lyrics are nothing short of pop genius - how many times have you wanted to tell a girl "It's nothing that you did / It's just everything the other girls do". Simple, yet so perfect. The second half of the song becomes a stomping, heart-draining journey through heartbreak and love. I mean it.

'Dark Water' features a genius pop guitar hook/chorus combo that would make the Cars proud, while 'Let Her Go' is a beautiful, atmospheric track full of swirling, cosmic synths that sound like Vangelis remixing an *Off the Wall*-era Michael Jackson hit.

The band's musicianship throughout the record is fantastically understated - it's obvious the dudes can play "better", more intricate parts, but their devotions to pop music alter their judgments for the better, so that they play only what is needed to make the song vibrant and lush, never messy.

Out of the squillion of bands that dabble in dance music these days, Tigercity have quietly accomplished something which so few of them have: they make you feel like you're dancing with purpose, and that you're driven by sincere, non-ironic emotion.

Art Zhoviev



MONKEY
JOURNEY TO THE WEST
XL RECORDINGS

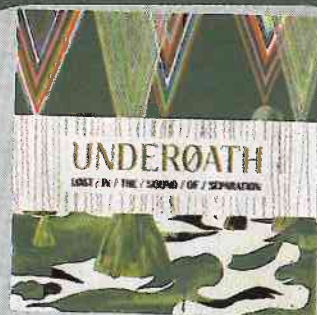
A stage adaptation of the 16th Century Chinese novel 'Journey to the West', by Wu Cheng'en, *Monkey* is a classical Chinese opera/experimental electronica soundtrack composed by Blur's Damon Albarn, along with Jamie Hewlett and Chinese actor-director Chen Shi-Zheng.

Described by Damon as "King Arthur - meets - Beowulf", *Monkey* is based around the story of a passage to India involving the Monkey King Sun Wu Kong in the company of the Buddhist monk Tripitaka. It's sung in Chinese and involves various classical Chinese instruments but to even begin to strip down its musical elements to a crude description is something of nonsense. *Monkey* is completely beyond its time which far surpasses the other 'experimental' music of today.

The opening track, 'Monkey's World,' contains orthodox Chinese arrangements mixed with a cheeky and innovative electronic part along with a punchy bassline, the result being something completely out of this world. With 'Monkey Bee', again listeners are immersed into a fantastical musical world, where there are no boundaries to what can be heard. It starts off slowly with a soft bassline and soft vocal harmonies and then sets off into an elaborate synth part, eventually exploding into an exhilarating mix of all of the parts together. 'O Mi To Fu,' can be described as oriental Daft Punk, or something crazy like that. The sounds heard on this soundtrack are just so incredibly innovative and imaginative, probably the result of recording in an authentic Maoist studio. Crazy still (i.e. unbelievably astonishing, oh my god, I can't believe this exists), 'Confessions of a Pig,' starts off with, yes, what sounds like a talking pig like creature, accompanied with a suspenseful violin part.

Monkey is insanely brilliant. You must listen to this, if you need something new to be inspired by - it's definitely this. Hopefully now, with a creation so utterly enchanting, some people will realize Damon's greatest accomplishment was not only 'Song 2!'

Stamatina Hasiotis



UNDEROATH
LOST IN THE SOUND OF
SEPARATION
TOOTH & NAIL RECORDS

After a couple of listens to Underoath's latest offering, *Lost in the Sound of Separation*, I was ready to write it off as *Define the Great Line* number two. At first listen, it sounds very similar to their last album, which isn't an entirely bad thing; *Define the Great Line* was a huge step forward for the band and their best release to date. However, the more I listened to *Lost in the Sound of Separation* it became clear to me that their sound has evolved and developed even further. It is like a hybrid of their previous CDs, but taken further both musically and lyrically.

Being a Christian band, Underoath has peppered the album with many references to God and Jesus, even more than in the past. In many ways it is like a concept album: themes of pain, redemption, forgiveness, and hope entwine throughout all of the songs, detailing the bands personal struggles and how their faith keeps them going. However, the lyrical themes are so universal that that they can hold meaning even for those of us that are not religious. The music itself reflects the changing moods of the articulate lyrics. It can go from calm to chaos in an instant, pulling the listener from the more ambient moments into a sense of urgency and destruction.

