



the e-magazine

issue 2 / 2005



@T
baloney
U Do I Don't
S#&T Happens
Escape
iFormat
fART
flash



While thinking about what we were going to do for the second issue of the Ovi Magazine a number of things happened to us. I had not realize how much influence these things had on us until I had all the articles and the ideas of the new issue in front of me and only a matter of days till we publish it. I know that is the same for everybody and that I should not have been surprised but seeing it in our writing, well it was a bit of...wow!

Asa starts realizing what parenthood is, and it is funny for me watching him fighting with all these feelings and proving one more time that pregnant women forget that at their men are going through a different kind of pregnancy, a mental one and somehow they have to worry and be the clowns. It is better if I let him speak about that himself. The only thing I can say is that you might see his baby break from his text here and there.

John lived his adventures in Africa after his round in Europe. Our young cowboy friend has decided to travel round of the world wearing his French scarf and his safari trousers. I hope in the near future, when he collects all his experiences, he writes something about them. Now, he's obviously enjoying his last year at college, including parties with heavy drinking and I'm not sure if I want to know what else!

I went through a different kind of adventure that tested me both physically and mentally. Two things became more real for me lately. A very wise woman said to me a long time ago that you realize that you getting older when a policeman stops you and you think how young the policemen are nowadays. It's not only the age but also the uniform and what it represents; you find that this kind authority doesn't scare you any more because you know how to

deal with it. Another woman, a few months before, my dentist in fact, said to me, after our good mornings and how are yous, that after your forties when you wake up you check what is and isn't aching - that is so true.

At the same time, Asa and I started a weekly one-hour radio programme in Helsinki, Finland. This is a new adventure for us since we sacrifice...better is kill...all our weekends but we do enjoy it. I think what we enjoy more is watching ourselves. How our moods are reflected in our show and how misunderstood we can be in a live show. But I'm going to talk about this experience more in the future.

Another event happened sometime in the beginning of January to us. Our internet provider called us that he wanted to talk with us without giving us much information. Been pretty aware about what hackers can do, Asa and I ran to his office to find out that nearly 5,000 people had hit our magazine. Of course, there were a lot of commercial sites visiting us but there were people from Finland and USA, from UK and Greece and then there were people from Sweden, Austria, France, Germany, Norway, Switzerland, Egypt, India, Japan, Turkey, South Africa and I don't remember where else; oh yes, two from the Seychelles!

Then there were the people who know us and people who met us because of the Ovi Magazine. Thank you all! If I knew your names, I would mention you all and this editorial would be 1Gb.

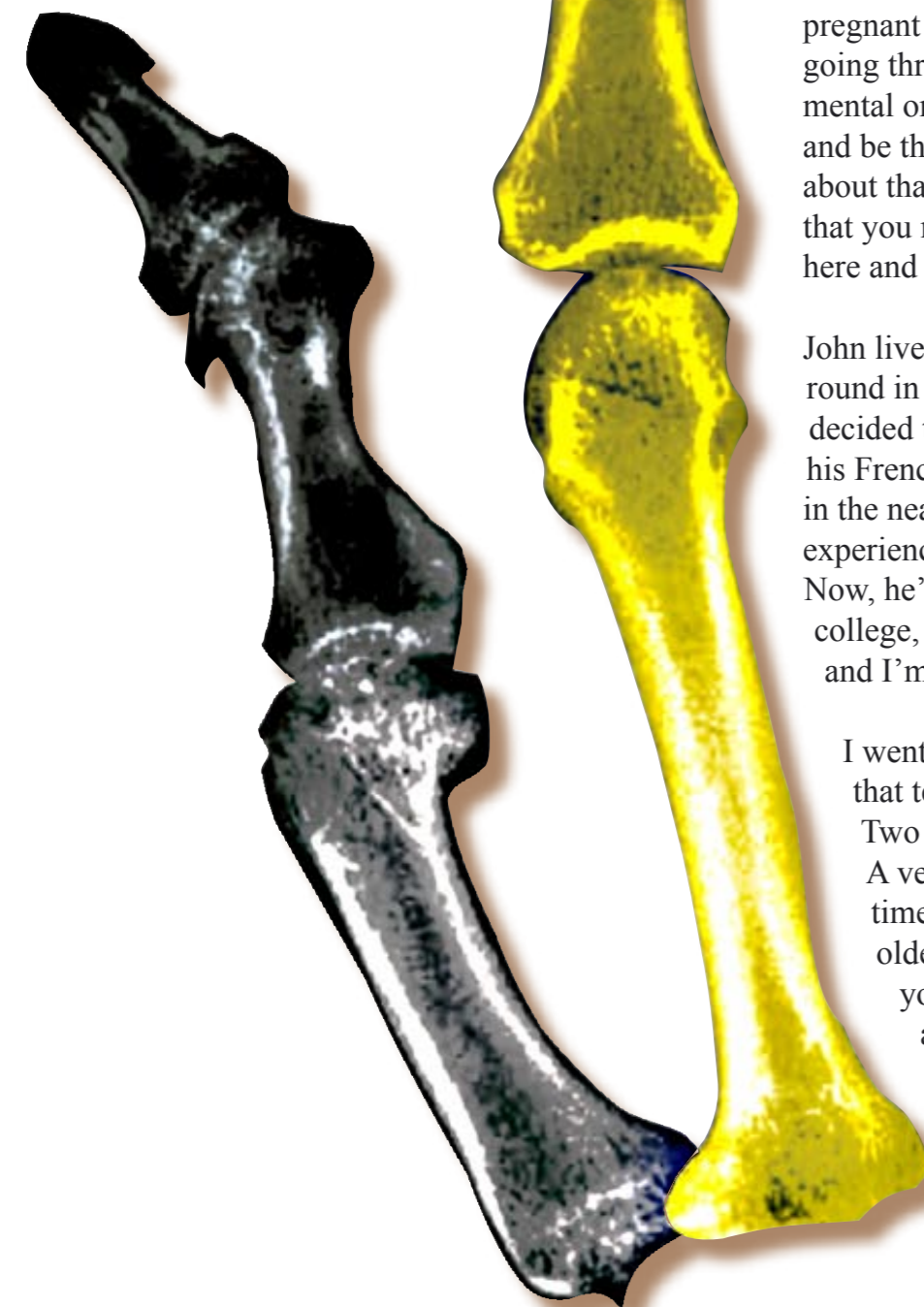
We do live the insecurity of everybody who creates something and that was somehow good news for us; it was also a bigger motivation for the second issue. Here I'd like to mention that nothing has changed in our aims and targets. The Ovi Magazine is a live portfolio and we do express our opinions in our articles and columns, as I wrote in my first editorial for the magazine.

