

# THE LINK Free

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**CAMBODIA:  
INSIDE THE BACKPACKER ECONOMY  
OF AN IMPOVERISHED NATION**



the Link

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3700 Willingdon Avenue  
Burnaby, BC V5G 3H2  
email: link@bcitsa.ca  
Tel: 604.432.8974  
Fax: 604.431.7619  
www.bcitsa.ca

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Contributors:

Chris Corday

Nikki Ewanyshyn

Patrick McKittrick

Eric Rosales

Victoria Revay

Managing Editor:

Geoff Gauthier  
link@bcitsa.ca

Assistant Editor:

Zoë Bake-Paterson

News Editor:

Trevor Hargreaves

Opinions Editor:

John Hughes

Entertainment Editor:

John Ackermann

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BCIT SA STUDENT ASSOCIATION

# SYNTHETIC BACKLASH

## REAL WRITER. REAL ARTICLE. REAL WORDS.

By Geoff Gauthier  
Managing Editor

Synthetic has become the dirty word of our time. Synthetic music is gone. Synthetic fabrics are toast... and speaking of toast, synthetic is definitely over in relation to food.

Synthetic flavours have fallen out of favour with North Americans, possibly in their quest to become fit, most likely on account of all the synthetic foods they ingested in the late 80's and early 90's. As a result of the backlash against synthetics there has been a massive spike in advertisements for food containing the word "real." But the overuse of the word "real" begins to lose affect on consumers by making them wonder if all of this talk of reality is covering for something, perhaps something fake.

Example one: The Pantry. The Pantry, a Canadian breakfast destination for many years, has recently branded their restaurants with the tag line "Real Food. Real Value. Real Taste." In fact, every link on their website begins with the word "real." Most of the menu items also begin with the word "real." It's almost as if The Pantry is trying very hard to make their patrons believe everything on their menu is real simply by subliminally projecting the word over and over again.

When you get inside The Pantry, however, have a look at the condiments on the table. Sweet 'N'Low! Busted! That's fake sugar, Jack! And what'll you have with your sourdough toast? Jam? What do you know? The little packet of strawberry jam that comes with your breakfast contains more preservatives and chemicals than a person should have in one sitting.

Perhaps that's a being a little hard on The Pantry. All of their food is real. Or is it? It's not like any member of the public can waltz

into the back kitchen and check the shelves and, uh, pantries, for boxed hash browns or powdered eggs. Consumers will have to trust in The Pantry that all of that flashy "real" advertising is living up to the food that arrives on their plates.

Example two: I Can't Believe It's Not Butter (ICBINB)! Neither can North America! It can't be good if Fabio is the spokes model for a synthetic butter product. Granted, butter is not the healthiest food item on the planet, but to create a liquid-chemical butter substitute and market it to bored housewives who dream of running away with a long-haired love machine, may have worked in the early 90's, but not now.

We have suffered many mistakes in history while trying to synthesize

butter only to come full circle and finally concede to the greatness that is the golden-yellow brick. First, there was the oil-based oleo that was distributed to troops during World War II, which in turn created the modern day margarine. Then there was ICBINB. Then there was a spray version of the latter. Oleo has left the scene completely. Margarine has been proven to contain evil trans-fats, ICBINB still exists, but is kind of a niche market, and so we are left with good old butter. Real Butter. Whatever doesn't kill you only makes you fatter, but at least you know what's in it... milk!

Example three: Ketchup chips. Ketchup chips contain tungsten, one of the main chemicals found in the manufacture of light bulbs. How did

this come about? Imagine a light bulb being dropped on to a desk in front of a scientist, the resulting chemical dust poofing up into the air and the scientist, accidentally inhaling the dust, realized that it tasted kind of like ketchup. Into the lab he goes and develops ketchup flavouring, without the use of any kind of natural ingredients, to be applied to potato chips. Not a tomato in sight. While it is obvious that this is the weak link in the "real" argument, take a look on the shelves next time you hit the chip isle in the super market.

Alongside the synthetically flavoured chips you will now find vegetable chips, organic potato chips, baked potato thins and classic style kettle chips. These new options are what the whole syn-

thetic backlash is all about. Yet another marketing ploy in the large world of "real" foods. You can buy the synthetic chips for half the price of the natural or "real" chips. It all comes down to price.

In the 80's and 90's there was a demand for synthetic products because the cost of using real ingredients was far too high, not for the consumers, but for the companies that produced the "food." The same companies that once dominated the market with synthetic foods now spend millions of dollars to get you to buy their crappy chemical knock-offs. When was the last time you saw an ad for "Uncle Bill's All Natural Spelt Chips?" You don't, simply because Uncle Bill knows that you're sick of eating synthetics.

Try keepin' it real.



Try as we might, we can never replicate the awesomeness that is butter!



# NEED FOOD? GOT FOOD.

## "STARVING STUDENT" SYNDROME ON THE RISE

By Zoë Bake-Paterson  
Assistant Editor

With the student food bank revamped and ready to serve, BCIT Student Association (BCITSA) is one of many post-secondary institutes that have stepped up to the increasing "starving student" syndrome.

"Getting a college or university degree in this country should be about sitting in a classroom, not lining up for food," says James Kusie, the National Director of the Canadian Alliance of Student Association (CASA).

While BCIT SA had food assistance in the past, it operated on a request basis, says Melodie Hrycenko the Resource Centre Manager at U-Connect. If you needed food you asked, but they would have to get back to you as no food was kept on hand. Now it offers immediate assistance such as dry goods and gift certificates for fresh produce.

"We have taken the funds for the Emergency Food Fund and bought staple foods for students with immediate needs," says Hrycenko. "It is up to the SA to look at the needs of students and address those needs. This is one of those needs."

CASA, a non-profit, non-partisan student organization, working with the Canadian Association of Food Banks (CAFB) released a study in June, 2004 showing that nearly a quarter of Canada's campuses now have food banks. The study also suggested a link between the costs of post-secondary education and student food bank use.

While October 17, 2004 marked the International Day to Eradicate Poverty, students in British Columbia are still facing increased poverty as the average tuition fees for post-secondary schooling creep to more than \$4,000.

"We believe strongly that the rise in campus-based food banks is the result of a crisis in the funding of post-secondary edu-

cation," says Charles Seiden, executive director for the CAFB.

This is a trend that has also been noticed by the Food Bank of Greater Vancouver Society (FBGVS). Among the many agencies and depots that work to provide food to the 25,000 people per week that come to the FBGVS, they also operate a student depot.

"The student depot is for full-time students in the evening so they don't have to miss class," says Arlene Kravitz, Director of Communications. "We've seen an increase with students because of tuition increases. We've seen increases across the board in recent years, and definitely with students."