At times there are thrashing guitars and frenzied drum beats, while at others, nothing more than a synthesised beat and a cello; often the two extremes appear in the one song, such as the closing track 'Desolate Earth: The End is Near'. One of the best songs on the album is 'A Fault Line, a Fault of Mine', it utilises both screaming and straight singing (as does the rest of the CD), and is very dynamic and catchy. Another highlight is the hauntingly beautiful 'Too Bright to See Too Loud to Hear'. This ballad style track picks up the beat half way through with clapping hands accompanying the drums, as the words "Good god, can you can still get us home?" repeats over and over.

Anyone who likes their hardcore a bit more interesting should definitely pick this CD up, if you give it a go I guarantee you won't be disappointed.

Erin Veide

Top 5 2008

Not Quite Dead Yet

Subbies, Contributors and Editors share their top 5 musical favourites discovered in the year almost gone.



B

Our deliciously tasty music subbies B and Millsie. They've done an amazing job this year keeping us bitten by the music bug. Good enough to eat!



Millsie

It's been a year of rediscovery for me, and with one notable exception I have mainly been listening to music not released in 2008. So, in no particular order, here are the top 5 tracks of my 2008.

1. Fuck Buttons - 'Sweet Love for Planet Earth'

The notable exception—ok, so the title sounds like it could be some lame hippy rant, but this gem is anything but. I was absolutely blown away by *Street Horrrsing*, and this was the track that started it all off. It's a delicate, brutal and scary introduction to one of the most astonishing releases of this year.

2. Adam Green - 'Hard to be a Girl'

Utterly devastated that I am not going to be able to make any of his gigs in Australia, *Friends of Mine* has been one of my most listened-to albums this year. At only one minute and 42 seconds, this is such a perfectly sweet country-tinged ditty that it's hard to not listen to it over and over again, and it never gets less charming.

3. The Smiths - 'Miserable Lie'

The Queen is Dead was always my favourite album from Moz and the boys, but 2008 saw me falling in love with the self-titled album and this song in particular. The mopey droney wrist-slashing beginning makes way for a bouncy bass line and falsetto-soaked slice of heaven. Yes, the lyrics are classic Smiths—depressed and miserable—but I, for one, cannot listen to this song without wanting to 80's dance all over the place.

4. Siouxsie and the Banshees - 'Hong Kong Garden'

What's a year without Siouxsie Sioux? For some reason, this one was dusted off and dominated a lot of my listening time this year. Check out the clip for tips on how to dance in heels like some kind of awesome.

5. The Shangri-Las - 'Give Him a Great Big Kiss'

"When I say I'm in love, you best believe I'm in love, L-U-V". Possibly the greatest start to a song, ever. So good, The Cramps borrowed it. Pure 60's teen pop, with a bit of attitude.

1. The Dø - A Mouthful

A recent discovery for me which I simply can't stop listening to. After my sister recommended me to look up a band called 'The Dø' (yes impossible to find such a name on Google), I freakishly stumbled across the debut album from this French-Finnish duo after the cover caught my eye. *A Mouthful* has a bit of everything ranging from cruisy, laid back tunes, to rockier numbers, as well as a hint of hip-hop and even world music flavours. But the real highlight on this album is Olivia B. Merilahti's super sexy voice.

2. Whitley - The Submarine

A beautiful album with every song being an absolute winner. 2008 has seen my new love for the banjo, and I think this is partly due to Whitley's debut album *The Submarine*. My only disappointment is that the delicateness and vulnerability that Whitley shares with you through this album is somewhat thrown out the window once you experience his jokey, crude nature at a live concert.

3. MGMT - 'Kids'

I will never stop dancing to this song. *Oracular Spectacular* is a really great album, and 'Kids' is possibly my favourite song of 2008.

4. Bon Iver - 'Skinny Love'

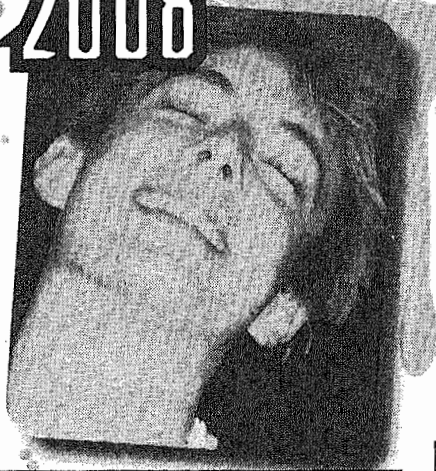
It's come to my attention this year that apparently I have a singer/songwriter obsession, and Bon Iver is certainly one of them. His album *For Emma, Forever Ago* is raw and organic and his standout track 'Skinny Love' rips my heart apart every time I listen to it. The fact that this album was created while Justin Vernon (Bon Iver) locked himself away in a cabin in the woods for 3 months in isolation makes it even more special. All I can say is who is Emma? Lucky girl.