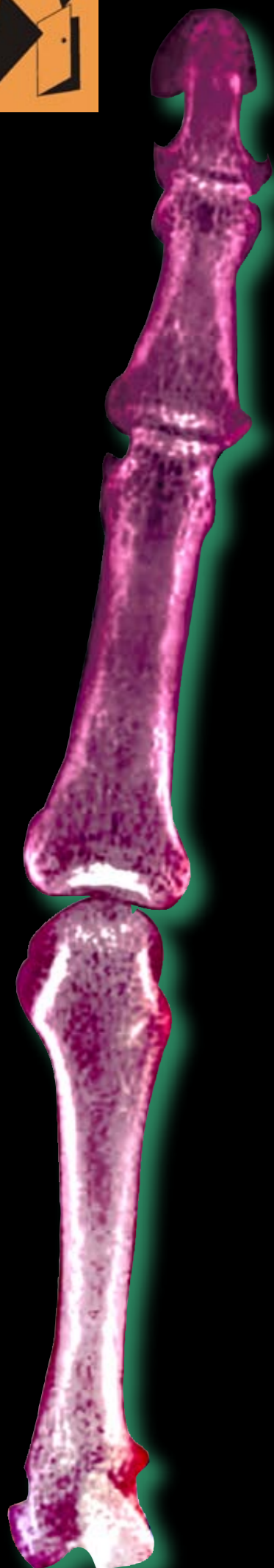
We do like your reactions to them, so do please keep sending us mails as well. You can send it personal to each one of us or to our general mail. We invite you to join us if you want and send us an article. We would like to have correspondents from everywhere around the world, including our friend or friends in the Seychelles. We all face the same problems seeking a future in this business.

For this issue we have tried something new as well, we are going to have attached a PDF version of the magazine that you can download or print. I'd better not say much more since Asa will start counting my characters (with spaces) again.

Thank you

Thanos Kalamidas





Huh? You're back for more? Well let me finish this sentence and then we can begin...e-magazines are like cumulus clouds, you know the ones formed by thermally unstable air rising, well e-magazines are not like that. Give me a moment to collate my thoughts into a cohesive substance and switch of the weather forecast...

Creating an e-magazine is like pregnancy. You put a great deal of physical effort into its creation and then tell everybody the good news. The similarities don't end there, oh no! Some people are genuinely interested and they send you feedback, others are more reserved and tell you of the looming dangers or what you are doing wrong, and then there are those who just don't give a flying fuck.

My baby analogy is inspired by my own personal situation of preparing for the coming role of father in July. I shall spare you the emotional rigmarole of the 40-week wait and the mood of the mother, and tell you all about our little baby Ovi.