The BCITSA food bank hasn't seen much of an increase, but that is because most students do not know it is there, says Hrycenko. "I think it's a problem that is not discussed and the students don't know where to ask for help," she says. "Our deal is we will help you until the Burnaby Food Bank is available to you."

The money for the BCITSA Emergency Food Fund came from last year's Christmas campaign where faculty and staff donated. This year is going to be another fundraiser, called the "Gift of Choice: Holiday Campaign." While dry food donations are always appreciated, Hrycenko says they prefer cash or gift certificates so that they can give people the power of choice.

"The SA is set up to make school more accessible, to help them over humps that get in the way of schooling," says Hrycenko.

"To get an education can be a challenge for the best of us, but add poverty to that mix and it becomes almost impossible," said a student from the University College of Fraser Valley at a Feast or Famine Banquet, to raise awareness for student poverty in 2000. "Where does the money come from to buy books and pay tuition fees? It comes out of the grocery money if your hunger for knowledge becomes as consuming as mine has."



## NEWS BRIEFS

By Trevor Hargreaves  
News Editor

### Gordon Campbell Wants To Take The Candy From The Kids

If the Liberals are elected to a second term in office, junk food will be banned from vending machines in all B.C. schools within four years. This dangerous promise was made by the illustrious Gordon Campbell at his party's convention this past weekend in Whistler. Worried student action groups have already voiced concern that the ban could be extended to post-secondary institutions. As students endure ever rising tuition fees, the cancellation of government grants, and higher costs of living, a cola and Kit Kat shortage could be the

breaking point. "Early classes are rough enough without legal stimulants" said an anonymous second year Broadcasting student visibly distressed while discussing the issue. "It would be like dawn of the living dead for half the day!" More on this as it develops.

### Believe It Or Not: Man Tries to Charge Whale With Attempted Murder

A Victoria based sailor whose sailboat has been attacked multiple times by Luna the killer whale has requested that local RCMP file charges of attempted murder against the whale. "The request was not taken seriously," said Keith Bell of Gold River in a statement to the media. Luna the killer whale declined comment.

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## ELECTION FALLOUT A BCIT PERSPECTIVE

By John Hughes  
Opinions Editor

Last Tuesday's election results are set in stone but, to borrow a phrase from U.S. President George W. Bush, "Monday morning quarterbacking" was rife.

BCIT students fit that Presidential profile in the electoral post-mortem. Second guessing was the order of the day for the BCIT rank-and-file as they thought about four more years next to our giant southern neighbor who had just put its incumbent back in office.

While many of the students did not see a direct relationship between their lives on campus and the renewed Presidential mandate, they did have plenty to say.

Overwhelmingly, BCIT students would have cast a ballot for John Kerry if they had had the power to vote on Tuesday. Marketing student Selma Karamani was adamant in her denunciation of the man they call 'Dubya' as a poor leader.

"I don't like Bush and I would have voted for Kerry," says Karamani. She says the continued focus of the president on fighting terrorism will lead to prolonged war. "You don't solve a problem by coming over and bombing everyone. Bush will bomb more countries and he will do nothing that will result in improvement."

BCIT's best and brightest all looked at the renewed Presidential mandate with more than a little concern. On top of the prospect of a continued Pax Americana other issues were on the forefront of students' minds. Operations Management student, Shawn Arkwright, weighed in on the softwood lumber dispute.

"Bush will have a definite effect on our economy. Look at the softwood lumber situation with Bush in office. That's not going to get better anytime soon," he says. Arkwright's colleague, Richard Bitterman was concerned

about his personal economics after the Tuesday's result.

"Bush getting back in could affect me if I work internationally. Sales of products I make anywhere in the world could be hindered by American protectionism," says Bitterman.

Despite the worries about international security and trade between Canada and the USA, most BCIT students voiced concern about George Bush's moral stance. Arkwright says Bush's world view is too Ameri-centric.

"Bush's foreign policy is too America-first. I think John Kerry is more in line with Canadian values. Kerry would have made more of an effort to cooperate with other countries rather than force America's will."

One Financial Management student picked up the morality ball and ran with it, extending it to the entire American electoral system. "I hate his morals and values. I hate the Electoral College. It's not representative."

The projections from North of 49 for the next four years do not inspire a mood of confidence. Canadians are often chided for their smugness and pious morality. Critics say such a stance is easy enough to maintain if you do not bear the weight of international anarchy on your shoulders while maintaining a military budget to match the responsibility.

Still, not all people are vehemently anti-Bush. BCIT's Francis Pasqueo came down heavily on George Bush's side. "Bush is a pretty cool guy, a pretty smart guy. He got elected twice didn't he? He is charismatic, that's why he got in. He's like me."

So what are we to take from this pastiche of opinions from BCIT students? It is fair to say that BCIT's campus crew prefers morality to charisma, and pluralism to unilateralism. This is not terribly surprising information to anyone who spends time at BCIT but it is a comfortably Canadian perspective.

## TRANSIT ENVY VANCOUVER NEEDS CHANGE

By Nikki Ewanyshyn  
2nd Year Broadcast Journalism

On a cold October morning in 2003, I stepped out of my house - travel mug of tea in hand - and in to my car. From my home in the suburban sprawl, I drove to school. I drive because I can.