5. Feist - 'I Feel It All'

I love that 2008 has seen a wave of fantastic music from talented female artists, including the likes of Laura Marling, Dawn Landes, Holly Throsby, Joan as Police Woman and Emiliana Torrini. I have really enjoyed listening to Feist's *The Reminder* this year, and the track 'I Feel It All' brightens up my day every time.

Top 5-2008

And we couldn't have done it without our lusciously cunning contributors!



Mitch Waters

1. MGMT - *Oracular Spectacular*

Probably the first CD I reviewed for On Dit and easily the best. Every track is a standout and wonderfully unique in its own right with 'Kids', 'Time to Pretend' and 'Electric Feel' near certainties for the Hottest 100. The real test for these guys will be if they can pull it off live when they make it down under at the end of the year.

2. Metallica - *Death Magnetic*

Just pipped at the post for No.1. This album is a true return to form for the gods of metal and my all-time favourite band bar none. It only failed to make first place due to one factor: originality. But that's not a bad thing of course 'cause if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Producer Rick Rubin's instructions to the band (that they consider their back catalogue) were clearly headed. The result is the best band in the world doing what they do best.

3. Conor Oberst - *Conor Oberst*

Always great to get music out of Conor no matter what guise he assumes. This record pays homage to Bob Dylan in a way that most may be unhappy with. However, this diehard fan cannot find a reason to complain and Conor has once again struck gold. This is more than enough to tide me over until the next Bright Eyes release rolls around.

4. Coldplay - *Viva la Vida*

God only knows the pressure that these guys must've been under to produce a commercially successful album. On that score, unsurprisingly, they haven't failed. What is more commendable is the way that the band they have redefined their sound and pushed the boundaries of the humble pop song. All this while still offering something listenable. Easily their best work to date.

5. Jess Atkinson - *The Watertline*

My favourite Australian release of the year without question. Atkinson is South Australia's finest and a name to watch. Do yourself a favour and go and catch him live.



Erin Veide

It was a bit of a struggle to narrow down the best releases of this year down to just five, as there have been so many albums rocking my stereo in the past months. But, after several re-writes, here is a countdown of my favourites.

1. Underoath - *Lost in the Sound of Separation*

I only got this a week ago and haven't been able to stop listening to it. It is beautiful yet ferocious, melodic yet anthemic, frightening and astounding both at the same time; it is truly a great album.

2. Bury Your Dead - *Self titled*

Number two is Bury Your Dead's self-titled album. This is everything a metal/hardcore CD should be... heavy, unrelenting, and with lyrics full of rage. From start to finish it doesn't let up, and I can't help but bang my head along with the riotous songs that have just enough melody to get caught in your head for days on end.

3. Story of the Year - *The Black Swan*

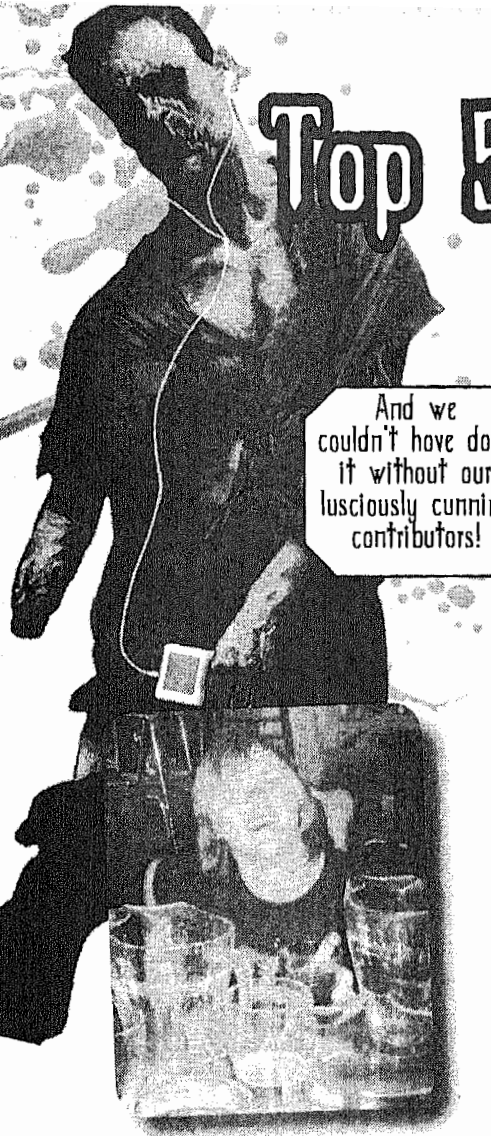
By far their best album, it is way more rock than anything they have done before, but is still catchy as hell. Full of belting guitars and drums, but also with a couple of ballads, the album is really easy to listen and thrash around to.