Ovi is now a few months old and is developing into a healthy zine. The proud parents, Thanos, John and I, have been up nights trying to nurture Ovi but it just refuses to suckle upon Thanos' meaty nipples – and I don't blame it.

Following the birth of Ovi, the roles of the parents has become more clearly defined. Thanos and I have spent more than our fair share babysitting, nursing and cleaning up the shit, while John has been a little wayward of late. Gallivanting around Uganda and painting the streets of Wisconsin red are not suitable activities for the father of a newborn e-magazine.

Thankfully, little Ovi has had many admirers over the course of its short existence and they even send little booties created in Photoshop. Thanks! Ovi is now starting to walk and the world is beginning to pay more attention to the noise it makes. The parents still need to lend a guiding hand every now and then, but we hope that Ovi will soon take on a life of its own and then take on the world.

Ovi is proud to boast among its pages a number of new articles lovingly crafted by its parents and

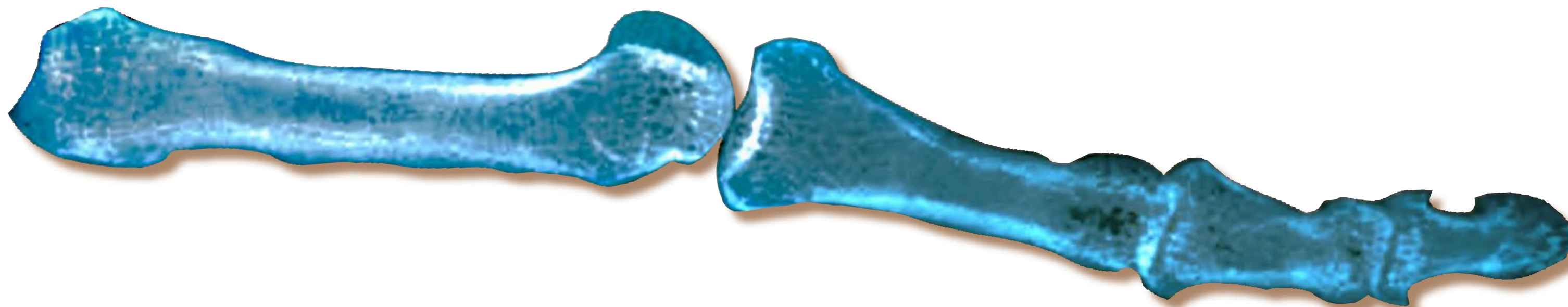


offered as a token of affection to our genial readers. Due to sleep deprivation, Thanos is beginning to let his political slip out and he has written some cracking pieces about Kyoto, Punks, Ronaldo and has penned a strong letter to John. Our absent American friend has picked up the case of a friend who drank a mug full of maple syrup on a dare. Not the example to set young Ovi, John!

Yours truly, perhaps the stand-in mother, has been cajoling, pestering and demanding work from the two dads, and has put together another feast of wordage worthy of Shakespeare – Gary Shakespeare from West London. I have written about the dangers of checking your health online, sponsorship in football and the curse of digital cameras, plus God receives a bemused letter from the husband of a pregnant women.

Thanks for returning to share in the second part of Ovi's life and don't worry if you accidentally wake up the sleepyhead because it is much livelier than you would ever believe.

Asa



A profiles of potential

As the spring-time temperature rises here in the Wisconsin, so do the pre-graduation anxiety at this comfy collegiate biome. With graduation less than 3 months away, the protective academic ozone is definitely wearing thin. Some, like myself, have little direction or idea where we'll end up a year from now. Others, like my roommate Joel, seem to have things all figured out.

Joel broke family tradition when he decided not to go into the cheese business. He is the first of four generations not involved in Wisconsin's largest agricultural industry. But according to this twenty-one-year old biology major, it was not a difficult decision to make, "I just felt like I could do more good as a doctor," he said. "I had the potential and interest in science, so I went just went for it."

But Joel is not taking a traditional path towards his M.D. He will be teaching science in rural Louisiana for two years before heading to medical school. In December he was accepted into the Teach for America program, a non-profit organization that trains college grads as teachers in low-income communities. Joel traces his desire to teach back to his own high school experience.

"I didn't really talk or have many friends back then," He said. "I mean, my mom picked out my clothes until I was a junior!"

But the thick rimmed glasses and plaid button-up shirts couldn't hide his bubbling personality for long. Joel says he started to break out of his cocoon by his senior year (about the same time his mother stopped picking out his outfits). As a teacher, he will be working with adolescents making similar transitions to adulthood.