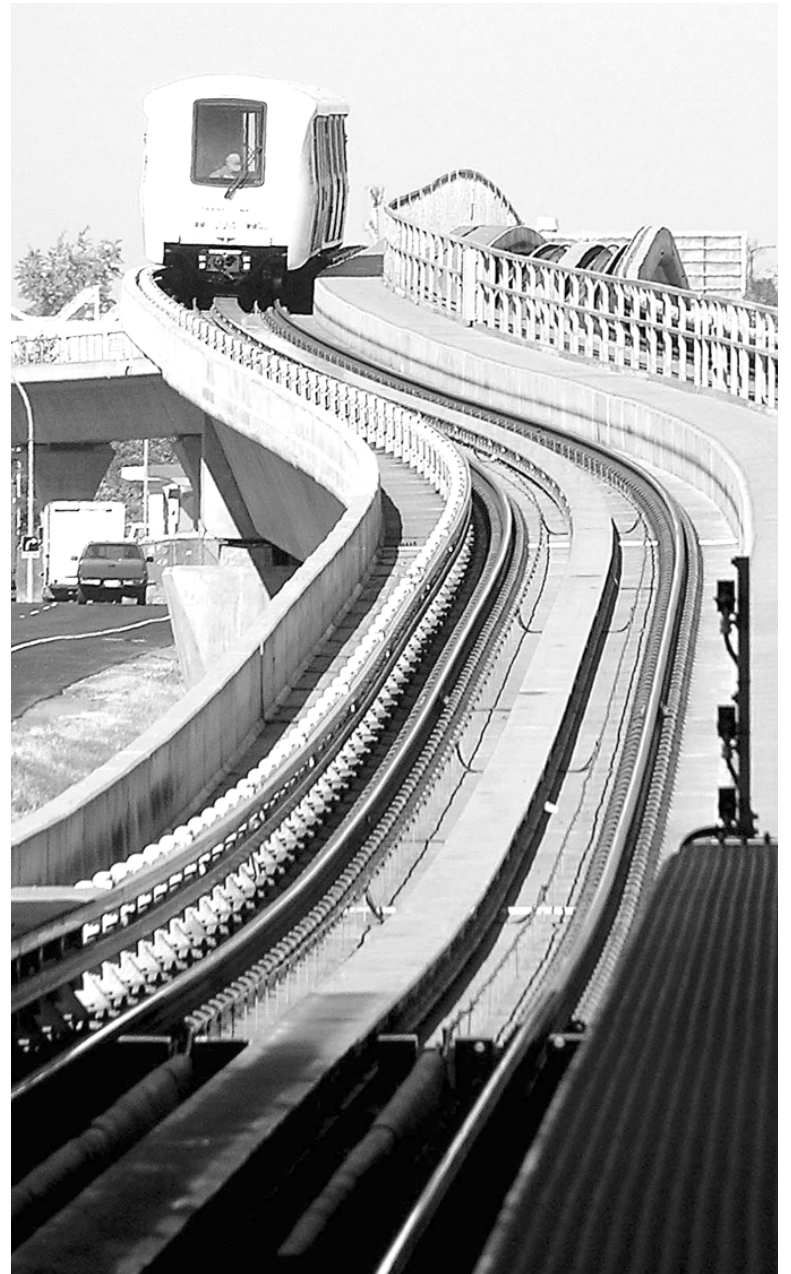
I own a car and consider myself fortunate that I do, but given the choice I would take transit. With transit, I wouldn't have to worry about other drivers cutting me off or slamming on their breaks. With transit, I would just sit and read the morning paper on the way to school. But I don't have that choice.

The transit system in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland can take me from the closest major street to school in about two to three hours. It would then be time to turn around and come home.

To convince me to get out of my car, it would take more bus routes and a more reliable system. I have come to realize this because for the past six weeks I have been in Toronto without a car.

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) transit system in the Greater Toronto Area is something a Vancouverite can appreciate. Buses come every five to ten minutes on most routes - not every half-hour or worse, every hour. The subway is fast, efficient and reliable, not to mention its cars are three times as long as the Skytrain. Unlike Vancouver, it is possible and it makes sense to take the bus and the subway from your home in the suburbs to your workplace downtown.

Why wouldn't you? From the time I left the house I was staying at in Scarborough - a similar distance of Surrey to Vancouver - to the time I stepped off the subway



in downtown Toronto, it took about an hour.

No long waits for a bus, no standing on a cold Skytrain platform outside and no more embarrassing moments when the Skytrain employees ask for your proof of payment and you nervously search for that ticket you know you bought. On the TTC system, once you go through the turn-style and pay your fare, you can take a bus, subway or streetcar and not once be asked to show

your ticket.

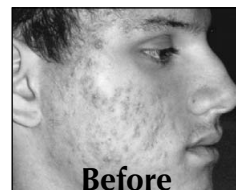
Did I mention cost? For \$2.25 an adult can go from their suburban home to downtown Toronto, or anywhere along the subway line. That is the equivalent of a \$4 - 3 zone fare in Vancouver.

It makes sense to use this great transit system. It's cheaper and more timely than battling road rage in your car, but there will have to be major improvements to our transit system if Lower Mainlanders are going to use it.

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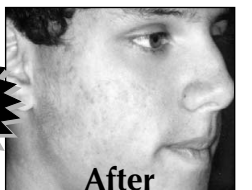
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The the graphic designer, Elayne Figueroa, has a degree in Graphic Communications & Production Technology and a certificate in Electronic Printing & Design. Add to this a Bachelor of Arts with a fine arts focus and you have a high-end industry professional working for you. When asked what services she is most proud of in the centre Elayne states:

"We have a plotter on site, which gives students, faculty and staff total design freedom in size, colour and layout. We can print out everything from posters and banners to autocad plots. Your imagination is the limit with a machine like that."

But she doesn't stop there either. Elayne's knowledge and experience in design and layout is also available for faculty and staff; working with departments and events from Alumni and Media Works to BCIT Open House.


Turns out whatever your design or printing needs are, the SA Image Centre can hook you up. You can even email completed files for printing 24/7 and they are guaranteed to be ready for the next day.


The SA Image Centre is located in the Great Hall, SE2. You can

contact the service at 604.451.7039 or email them at [image@bcitsa.ca](mailto:image@bcitsa.ca).

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# NOT SO-EASY RIDE CAMBODIA'S "HOPEFUL" BACKPACKERS

By Chris Corday  
2nd Year Broadcast Journalism

Whatever you're looking for as a traveller, you needn't look far in Southeast Asia. Everything can be yours for a price, and usually an inexpensive one.

Being one of the poorest regions on the planet, locals are desperate for the tourist dollar and are often willing to do whatever it takes to get it.

It can certainly be said that backpacking is hugely important for some countries, helping to put food on the table for thousands of residents of the third world. It's visible on the streets of the Southeast Asian backpacker trail where independent businesses catering to budget travellers have flourished. Many land owners in formerly backwater towns, where backpackers have established a pit stop, suddenly find themselves moneyed, and some less fortunate families are finally able to pull themselves out of poverty by getting jobs in the budget travel industry. But there is a cost to this type of tourism-dependent economy. In many places it's

paid for with snowballing apathy and the death of young people's dreams.

Cambodia is a prime example of how the development of mass

tourism can stimulate an economy, fund the survival of its poorer residents and stunt the growth of a vulnerable society. Virtually destroyed by a genocidal government in the 70s and 80s - Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge murdered almost a quarter million of their own people - Cambodia has spent the past two decades re-populating, re-educating and trying to heal. It has been an arduous task, and Cambodia remains one of the world's poorest countries.

Although today's Cambodia is a more peaceful place, the slow reconstruction process still struggles with a multitude of social problems such as HIV/AIDS, human trafficking, child prostitution, landmines, a huge population of amputees and orphans, illegal logging, and pervasive government corruption.

Siem Reap is Cambodia's pride and joy. The city of 100,000 in Cambodia's Northwest is home to 1000-year-old Angkor Wat, one of Asia's most famous archeological sites and the world's largest religious structure.