4. From First to Last - *Self titled*

The band has been known for their eloquent and twisted lyrics that due to the departure of singer and lyricist Sonny Moore, are not present on this album. Without the peculiar vocals, it just isn't as great as their past albums; but if you can fool your mind into thinking it is a different band, then it is an awesome emo/hardcore CD to listen to.

5. The Grates - *Teeth Lost, Hearts Won*

So fun and catchy, it picks up right where *Gravity Won't Get You High* left off and just gets better and better. It is impossible to listen to this CD without dancing and singing along to the rock-infused pop melodies.



Jimmy Gartner

1. The Gutter Twins - 'All Misery/Flowers'

The highlight of the collaboration between alt-rock icons Mark Lanegan and Greg Dulli. Feel chills as Lanegan croons "Little girls might twitch at the way I itch/But the way I burn is a son of a bitch".

2. The Black Keys - 'Things Ain't Like They Used To Be'

Touching album closer from the Akron boys, with an amazing harmonious chorus.

3. The Sea Thieves - 'Couldn't Think That Fast'

A beautiful piece from a sweetly-flavoured Adelaide indie folk duo.

4. The Drones - 'The Minotaur'

An emphatic "Fuck yeah" is all I can say about them. Can't wait to hear the full album.

5. Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds - 'More News From Nowhere'

"Alina she starts screaming/her cheeks are full of psychotropic leaves/Her extinction was nearly absolute/When she turned her back on me," Nick sings in this smooth, ice-cold conclusion to one of his better albums.



Stamyo (oh, just this once!) Hasiotis

1. Eddy Current Suppression Ring - 'Precious Rose'

Man, this band knows how to play live and how to write an amazing guitar song! 'Precious Rose' is a reminder that we have the choice to listen to some damn fine music these days!

2. Elastica - 'Annie'

Elastica are now long defunct, and they only made 2 albums in the space of about 10 years, the second being full of covers of obscure German punk bands. Nevertheless, their debut album was/is the best thing in the world. 'Annie' is about a minuteish long but it's the best minute of girly Wire-esque Brit punk that you'll ever hear. Well, with the exception of the 14 other tracks. (What the hell is that crap with The Gossip sampling 'Connection'? (ewww!))

3. Sonic Youth - 'No Queen Blues'

From their album *Washing Machine*, this track makes my heart spin around like one. Anyway, yes 'No Queen Blues' - the lyrics are genius, the riff is genius, Thurston Moore is genius, and Sonic Youth are genius.

4. The Vines - Melodia

I've pretty much loved The Vines since *Highly Evolved*. And I won't lie: Craig is a good looking man. Although *Melodia* isn't as good as their others, it's better than the other crap out now. My favourite track is 'Merry-Go-Round,' which features a whole lot of guitar noises (I think it's been well established, I like my guitar noise, but you know, I'm also a sucker for Brian Eno and sweet, sweet keys) - who wouldn't love that?

5. Blur - 'He Thought of Cars'

When I ask people what their favourite Blur song is, the majority say 'Song 2'. I have news for you all - Blur has OTHER utterly brilliant songs, like 'He Thought of Cars', and pretty much everything on *The Great Escape*. Damon's voice is so dreamy and wistful, and the melody is just beautiful. I absolutely love everything Blur has ever produced!



Team CMN, your faithful Editors, Catty, Mac Daddy & Phot Natty Top 5 Most Memorable of 2008

1. Ben Kweller gig at Fowlers

Earlier this year, all of the eds were lucky to have a bonding sesh with the man himself; dreamy, steamy Ben Kweller. It was a magical night and we all broke it down to gorgeous tracks like 'Sundress' and 'Butterflies.' He went above and beyond his call of duty, marriage proposals ensued and the sex reminded us of eating spaghetti - messy but satisfying.

2. 'Homecoming' - Kanye West Feat. Chris Martin.

Apart from Chris Martin being the man of Nat's dreams, this track holds an especially special place in the eds' hearts. The tension builds up, excitement fills the air, we finalise the last page, put it into the folder and then the beat rings out. After hours upon hours of eating junk food and communicating solely by email, we're coming home!