He hasn't always been a motivated go-getter. He was especially unfocused his freshman year of college, when he attempted to go without sleep for 72 hours and drink a gallon of milk instead of studying for his chemistry midterm. But he has not completely left his old foolish ways behind him. Just last weekend,

he consumed large coffee mug full of maple syrup on a dare from a friend.

"I was fine until my stomach muscles started to spasm," he recalled. "Then I sort of went catatonic for about 4 hours."

But Teach for America only recruits "the most promising future leaders" for their ranks and, despite his bizarre binges, Joel definitely fits this description.

As a physical therapy assistant at Meriter Hospital and an aid for the Wisconsin Early Autism Project, Joel is already using his skills to help those around him.

He will continue his good work in his classroom next year, where one of his major goals will be reaching out to all his students—especially those marginalized by their classmates. "I want to connect with my students," Giffin said. "I'll do whatever it takes, whether it's staying after class, giving out my phone number or talking with parents." But if all this fails, he can always host a syrup chugging contest in the school cafeteria.



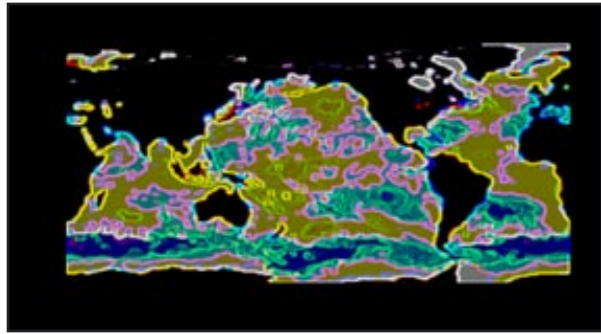
Le Métèque

How many frogs have you kissed
TODAY?



Check our 'inside' magazine





Escaping Kyoto

By Thanos Kalamidas

According to an article I read lately, NASA scientists think that the year 2005 is going to be the hottest year ever since the 19th century. The best cause for this change, according to the same scientists and I presume there is no doubt for the NASA scientists, is the extended transition of carbon dioxide and the weak effect of El Niño last year.

The average temperature has increased globally up to 0.5 degrees Celsius and that's not the final measurement but an estimate for what's going to happen, since they all wait the summer on this side of the Earth. The measurements for global temperature began from the start of the 19th century and the four hottest years since records began have been (in reverse order): 1998, 2002, 2003 and 2005 - and we are still in March.

The change in climate is obvious to all of us, I remember that 30 years ago there were four seasons in Greece; autumn, winter, spring and summer. Now there is only three months of winter and nine months of summer, with temperatures

reaching 45 degrees Celsius in the shade. In early -80s, the first time Greece faced temperatures up to 45 degrees nearly 50 people died, so it is even obvious to people who are not environmental freaks.

2005, the year we are now in, is expected to be the hottest year ever; we know why and what are we doing? Well, how damn stupid can people be? The Kyoto Agreement was the first step and very naïve. It was very political in trying to balance the interests of the powerful and strangling, once again, the poor countries of the south, places that are already choking from AIDS, the lack of water and medicines for the simplest illnesses.

From the other side, the industrial countries seem to be very a sceptical about the signing of the agreement with USA, refusing to sign even though it is responsible for 40% of the international transition of carbon dioxide.

When we started this section of the Ovi Magazine we thought that it would be a place for environmental issues and opinions, and that's the reason we called it 'Escape'. Now is the first time I find this title so perfectly suitable. I just don't know who's escaping: us or them from responsibility. If it is me then I don't know where to escape to since the problem will find me wherever I hide!

Lethal ingredients

By Asa Butcher

Panic and fear have gripped Britain in the latest food crisis. More than 400 products had to be recalled because they were found to contain a banned food dye called Sudan I, which has been linked to an increased risk of cancer.

Despite only certain products being contaminated, there has been some confusion to the news, with some elderly people throwing away everything in their cupboards, fridge and freezer. It is understandable when the recall of products includes soups, sauces, crisps and ready meals; it is the biggest recall in British history costing an estimated £100m.

We are living in a technological age when a banned dye manages to get into food. As always, the mistake is explained away by blaming the multi-faceted intricacies of the food industry. Food manufacturer, Premier Foods, obtains the chilli powder from a UK-based spice and herb specialist Unbar Rothon who had received it from another UK company, East Anglian Food Ingredients (EAFI), who had imported it from India before the 2003 regulations took affect; a better excuse than 'the dog ate my homework, sir'.

It is comforting to know that Premier Foods, Unbar Rothon or EAFI did not realise that there was a banned food dye in their possession or that they had sold it on to a company that deals with food products. Naturally, this dye went into a sauce that is used as an ingredient in hundreds of other products and it is understandable that nobody realised it had been outlawed for 18 months.