Siem Reap is one of the country's fastest growing regions as young people from poorer rural areas

give up on rice farming to become urbanites for the first time in their lives. A juicy rumor has it that they will be able to find jobs in the flourishing tourist industry, catering to the million-or-so tourists who swing through Cambodia's tourist Mecca every year.

This bustling backpacker hotspot is still in its infancy, and new businesses are popping up every day. Five-star hotel chains such as French-owned Sofitel and Le Meridien have built massive complexes in Siem Reap in the past two years, designed at great cost to house well-heeled tourists. Unfortunately for recent rural migrants to the city, getting jobs with these companies is truly a far-fetched dream. These hotels exist because of lucrative private land deals between multinational corporations and the Cambodian government. In fact, unless you come from the family of a bureaucrat, the likelihood of getting a job at the red-carpeted Le Meridien is slim to none.

Take a not-so-leisurely stroll through Siem Reap with your backpack strapped on and you'll undoubtedly come face-to-face with thousands of Khmers, both young and old, often completely reliant on your handout for money just to feed themselves. Begging and hassling is an undeniably and increasingly huge part of any traveling experience in Cambodia. It's how foreigners interact with the majority of local people in areas accustomed to tourists.

Aside from snapshots of Angkor Wat's beautifully preserved architecture, experiences with aggressive and eccentric street people and vendors are often the most vivid memories travellers take home. Throngs of children wander around all day on the hunt for sympathetic-looking foreigners to harass for cash. They've practiced their begging ritual and souvenir sales pitch so many times that they've honed it into an art, to the point that their

conversational English is often shockingly immaculate. Teenaged Khmer mothers shouldering rag-clad babies hover and pace outside downtown tourist restaurants at dinnertime, hoping to profit from a well-worn poverty guilt trip. Begging for these women and their children has become a full-time job.

Ten years of tourism has entrenched a deep economic dependency on hand-outs. With little or no social infrastructure - other than what is provided by foreign aid from non-governmental organizations - begging or selling random souvenirs is the only thing that many young people have learned to do. The practice, which seems like it should be a temporary fix for severe poverty, is observably addictive and debilitating: as long as there are backpackers around to fund their survival, it may be all that they (and generations to come) will ever hope to do.

Hungry packs of dust-covered motorcycle taxi drivers, or 'motos,' loiter on Siem Reap's street corners, 24-hours a day. Each of these competitive independent businessmen patiently waits for a foreigner to snatch up and deliver to spots around town. Finding a backpacker willing to hire you as a personal chauffeur means a daily wage of anywhere from six to twelve American dollars. That is considered very decent money, even in a more expensive Cambodian city like Siem Reap. I meet 24-year-old Vee Ta one sweltering morning outside my guesthouse. He's perched atop his motorcycle, hoping to catch travellers before they head out for a sweaty day of sight-seeing. Vee is a tall, healthy looking young man with black hair down to his shoulders and a wide, toothy smile. After the usual greeting and a surprisingly low-intensity bargaining session, we quickly agree on \$10 for the day. For my girlfriend Keiko and I, it

will be a snug 3-person ride to Angkor Wat's temples on Vee's 50-cc Honda Dream. But as his English ability is head and shoulders above that of many monolingual motos in Cambodia, we think we've found a real gem in the young driver.

As we ride through Siem Reap's slow paced and dusty streets, Vee swerves to avoid everything from huge cement trucks to a herd of confused water buffalo. He tells us he's been a moto for three years, driving to support his family after his father packed up and moved out with a second wife in Kompong Thom province. His mother isn't able to work because of complications from a recent surgery, and being the oldest he has been hastily thrown into the role of household breadwinner.

"I have to support my mother and my family," he tells us. "It's why I stopped studying, because I come from a broken family. So I had to find a job."

Having spent much of his adult life preparing to become a Buddhist monk, working as an English-speaking moto wasn't a very big leap. Vee says he had been learning the language for free at his pagoda. "Many monks study everyday, Japanese and English are important languages here," he explains. "If they have to quit being monks, they need to find a job, like being a speaking guide."

Formal education is expensive in Siem Reap, and unless your family owns land or you're willing to go hungry to buckle down and study, academic luxuries such as English and tourism courses are beyond your reach. Vee admits he thinks getting a job that requires an education is not an attainable goal for poorer people like himself.

"I'd like to be a tour guide. You just walk and tell stories. It'd be an easy job," he says. "But it's so expensive to get the license,





# DRIVER BACKPACKER SCENE

around \$700. And to learn the story of Angkor Wat, \$300. It's just for the people whose parents are rich."

Cambodia's growing backpacker scene provides many families with enough money to eat and jobs with better working conditions than backbreaking subsistence farming or dreaded highway construction in the tropical heat. Without backpackers to shuttle around the city, Vee says he would go hungry more often.

"My health is better because I drive a motorcycle," he explains. "I can eat everyday. Before I couldn't eat enough so I had stomachaches. When I drive the tourists, all my friends say 'You look very fat now!' Before I was sick, not fat."

School-aged Khmers, who make up 50 percent of Cambodia's population, are becoming increasingly fixated on tourism as a career. Whether or not this is a wise career choice is dependent on the country's ability to attract more travellers. "Many children are studying English because they want to be a motorcycle driver," Vee says. "So if the tourists don't come, what will they do? Tourists are very important to us."

It's lunchtime at Angkor Wat and hundreds of backpackers throng the ramshackle outdoor restaurants that surround the temple complex. Keiko and I invite Vee to climb off his motorbike and join us for a meal. But being able to eat with travellers every day comes at a price. For the promise of a few dollars a day, and often only during the high tourist season of December to March, many motos like Vee are coerced into giving up their ambitions.

Many Khmer people report feeling powerless to change their own lives because they are poor. Post-civil war government corruption and abuses of power, spreading disease, and the rising

cost of living have understandably institutionalized a sense of hopelessness among many poor people. Money from tourism becomes an explanation for non-land owners to remain 'impoverished, but better than before'.

"Things are better because I'm a driver now, but for my family it's not better," Vee says. "They just stay at home."

Vee speaks English with clarity and conviction, and in many other countries it's likely that his skill with the language would enable him to find a stable company job with a decent wage. But this is Cambodia, and to Vee that means resigning to the fact that he is poor. Chasing dreams means giving up on the chance to make money from tourists and it also means taking a huge risk.

This is the same gamble that students in countries around the world take, except in Cambodia, a country with a non-existent social safety net, it's all the more dangerous. What happens if you can't find a job once you're done?