3. 'Mr Wolf (What's the Time)' - The Herbs

They are on way too many happy high herbs. Possibly the most annoying song ever known to human kind. Nat would put it on to annoy the shit out of the others, but that's not the best part. It was given to us on a compilation from the *Samizdat* (local zine) kids, trying to promote their first issue. Apparently good songs to listen to while reading their zine. In the case of 'Mr Wolf (What's the Time)' where he insists on telling us what the time is every hour, on the hour, we think not.

4. Whitley - in general

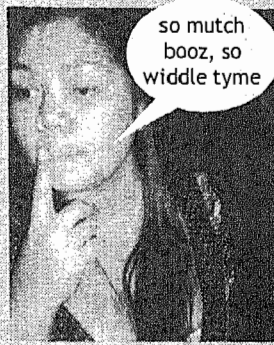
Subdued and melodic, Whitley is totally sweet and can be tuned out when you're Google image searching, *always with the safe search on*. He does a mean Bjork cover, and is great live in a typical, hot singer-songwriter out of Melbourne way. We listen to him a lot, which iTunes Top 25 Most Played can vouch for.

5. Naff Musical Theatre

If it's rather uncool and there is song and dance involved, you can bet your bottom dollar the *On Dit* kids will be skipping along to get the front row seat. Scamming freebies for epics like *Miss Saigon* all come along with the deal of the grueling editorship, and let's be honest, who doesn't like watching gyratin' Vietnamese honeys? Special mention to the local award-winning production of *Les Mis...* I'm pretty sure we missed an *On Dit* deadline because of it!

Dishonorable mention:

'Neon Bible' on The Arcade Fire, which was unceremoniously deleted from Cat's computer by Mike upon announcing that it was the 'weak link' on the *Neon Bible* album. Well sorry!



so mutch
booz, so
widdle tyme

TJ'S NIGHTLIFE

"She knows, because she goes"

LOLS WITH

SOME HORROR-BLE THINGS ABOUT BEING OVERSEAS

(the life and times of a former nightlife sub-editor)

Earlier this year my little bubble consisting of - Adelaide University, Hindley Street and the Eastern Suburbs (this is simply where I live - try not to hold it against me, although I know most of you will, because most (if not all) - uni students who don't live in the east always (and unnecessarily) hate those who do. Unless you're an engineering student, in which case you don't care about anything but beer, boobs and barbeques..) Back to my point, my bubble began to get all too boring so I set off abroad, leaving not only the pages of *On Dit*, but everything else. It's been the trip of a lifetime and has really only just begun but *la vie* overseas is not all sunshine, smiles and Kodak moments and considering the theme of this edition, I thought I'd share with you the not so fun parts of my trip and by not so fun I mean down right *horror-ble*.

HACKNEY - A mere two days into my trip the ultimate backpacker disaster struck. Unbeknownst to me and my friend, we had booked to stay in London's worst borough, Hackney, and worst is no understatement. It was cheap and that was all we cared about. Nevertheless, one sunny afternoon we were minding our own business outside in a private section of our accommodation when an old black man walked over to us, bent down and stole my friends wallet. FUCK - is the first thing I thought as I sat there stunned. Luckily my friend quickly realised she had everything to lose so she got up and started running after the man yelling obscenities the entire way. What's even more lucky is that a pack of stoned teenage boys stopped the robber and gave back her wallet. When we reported this to the police and told other residents they couldn't believe she got it back, as no one ever does in Hackney. In short, although she got her wallet back, it was the scary as hell - don't go to Hackney.

STAIRS - Visiting old cities is always amazing, there is just one thing I cannot stand - stairs. Namely in Barcelona (or anywhere in Spain for that matter) and Montreal. Firstly there's the long train/plane/boat ride and then navigating your way around a completely unfamiliar city with your heavy, heavy

luggage. Finally you find your hostel, but lo and behold you've got to climb five flights of stairs just to get to your smelly bunk bed in a room shared with ten other people. I'm the first to admit I'm a lazy traveller and I despise - with a passion - those pro-active Kathmandu decked out dicks with maps and fanny packs - when I see them power up the stairs as if they're on *The Amazing Race*, I want to kill them. But seriously, for the rest of us normal travellers, how hard is it to get a lift?