We are living in an age where we place our lives and well-being into the trust of others far more regularly. We trust that the train driver sees the red light, we trust that the motorists around us have not been drinking, we trust that schoolteachers aren't paedophiles, we trust that our food and water are safe, we trust...we trust...

Britain claims to be a modern society but when the basics monumentally screw up we are left nursing our shattered trust once again. Hospitals are too dirty and the likeli-

hood of catching a bonus disease while in a British hospital bed is very high. The police are disillusioned and facing increasing hostility from the public for failing to do their job. Politicians are still acting like politicians and the future is looking terribly bleak.

Yesterday it was BSE, today it is Sudan I, tomorrow it is GM foods and the day after it is a bird flu epidemic. It is a great time to be alive if you are an adrenaline junky; if it doesn't kill you, it will make you stronger. Yeah, right. I can't wait to find out what effect 50 years of flavourings, additives and dyes will have on my physical well-being.

Countries, such as France and Finland, seem to prefer using natural ingredients and cooking meals from scratch, perhaps that is why they haven't had to recall 400 products contaminated with Sudan I...yet.



Racism is a joke

By Asa Butcher

“There was an Englishman, Scotsman and Irishman and they walked into a joke...” Don’t worry, it isn’t racist or prejudice if an Englishman, Scotsman or Irishman is telling it, or is it? Today it is bloody hard to work out the boundaries of humour; when does a joke become offensive to somebody?

I’ll try to be careful writing this article because I don’t want to be called a racist. I’m not racist – my best friend’s a limey red-coated pommy bastard...a.k.a. British. Here is the first complication that derogatory terms and jokes raise. I am British/English and am perfectly allowed to use these terms quite freely about my fellow countrymen.

Other nations can escape criticism when insulting the Brits, such as Americans, Australians, the Irish, Scots and also French and Germans, because we share a common cultural and historical animosity that has lasted centuries and has led to the terms almost losing their bite and becoming nicknames. This issue shares similarities with African Americans permitted to call one another ‘nigger’ but should an Ahab use the term then it is severely frowned upon.

Q. What’s the difference between the English and a jet engine?

A. A jet engine eventually stops whining.

How do the English react when other cultures laugh at us or poke fun at our way of life, such as the British comedy sketch show Goodness Gracious Me? The show features sketches about Indian culture and pokes fun at the English from their point of view, such as mimicking the antics of drunk Brits in an Indian restaurant. The show attracts huge audiences of all backgrounds but could you imagine a 21st century primetime BBC show that had the opposite idea?

Goodness Gracious Me’s Mr ‘Everything Comes From India’: The royal family? Indian! Have arranged marriages, live in the same house and all work for the family business. Indian!

A change in what is accepted in humour is a sign of the over-cautious times we live in. You can't say that, you can't do that, what happened to the days of comedians like Bill Hicks? Hicks joked about blowjobs, the joys of smoking, pornography and so much more; not only was he incredibly hilarious with subtle and complex humour, he was intelligently challenging the very fabric of society and that moved him beyond being offensive to the majority.

Bill was threatened after a show by three God-fearing thugs who said: "Hey buddy, we're Christians, we don't like what you said." "So forgive me," he answered.

Raising an issue within society through humour or gently mocking another culture for its peculiarities is one way of dealing with the issue; the problems arise when jokes are laced with hatred and dehumanising terms. Often ignorance, a lack of understanding or claiming it is the norm are trotted out as excuses, but, in defence, some are quite funny. No one section of society escapes ridicule, everybody has endured a joke at their expense at some time in their life, jokes were told the day after 9-11, Princess Diana jokes were told, the war in Iraq has many and even tsunami jokes made the rounds via text message.

How many Iraqi's does it take to screw in a light bulb? Four.
One to screw in the light bulb.
One to claim that they've actually screwed in 300 light bulbs.
One to claim that they've unscrewed 150 American light bulbs.
And one to claim that they're screwing and unscrewing light bulbs for the Palestinians.

How many Americans does it take to screw in a light bulb?
Only one, but he does it from 30 miles away using laser targeting, and at a cost of \$800,000.

Is that fair? Both sides are equally mocked and, I think, no harm has been caused. Humour is a human defence mechanism and living in a <deep sigh> multicultural society, we must learn to laugh at one another and ourselves. Jokes can be a source of alternative education and, used properly, it relieves tensions.

It feels as though being white is the new minority and it is incredibly difficult to suddenly change your approach to the world after years of playground joke telling. When I was growing up it is embarrassing to think how many jokes were told about the Ethiopian famine. I am not alone in this and many of my generation were desensitised, in a manner of speaking, to the cruelty of the humour.