"It's very difficult to find a job, even if you finish high school. But to pay for that or for university is so expensive," he explains. "It's for the rich. For the poor, we just find jobs. I just see the people who are rich getting richer, and the poor get poorer. So I don't know about the future here."

For motos like Vee, personal dreams do still exist. He's simply adapted them in response to the recent influx of travellers. Dreams of becoming a hotel worker after finishing high school or even university have transformed into goals that don't require a formal education.

"I have these dreams, but I think I'll be a motorbike driver my whole life," he says. "Or maybe change to become a tuk-tuk [a motorcycle taxi with a carriage] driver because I can get more money than a motorbike doing that."

Later on in our conversation,

Vee makes known the most significant impact that a fast-developing backpacker industry has on a country. "Many people here, they don't like anything now. They don't care about anything," he says. "They're just looking for money. Money is the most important thing in my life, too."

The sun sets before 6:00pm in Cambodia and Vee shuttles us off to one last temple monument before we have to leave Angkor Wat. It's a gorgeous and crowded photo op - a softly setting golden sun, hilltop ruins and a birds' eye view of the vastly sprawling complex.

We fill our digital cameras with snapshots and carefully retreat down the darkened hill. Vee smiles at us and kickstarts his motorbike. As we wind our way back down Siem Reap's street-light-free roads, he begins his well-worn sales pitch, trying to persuade us to hire him as our driver for our next day's Siem Reap adventure. We tell him we're leaving for Phnom Penh the next afternoon, and quietly he says he understands. "Please tell your friends about Cambodia," he tells us. "I will need tourists to drive."





# BOOMPA RECORDS

## LOCAL RECORD LABEL OPTS FOR COOL OVER COMMERCE

By Trevor Hargreaves  
News Editor

The wonderful nation of Canada is great country. Bountiful maple syrup supplies, Mounties aplenty and leadership that isn't in the pocket of Halliburton and Exxon. There are millions of reasons why living in this fine country is a blessing on a daily basis. If you're an aspiring musician however, the Great White North presents some particular challenges.

As a nation, we've done a fine job of collectively emulating the celebrity worship of our neighbors to the south. But when it comes to home-grown talent, our sparse national population makes achieving a career in music all the more difficult. While scores of target demographic 15 year-olds are glued to Much Music for several

hours a day, they're often more interested in American assembly-line pop than arty bands from Vancouver, Edmonton, Saskatoon, or [insert random Canadian location here].

While these realities are rather disheartening, all is not lost. A decent independent Canuck band can establish a decent local following by playing the bars in their surrounding area. The question is where do you go from there?

This was a problem faced by long-time tunesmiths Scott Walker and Rob Calder after several years in seminal Vancouver band The Salteens. "The main thing is that we were doing all the work anyway," says Calder. "Our music wasn't the kind of sound that attracts major labels and we had a niche audience, so starting a record label was a logical step."

Since the labels inception just

over a year ago, Calder and Walker (along with label manager Shannon Martin and web designer/graphic artist Erin Nicholson) have established a roster of bands traditionally overlooked by listeners and critics alike. Featured artists include local punkers Billy and the Lost Boys, Ex-Grape of Wrath Kevin Kane, indie weirdos Run Chico Run, Australian act Sekiden and a host of others. Another interesting signing is ex-Weezer bassist Matt Sharp's latest solo effort.

By joining the Boomba roster, local bands are greatly assisted with getting organized, getting national CD distribution and scoring some much needed press. This coast to coast exposure maximizes the potential of a fringe fan-base. Unlike the corporate atmosphere of major labels, Boomba is an obvious labor of love. "I used to

work eight hours a day at a music store," says Calder. "Now I work those same hours trying to raise the profile of bands I like".

While it's doubtful these efforts will end up scoring million-dollar record deals for Boomba bands, the artists on the roster will get their music to a larger fan-base and find it easier to tour Canada's vast geography.

If you like music...and you know that you do, check out the label's website ([www.boomba.ca](http://www.boomba.ca)), pick up a few albums or perhaps go see a few Boomba bands live. You'll get your chance this coming Friday when Boomba hosts a label showcase at The Penthouse as part of the New Music West festival. The evening features the aforementioned Salteens, The Dudes, Leeroy Stagger, Run Chico Run and My Project: Blue. While this line-up is easily



enough to make the cover charge worthwhile, Calder has an even better reason to attend. "The Penthouse is a strip club by day, so you'll also get to see Salteen/Boomba honcho Scott Walker dancing the stripper pole as an added highlight."

If you do drop by, be sure to join in a sexy bongo sing-a-long of boomba boomba boomba while Scotty works that pole. Sweet.

## KINSEY THE STUDY OF SEXUALITY

By Patrick McKittrick  
2nd Year Part-time Studies

Reminiscent of A Beautiful Mind, this movie is about the life and times of a brilliant scientist. This particular scientist happens to be entirely pre-occupied with human sexual behaviour. The results are funny, bewildering and moving.

Alfred Kinsey was a pioneer in the field of sex research. (Google offers 87,300 entries for "the kinsey report"). He paved the way for such researchers as Masters and Johnson.

This movie is filled with moments of humour that seem unintentionally funny. Take an earnest, rational, scientific mind and give it the task of measuring and recording sexual behaviour. You will find yourself giggling, especially at the profound ignorance of sexual behaviour and conduct of the times.

Kinsey starts out as a naive young biology professor who is at first interested only in insects. He falls in love and has a difficult time on his wedding night. At first profoundly embarrassed, he suddenly realizes that sex is a problem like any other. It can be solved with expert advice.

He and his wife receive such advice from a doctor and Kinsey is launched on a new field of

study. The Kinsey Report became a landmark study. Although the first part was wildly popular, the second part dealing with female response was more controversial.

The movie becomes a bit bewildering as it delves deeply into the character and work of Alfred Kinsey. Although he was an uncompromising and brutally honest scientist, he lacked the gifts of sensitivity and diplomacy.

Liam Neeson presents us with a complex emotional portrait of a

scientist with personal issues of his own to resolve. His wife, played by Laura Linney, is a woman of unfailing good humour, although even she is shaken to her roots when she discovers that Kinsey has had a homosexual affair.

The final verdict on Kinsey the man may still be out. Nevertheless, the movie is about as honest and uncompromising as you could hope. Kinsey would not have had it any other way.

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Expiry date: Jan. 31, 05



# HAS BEEN IS AGAIN

## SHATNER CD IS REALLY, REALLY GOOD

**William Shatner**  
*Has Been*  
Shout Factory Records

By Geoff Gauthier  
Managing Editor

**B**ack in 1997 a little album called *Spaced Out: The Very Best of Leonard Nimoy and William Shatner* hit record store shelves and became an instant cult classic. While the commanding officers of the USS Enterprise hacked out a strange rendition of "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds," that album never achieved the musical notoriety that William Shatner's new solo album will achieve.