AUSSIES - This is hard to put on my list as I have met some truly great Australians during my travels. But unfortunately they're a minority. Working in a hostel and travelling before that, I've met many Aussies and most of them seem to have arrived in Europe straight from Planet Bogan. Thousands of culturally ignorant, disrespectful and just disgusting youths roam the streets completely plastered and without a care or interest in the places they are visiting. I know all backpackers are out for a good time, and the bogan in me comes out to play from time to time, but there is a fine line between fun/funny and rude/stupid. I'm saddened to say that there are people over here that make me ashamed to be an Australian. 93.5% of Aussies I have encountered have either been :

- a - complaining about something
 - b - pissing on something
 - c - swearing at someone who doesn't speak English or,
 - d - vomiting
-Just like home.

CCD - This is pretty much every travellers' worst nightmare and it happened to me. A couple of weeks ago my friend and I set off from London to Edinburgh in search of a boozey weekend and Greek boy. Living in London is a constant losing battle with the budget, and so I had planned my weekend right down to the last pound/cider. I got to the train station early Monday morning after a phenomenal weekend (despite not finding the Greek boy) and had nothing left but my clothes, a strange bruise on my left knee and my credit card. I went to buy my ticket, not a care in the world until the ticket seller frowned and passed me a receipt that stated in bold letters - DECLINED. That's right, my credit card DECLINED (CCD). I started to sweat and go red in the face; my friend had decided to stay in Edinburgh to keep looking

for the Greek boy and I didn't even have credit to call her. Thankfully I didn't have to walk back to London. After waiting around stranded, distressed and having decided that my life was over and that I was going to die in an Edinburgh train station, a pack of sleazy Italian boys I had met the night before arrived and decided to buy me a ticket. I thank God everyday for those boys and the fact that in accepting their offer I didn't end up the bride of a big fat Italian wedding in Sicily two weeks later.

DENIM ON DENIM - Correct me if I'm wrong here but wearing denim with denim went out of fashion with the fall of *Beverly Hills 90210* and *Saved By The Bell*, no? Think again! Europe is full of denim on denim wearing weirdos. The biggest culprits come from Eastern European countries such as Russia, Bulgaria and Romania. Although I've seen an occasional Mexican in a blue jeans-denim jacket combo. This, in my opinion, is a mortal sin and should be the 11th commandment: Thou Shalt Not Wear Denim With Denim. I'm not sure why it mortifies me so much - perhaps because denim on denim usually goes hand in hand with acid-wash and a camel-toe. Sometimes they have denim material backpacks too! Eeek.

SLEAZY MEN - Say the words "hola chica, hola chica" to me and it's likely I'll turn around and punch you in the face. If you think Aussie men are bad, you ain't seen nothing yet. British men, especially those who work in construction, think the 'C' word is a compliment and will often whistle at you and invite you to their truck for some hot hot sex. I don't mean to be racist, but here is the breakdown well-known amongst young female travellers - Moroccans are only interested up until they steal all your belongings, Brazilians won't take no for an answer and Italians think they are God's gift to women and won't leave you alone until you tell them so. Creepy men are everywhere and unavoidable, the other day on the tube I caught a middle aged man using his phone to secretly take a photo of a girl who had her legs a little too far apart. There are many more unsavoury stories, which I can't even bring myself to put in the pages of *On Dit*. But trust me, two minutes away from Adelaide and Shane Warne could pass as your local priest.

TJ

MAC DADDY'S
TJ'S

NIGHTLIFE



shake ur
groov thang

MAC DADDY & TJ*

THE HORRORS OF NIGHTLIFE
IN ADELAIDE

Seeing as though our lovely TJ has contributed for our final hurrah one last column on the horrors of overseas travel and nightlife, I have decided to take the other approach and keep it local (no Channel 9 puns here.) Adelaide nightlife can be a scary experience for everyone, even for self-confessed experienced aficionados like myself.

Rape Square

In my circle of friends there is an actual square in the city that takes this title due to the fear that accompanies walking through it at night. I won't mention it specifically but I would recommend that generally walking alone through the city at night isn't the best option for ladies and gents alike, ESPECIALLY THROUGH THE SQUARES. It's more fun to party together so don't be a Nigel No Friends and stick with your peeps. No one likes a Negative Nelly.

Unplanned Vomit

In previous editions I have spoken of 'the vom-sesh' as my nemesis. The unplanned vomit is something that strikes fear in my heart. Personally, I haven't had to experience a moment such as this. I have, however, witnessed one at the UniBar. It was mid-afternoon too and a girl was on her way to

the toilet, covered her mouth and spewed as she was walking to the toilets. Gross AND scary.