Currently everybody is in a state of near panic over what they can say after years of saying whatever they want, perhaps the next generation will find a balance between





the two. It is hard to believe that as a white straight man you can find yourself feeling like a minority and feeling as though you need to apologise for being what you are. I guess that telling the occasional racist joke is one form of venting the stress at the situation we are finding ourselves battling each day.

Vacancy:Wanted a disabled black gay lesbian to fill immediate position...

Vacancy:Wanted an obese ugly arrogant and stupid employee needed to...

Should an employer advertise a job vacancy but upset somebody with an -ism then they may find themselves facing a discrimination charge. It doesn't get any easier because if the disabled black gay lesbian arrives for an interview and does not receive the position then they can claim any number of discriminatory reasons – perhaps the employer just thought they were an absolute wanker.

No! You are not allowed to personally dislike any ethnic or physical minority now because you will be labelled with one of those -ist tags. When did employers lose the right to choose who they want to work with based on their personality, skills and that certain je ne sais quoi? On the other hand, what does the disabled black gay lesbian feel when they get the job? Do they feel as though they were chosen for the job because their skills best suited the job or are they there to fill minority quotas and make the company look good?

Exasperating, frustrating and outright confusing are a few of the words that immediately come to mind, while there is also no end in sight. Every joke is going to offend somebody, no matter how innocent it may seem:

Big chimney says to little chimney:You're too young to smoke.



Sorry about that pro-smoking joke. I am now in the position where I should include a witticism about all minorities so I am not accused of being prejudiced against any one particular group...



Disabled and racist:

Stevie Wonder is asked how bad it is to be blind. He replies, "It could be worse, I could be black."



Homosexual:

Three gays in a Jacuzzi and a condom floats to the surface. One says, "Ok, who fart-ed?"



Sexist:

Why did the woman cross the road? More to the point, what was she doing out of the kitchen?



Middle East:

Why are camels called "Ships of the Desert"? Because they're full of Arab semen.



Finland:

How many Finns does it take to change a light bulb? Zero, they can't do it. When they notice the bulb is glass and there are threads on it, they spend the rest of the night trying to open it.



Religious:

What's the difference between Jesus Christ and an oil painting? You only need one nail to hold up a picture.

Sorry, that is enough. However, if you smiled at any of them, and I tried to pick some of the worst, then you are just as bad as the rest of us. Join us in battling our demons, at least in public, and, now I come to think of it, isn't all this a case of censorship and freedom of speech...but that is another story.

The colour

By Thanos Kalamidas

Living abroad for a big part of my life I've been a victim of racist behaviour or actions a few times myself. One of my worst moments was when I lived in South Africa, while working for an international company in the mid-80s. That was the period when racism had a face; a real face, at least for me. The older ones remember the period of the -30s and -40s but for me it was the 1980s.

It happened that after that followed another place, again with an international company in Japan. That was a different kind

of racism or xenophobia. There I found out that it was not between the whites and the blacks but between people who had the same colour, at least in my eyes. Japanese people felt superior to Koreans, Vietnamese and Chinese people.

Coming to me, I knew that even if I spent the rest of my life there I would always be a *Henna Gaijin*, which means anything from 'foreigner' to 'the one who doesn't know the rules', 'white naïve alien' to some worse that I'd much not rather refer to. Still, a term that separates you from the local society and it ends up being racist and prejudice.

Later I moved back to Europe and have lived in different two different countries, France and Finland, in the last ten years. Again, I was an alien. By this, I don't try to compare South Africa and Japan of