*Has Been* is fantastic, simply put. Opening with a smashing cover of Pulp's 1995 hit "Common People," Shatner introduces his velvet-smooth, spoken-word vocal style over a synth beat, laid down by

the album's producer and overall musical genius Ben Folds. Joe Jackson, famous UK singer and composer, lends his emotionally charged gullet to the chorus, thus enhancing an already dynamic song. As if this isn't enough, a huge choir sings along with the band at the dénouement tying up the loose ends. And that's only the first four minutes.

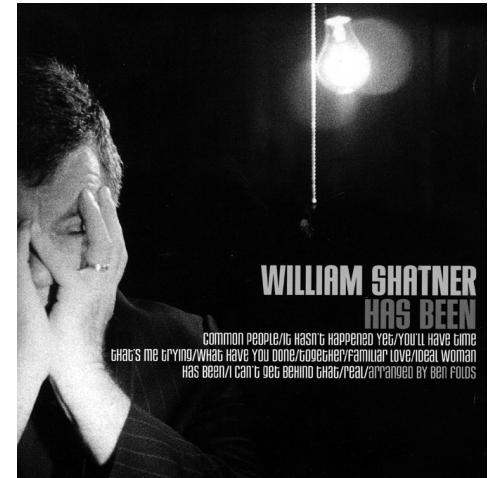
One of the biggest things going for Shatner is his range of song topics and genres. At times it is difficult to tell if he's poking fun at himself or pouring his heart out to his audience, and this vagary is what keeps you listening to the album. "What Have You Done," is a minute and a half of raw emotions. Spoken as a poem, Shatner recalls in vivid detail the tragic drowning death of his third wife Nerine. It's incredibly sad and more than adequately absolves his guilt.

"I Can't Get Behind That," is a raucous rant with ex-Black Flag great Henry Rollins

where Shatner's sense of humour is perfectly displayed. Matt Chamberlain, whose work can be heard on tons of albums from artists like Macy Gray, Liz Phair, David Bowie, and Fiona Apple, provides the crazy howl beats for Shatner and Rollins to yell over.

Brad Paisley lends country influence the last song on *Has Been*, called "Real." It's an interesting little ditty about the way some people believe too much in television. The chorus sums it up: "While there's a part of me / in that guy you see / up there on that screen / I am so much more... sorry to disappoint you, but I'm real."

*Has Been* is a fantastic foray into true music for William Shatner. The combination of Shatner and Ben Folds comes across as perfectly natural, the duo working together to create something that will not be remembered as a joke, but as a thoughtful, artistic compilation of music and words.



# REVAY REVIEW

## THE EX FACTOR

By Victoria Revay  
2nd Year Broadcast Journalism

**I**was at home the other night and the very awesome "Ex-Factor" by Miss Lauren Hill came on MuchMusic, followed by Tupac's "I Get Around." In the midst of those two very emotional songs I started thinking about a recent conversation I had with a friend.

We'll call her "Mary" for confidentiality reasons. Mary just got divorced a few months ago and well, let us be honest, she is so over it and him and everything all together. So we discussed the issue in between bottles of wine and re-runs of "Sex."

The "issue" is that it is possible for women to be over "the Man" just like that.

I mean if men, boys and assholes - whichever species you choose to date - can totally get over you or anyone they did the night before (with the help of a few cases of beer) why can't women?

Why do we sabotage our happiness with feelings of make-believe guilt? I know that when Mary's out on the dance floor, getting it on with a lover, she is NOT feeling guilty. No way, Mary-Jose. So I called Mary on this strange act of getting it on with the lover, but then sobbing to me a few nights later about guilt and the "I should feel bad because the ex does." And I realized that men and women have more in common than they think.

I just feel women unintentionally, and perhaps as a result of years of subliminal conditioning by men in laboratories, suffer

without reason in times of break-ups. Why can't we just feel like men do?

For example, scenario one: wake up one morning and decide that boyfriend, casual lover or fiancée will no longer satisfy us. Could be emotional, sexual, financial, all or none- he can't help you if he is gay. So we talk about it as casually and with as much consideration as possible and we let it go. Then we go out and tear it up. We go crazy and NOT feel bad the next day!

Scenario two: Wake up one morning and decide that the boyfriend, casual lover or even fiancée needs to get the boot. We do so with poise and confidence, then we go out and tear it up and NOT feel bad the next day! We go buy a new outfit, get our hair done and enjoy life.

Ladies, let start acting like goddesses,

'cause we are.

P.S. A wise boy, (who is enchantingly super and fantastic in every way) once told me that life should be simpler when it comes to likes and relationships. He said that if two people just don't have it anymore, they should just let it go and find happiness with someone they can be happy with all the time. Someone they can just look at and feel lucky to have in their life and someone that they want to kiss all the time.

It is just that simple, Mary.

Sometimes it feels good to be reminded of the essentials in love, because time and circumstance distort the truth. Simple, care-free and all-encompassing, all that real love is.

### CFML Hot 20 Countdown www.radiocfml.com Altering Radio Evolution

1. k-os - Crabbuckit
2. Sarah Slean - Lucky Me
3. Nelly Furtado - Explode
4. Bowling for Soup - 1985
5. Gordie Sampson - Sunburn
6. Alanis Morissette - Eight Easy Steps

7. Modest Mouse - Float On
8. Jamie Cullum - Frontin'
9. Rachael Yamagata - Worn Me Down
10. Jimmy Eat World - Pain
11. Cake - NoPhone
12. Tegan and Sara - Walking with a Ghost
13. Howie Day - Collide
14. The Thrills - TellMe Something I Don't Know
15. Danny Michel - Beautiful
16. Boy - Same Old Song
17. Head Automatica - Beating Heart Baby
18. Stars - Set Yourself on Fire
19. Razorlight - Golden Touch
20. Matthew Good - Alert Status Red



# AT THE BUZZER WITH ERIC ROSALES

## DID HOCKEY-STYLE MEDIA COVERAGE KILL THE GRIZZLIES?



The National Basketball Association started their season this past week.

At this point, I'd like to allow all the people who hate basketball to go back to their NHL Classic games on the tube, go back to their riveting articles on the lock-out in the papers, and to get back to holding on their phone line, waiting to give their opinion about why there's no hockey on the local radio stations.

There.

Glad you're still with me.