Meningococcal

You're probably thinking, "Errr....excuse me... what?!?! This is not a medical exam." Well let me teach you a little unresearched lesson. I'm not exactly a hypochondriac, although it doesn't help that I have a Google Doctor as a friend, you know the type who can diagnose pancreatic cancer as long as they have five minutes and Internet access. So here's my advice. When you're bumpin' and grindin' on the d-floor and that lovely young lass who you've been eyeing off all night meanders over for a little hot and heavy action, keep this in mind; macking on with anyone could end in a nasty case of the meningococcal. Saliva swapping is the major cause of this. Scary shit. I was going to mention STDs but surely it's been done to death. No glove no love, no balloon no party... you get the gist.

Morning After

Don't worry, I'm not talking about anything to do with a Senate inquiry into RU486, I'm referring to the biggest horror of all... waking up in the morning to not only find that your head is pounding because you didn't listen to your mum's advice of drinking a glass of water every now and then, but then going through the "check-the-wallet" routine. There is

nothing worse than assuming there is still a couple of reds (or if you thought you were really lucky, 'pineapples' aka fiddys) in your wallet to find either nada or shrap. Ouch. 'Coyote ugly' can also be a killer the morning after, but I won't go into that.

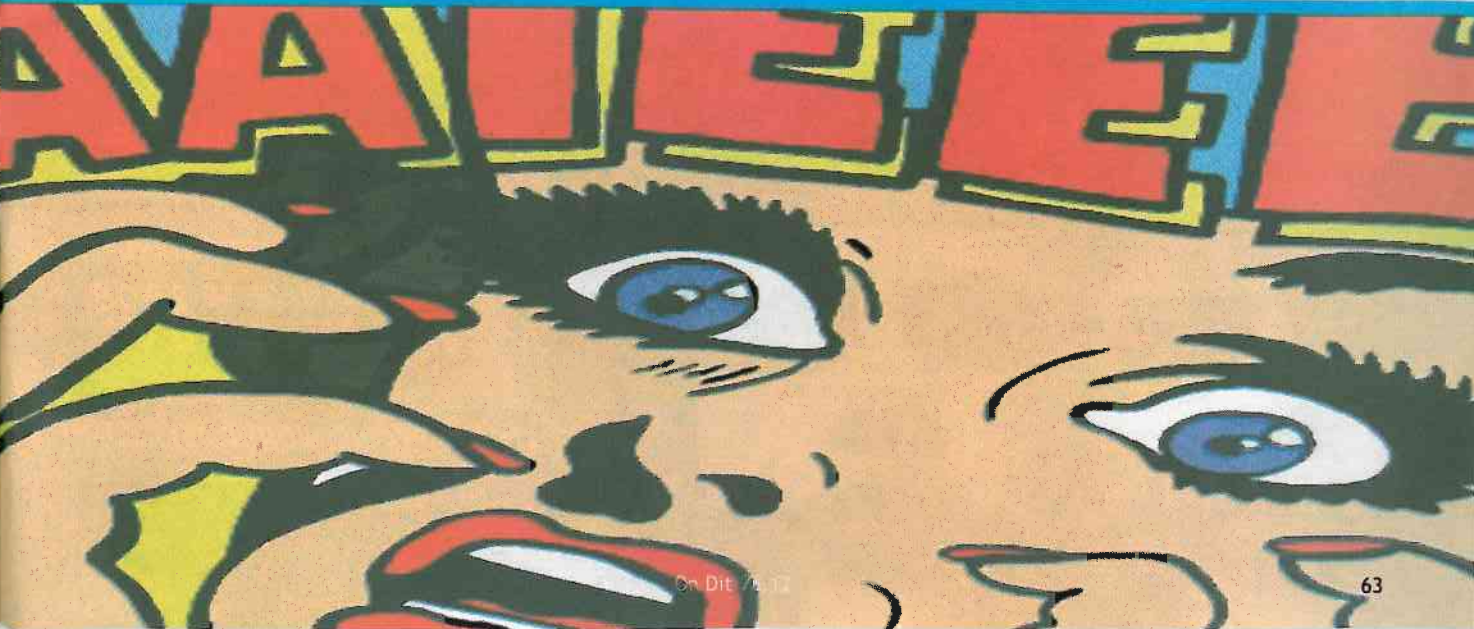
Honourable mention

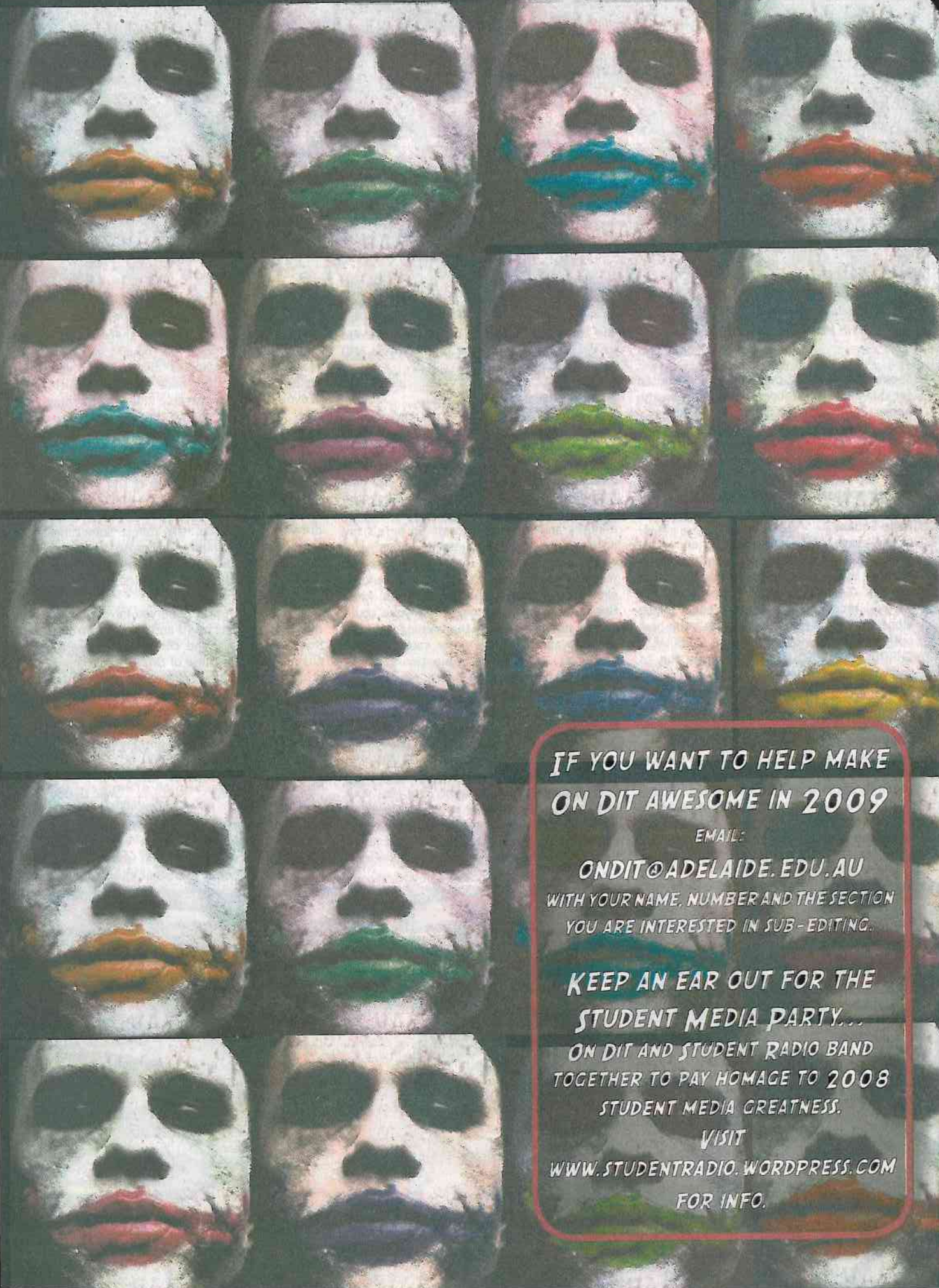
I could go on and on about the horrors of Adelaide nightlife (as well as the joys and GTs) but time is of the essence. An honourable mention goes to everyone's fundamental drinking companion, the toilet. Sometimes they are your saviours, but most times they instil fear into the hearts of all who encounter one that has been recently soiled. Ew.

Well it's been real. I hope you have enjoyed this year's efforts by TJ and myself. I'm sure K-Rudd, my liver and conservatives are all championing the cause of *On Dit's* continuous promotion of binge drinking. We are, after all, university students and to perpetuate the stereotype, would you expect any better? Thanks for reading our columns, thanks for recognising TJ at Jive but nothing for me and as always, drink responsibly.

Mac Daddy

Oh, and if you're wondering how TJ could write a longer article than myself from overseas, try doing a column and editing a whole newspaper, it's not that easy.





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