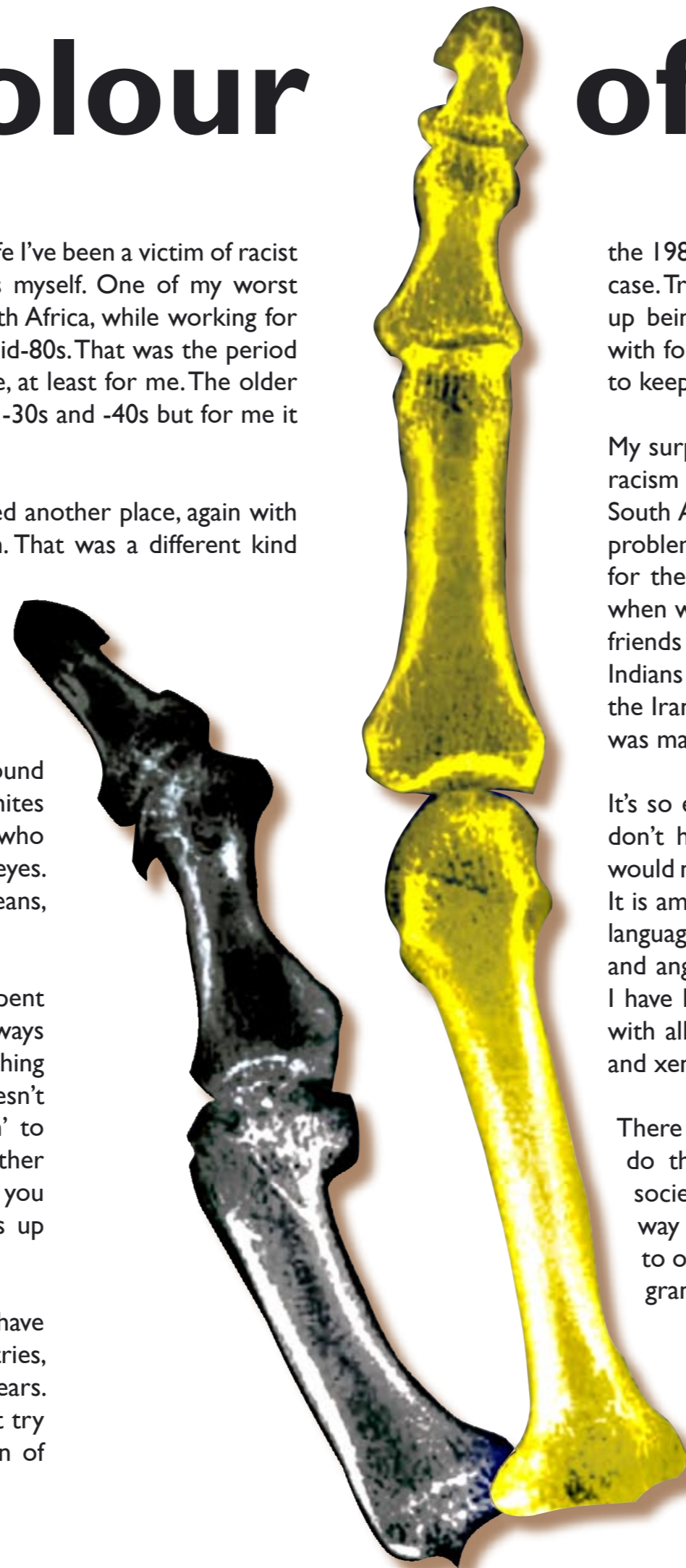
of racism

the 1980s or Europe. Each one of them is a different case. Trying to defend myself in most cases, I ended up being surrounded by foreigners and socialising with foreigners. It was probably because it is better to keep company with the same problems.

My surprise in every case was to find prejudice and racism even between the foreigners. I mean living in South Africa at that time we were facing the same problems and we were sharing the same despidal for the system. We were ready to carry messages when we were going out of the country or use our friends and relatives to take out messages. Still, the Indians hated the Pakistanis, the Greeks the Turks, the Iranians the Arabs, the French the English and it was madness. Unfortunately it still is.

It's so easy to say 'I'm not racist' meaning that you don't have a problem with black people, but you would never be sitting at the same table with an Arab. It is amazing when somebody says to you that your language reminds them of Russian and you get upset and angry. Isn't that racism? The funny thing is that I have heard many times the very same foreigners, with all these prejudices, complaining about racism and xenophobia in the country they live.

There are laws and rules and, of course, the schools do their best to educate about a multicultural society but that's not enough. We have a long way to go and I include myself in that. We have to overcome our prejudices in the hope that our grandkids will be comfortable in our society.



Pay the Game

By Asa Butcher

David Beckham. You may recognise him from the latest Adidas, Vodaphone, Police Sunglasses, Pepsi, Calvin Klein, Gillette or BP Castrol engine oil advert. I have heard he plays a spot of football in his spare time, but that maybe just hearsay.

Sponsorship, advertising and promotions have snowballed in recent years and England's current captain has been at the forefront of this marketing avalanche. In recent seasons, we have seen more aspects of the game carrying a brand name or sponsor. When you next attend a match or tune into watch a game on television tally up the sponsors.

Hoardings around the pitch are commonplace now, but now some clubs have rotating boards that alternate between three sponsors or there are electronic hoardings that have moving adverts. Nike, Kappa and Adidas have cornered the market in the manufacture of shirts, boots, shinpads, hairbands and noseclips, while Lucozade is plastered over every water bottle.

The clock and score are usually sponsored by Seiko and many new football grounds are financed in return for a stadium name, such as Bolton Wanderers' Reebok stadium, Southampton's Friends Provident St Mary's Stadium and Leicester City's Walkers Stadium. You would hope it ended there but the moneymaking possibilities on match day are seemingly endless.