There are several takes on the

collapse of the Vancouver Grizzlies since they left for Elvishland years ago, and all of them have some value. Things like their management couldn't run a 7-Eleven, their talent pool might have dominated a Filipino-league at best and too many players believed Vancouver was Alaska, a rain forest, or both and that that was way out of their comfort zones. But most of all, I believe there was too great a cultural divide between the players and the people that told us about the players and the league. Yes, this does

have something to do with the media, how hockey-first reporters cover basketball.

The Vancouver Canucks recently held a media training camp, a chance for local reporters and a few corporate sponsor-types to go through what the Canucks would go through, culminating in a game against the 'Nucks alumni.

Each person needed to supply their own equipment, right down to the sticks. It should be noted that even more people would have participated in the event had they been able to work their schedules

around it.

The point is, hockey is in their blood, and they probably understand the game better than they understand their wife, girlfriend or kids.

Put together a basketball camp (not that anyone ever thought of that over the course of the five years the Grizzlies were here), and it's clear that the interest level wouldn't be near as high. I'd go so far as to say that half the media in attendance wouldn't have "real" basketball shoes, assuming that their runners could double up just fine. That's like saying figure skates would be fine to play hockey in.

You could see early on that there was no relationship forged between basketball players and reporters, and the media takes the chance to let everyone know about it.

Early on, the media was turned off by the player's attitudes toward the press, and the theme of most reporters was that these players were jerks, prima donnas, malcontents and - when a player would get into trouble with the law in any capacity - troublemakers.

They lambasted players for making the amount of money that they did, yet Orca Bay brass was widely congratulated for opening up the purse strings to sign Mark Messier. That's beyond-his-prime-three-years-before-signing-with-Vancouver Mark Messier.

Much was made of Blue Edwards' extra-marital affairs, much of it front page news material, yet no Vancouver Canuck player has ever been scrutinized for what they've done in their per-

sonal lives, though it's safe to say that they're not all angels.

My all-time favourite is a TV station showing Gary Payton snarling at reporters, and running that clip just to show what a jerk he was. I recalled that classic cut as ABC ran a story in the NBA finals of Payton coming back to his hometown of Oakland to help his dad coach underprivileged kids.

And I find it especially bothersome to hear how there are way too many bad seeds in the NBA, guys that don't appreciate the position they are in, and wonder how a magazine like SLAM (an all basketball magazine) can come up with feature after feature of these supposed bad seeds.

The stories aren't your run-of-the-mill "He scores 20 points a game and would like to be an all-star" pieces. They are about guys that have lived in the gutter, raised by anyone in their family that wasn't a drug addict, bouncing a dingy rubber ball on rat-infested asphalt.

Yet our media hardly showed that side.

But we can show how John and Joan Smith woke up every morning at 4am to get John jr. to hockey practice. How they laboured to get him new equipment every year, and now how they can't imagine a kid from small-town (insert your prairie province of choice here) is going to get drafted into the NHL.

Both are great stories that we should hear. But it's too bad that our media couldn't tell those basketball stories, more sad that they didn't even know why they couldn't.

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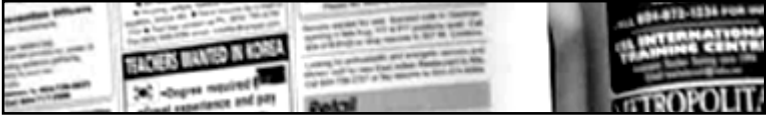
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3. Outlaw – a horse that cannot be broke. Urban outlaw, scruffy jean-clad strutters who cause mischief... definitely subversive.
4. Poke – a pouch used by cowboys to carry small personal items. See purse, the pig-in-the-poke game from bad 80's comedy family The Griswalds, or really hot sex.
5. Full as a tick – to be drunk. Even after a 140 odd years this speaks for itself.
6. Dry Gulch - to ambush. Reference to abandoning a body where it fell. Often follows a heavy night of being Full as a tick.
7. Get the Mitten - to be rejected by a lover, as in "Looks like J-Lo gave poor Ben the mitten," or "all my stuff is on the lawn because I got the mitten from my pardner last night."
8. Cowboy – identify as you prefer, then add cowboy hat. Pink or otherwise fuzzy, sparkly hats do not apply. Best said in a slow drawl, as in "Hey there Cowboy." The cool kids will apply this to both genders.



# SON OF BUSH RIDES AGAIN

## BETTER TO ELECT THE DEVIL YOU KNOW THAN THE DEVIL YOU DON'T

John Ackermann  
Entertainment Editor

As I'm sure many of you did, I spent Tuesday November 2 glued to the television, watching the Presidential election returns come in. I stayed up into the early morning watching the unthinkable unfold: the re-election of George W. Bush.

If this were a movie you could have called his first term Son of Bush. Now it looks like we're in for the sequel - Son of Bush Rides Again. Many sequels tend to be lame recreations of the original. We can hope against hope and give W the benefit of the doubt that he'll have a Godfather Part II kind of Presidency. That was a great sequel - for many people better than the first Godfather movie. No, wait. Godfather II is the one when Michael Corleone kills his brother. No chance of that happening. Maybe if Bush lost. Could you imagine? "Jeb! Jeb! I know it was you! You broke my heart!" But I digress...

Anyway, if you care to push the movie sequel metaphor out a little further you can come up with some interesting observations. With apologies to Sly Stallone, if you add up two terms of W and include the terms of his father as Vice-President for eight years in the Reagan-era White House and then one term of his own, you'll have the rough equivalent of the Rocky movies. Add it all up and you have five terms or twenty years of a George Bush as either the number one or number two man in American politics. Speaking of Rocky, I heard a rumour that Donald Rumsfeld is thinking of leaving his post as Attorney General. Maybe Mr. T will get the nod instead.

What strikes me as odd is the fact that W's father, for all the faults of his administration, was a much better president and yet he could only manage one term in the White House, forever consigned to that dust heap of history of other one termers like Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. Of course W never had the misfortune of running against Bill Clinton. The one unspoken truth is that if not for the constitutional amendment that limits occupants of the White House to two terms, Clinton would have cleaned W's clock in 2000 and had he run this year, who's to say he couldn't have

landed a fourth term a la FDR?

All kidding aside, I think one concept that Bush I understood better than his son (well, I'm sure there are many more) was the idea of the exit strategy. You'll recall in the first Presidential debate, Bush's challenger John Kerry pointed out the elder Bush didn't send in ground troops to Iraq because - and this is quoting the elder Bush, remember - the civilian population would have regarded them as an army of occupiers.

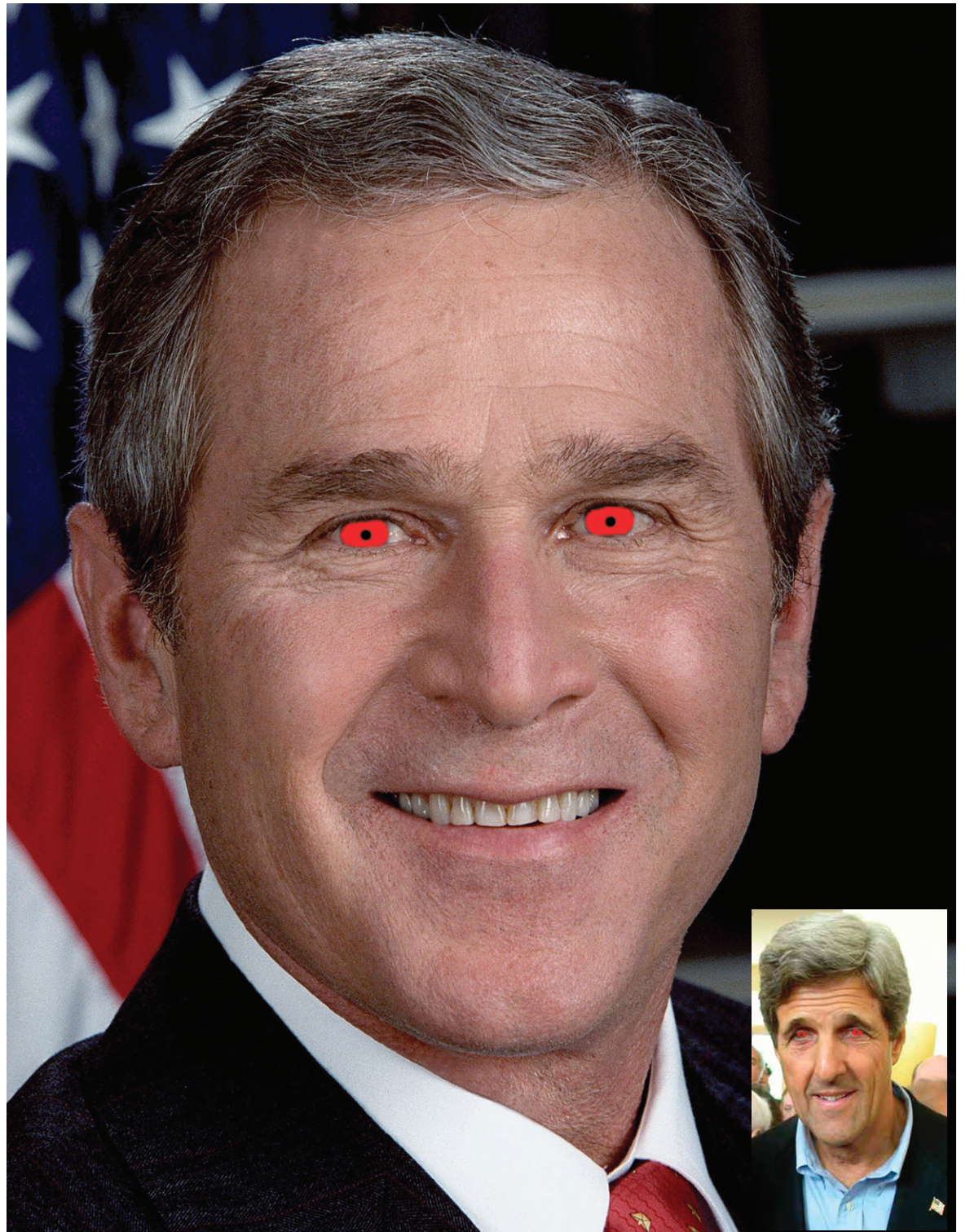
In spite of all this, what irritates me beyond all irritation is that it was even a tight race. For all the bad the Bush administration has done they not only managed to get re-elected but Bush actually got MORE votes than he did four years ago.

The real sad thing of Decision 2004 is the failure of the American Left to get through to middle America. One of the more disingenuous things said in the wake of Kerry's defeat is that as people get further away from large bodies of water, ie. The West Coast and the East Coast, their intelligence takes a corresponding nosedive.

I'm wondering if all the agitation of the celebrity community, be it Michael Moore and Fahrenheit 9/11, the Vote For Change Tour, even P. Diddy and his cartoonish Vote or Die campaign, did this turn people off from voting for Kerry or from voting in general? My thinking is that fundamentally Americans are still individualist and insular in their views and that if they feel they are being preached to, they will reject whatever message, no matter how important.

I suppose Canadians are more outward looking - or at least we sure like to think we are. But when you think about it, the make-up of the last few parliaments for the most part has been very regional. The Alliance/Conservatives cover most of the West, The Liberals have a stranglehold on Ontario, and the BQ holds power in Quebec. With this kind of regionalized bloc voting, you can't really say the whole country is that united either. But we have a ways to go before we are so clearly divided as the Americans are.

The failure of Kerry's campaign was that maybe his positions were too nuanced or maybe his message too sophisticated. One word I've heard used to



*The devil you know (above) and the devil you don't (inset). Let the good times roll.*

describe him as patrician. I think the flip-flop factor definitely hurt him. It's not so much the fact that he was a flip-flopper - he wasn't really - but it was that image created by the Bush spinmeisters that sank him. Lines like, "I actually did vote for the 87 billion dollars [for the invasion of Iraq] before I voted against it" paid off in Middle America. The fact that he may be too far left for the average American may have played a role as well. During the second debate, W said [Kerry is] so left-wing that of the two senators from Massachusetts, Ted Kennedy is regarded as the conservative one. In a debate setting, it doesn't matter if something like that is true or not - it's all about scoring those

points.

There are some who would make the argument that as Canadians we don't really have a leg to stand on when we criticize Americans for electing a leader who rules autocratically and mangles the English language whenever he opens his mouth. We did have ten years of Jean Chretien as Prime Minister, a man who won three consecutive majority governments. Mind you, under our system, Chretien never needed anywhere near 50% of the vote to become Prime Minister. But the difference between Chretien and Bush is that, underneath that aw-shucks veneer, Chretien was a shrewd politician and could pull things together in a tight situation.

We may not know the extent of his activities in the sponsorship scandal - yet - but so far, he's not looking too bad. Heck, we're realizing how good Chretien was in how bad Paul Martin is. Chretien made governing look easy, Martin squirms and stammers so much, he makes us wonder what made him look so good in the first place.

Viewing from a safe distance, we as Canadians still hope that Bush II doesn't screw things up too badly. Americans decided they would be better off with the devil they know instead of the one they don't. If you look at that in movie terms, another four years of Bush is like watching a sequel to a movie you've seen many times before.