From Premiership to Conference League, if you have any spare cash floating around in a drawer then you can get in on the action. At Newcastle United, you can sponsor a player's shirt for £2,750 (€4,000), the match ball for £2,225 (€3,200), the matchday programme for £2,225 (€3,200) or be a big potato and sponsor the match for £11,000 (€16,000).

Should you find yourself head of a major corporation then why not sponsor a cup competition? England's League Cup has had six sponsors since 1981 ranging from the Milk Marketing Board to Carling Lager – it is a sign of the times that we have gone from health to alcohol. Barclaycard have been putting my monthly Visa repayments to good use by sponsoring the Premiership and Coca-Cola has put the fizz back into the Championship (a.k.a. Division One, a.k.a. the old Division Two).

One aspect that I am grateful never caught on was during the 1998 World Cup hosted by the United States. I was (un)fortunate enough to watch a few games

on U.S. television because I wanted to know how advert-happy American TV would solve the problem of 45-minutes of non-stop action. It was simple: divide the game into thirds, a voiceover would say, "This segment is brought to you by the U.S. Army. Be the best!" and then the logo remained in the top-right corner for half an hour.

Over time the nightmares stopped and English football did not take to this thrice a match voiceover, but the fear that football shirts will soon resemble Michael Schumach-



er's logo-covered racing jumpsuit still remain. In the end only time will tell how the beautiful game (sponsored by Sony) will continue to incorporate commercial interests. I predict that the Nike Swoosh will be appearing on footballer's safety helmets (it will happen) or, maybe, David Beckham will just shave the Adidas logo into his pubic hair.

* Adidas, Barclaycard, BP Castrol engine oil, Calvin Klein, Carling Lager, Coca-Cola, Friends Provident, Gillette, Kappa, Lucozade, Milk Marketing Board, Nike, Pepsi, Police Sunglasses, Reebok, Seiko, Sony, U.S. Army, Vodaphone and Walkers are all either trademarks, copyrighted, company names, extinct or the next Beckham kid's first name.



Ronaldo's talent

By Thanos Kalamidas

The recognition and admiration of people with special intelligence, talents and qualities from their social and worldwide surroundings is everywhere in the human history of arts, science, politics and even war.

No doubt that this is a hard process that demands not only the one side to have all the intelligence, talent and qualities but it demands the other side to accept them, which is something that doesn't happen too easily.

It is not easy in arts, science, politics and war but at least over the last twenty years it has become very easy in football. Big football stars move from country to country like Owen, Figo, Zidane and Beckham, or from continent to continent like Ronaldo, and I'm sure you have already noticed that all these players play in the same team, Real Madrid.

When I was thinking about writing this article my mind was mainly focused upon Greek football but I thought that Real Madrid is the best example of stars that move around.

These individuals became stars in their own country, continent stars playing for one of the cups and the international stars playing for their national teams. Most

of them reached their talent's zenith in one of the international games and then came the big move to another country or continent; time for the big money.

In most cases, the same individuals were not in their prime when they moved country. There are exceptions and are the sorts of exceptions that prove the rule.

Travelling to Greece now, from time to time we see international stars landing in Greece, such as Lagios Detari, Daniel Batista and recently Giovanni, Ivic and last year Rivaldo arrived. Rivaldo was once a big star - the Brazilian equivalent to Maradona. What brought him to Greece? I can think of three reasons:

a) In old age you need warm weather and it is always good in a country like Greece where people respect fame so they can just...relax!

b) Money, money, money. These people are a moving marketing goldmine. The first day Rivaldo landed in Greece the team that bought him sold 10,000 jerseys with his name on the back. In addition, the stadium was full for every game and the team got a few dozen new sponsors.

c) Money, money, money. These people take percentages from the sales if not straight from the products and definitely from the adverts they do for the sponsors.

Each of these keeps the management of the team happy, the accountants happy and the stockholders happy...in the beginning. Once the 'honeymoon' is over and they discover that the star is either too tired to play for the full 90-minutes or has a returning injury that means they

can only play a third of the games a tenth at a time.

Then the fans start to complain that the team is not doing well. The management, the stockholders and the big star obviously forgot something very important: the fans. The fans are the ones who buy these fancy jerseys and the tickets and they are doing it for the team; the colours and that's all!

I, myself, have been following a team for the last 40 years in good and bad times, with big names as players and unknown teenagers, but I'm doing it because I love the team. The colours are something of my personal history, I have stories from my youth with this team and the names of certain players are a part of this history, and not the reason I follow this team.

Returning to Real Madrid, all these players who play today for that team could make the top ten of international football. Zidane's games with the French national team are always a classic, David Beckham with Manchester United and Owen's games with Liverpool and the English national team still aren't enough to make Real the best team the world has ever seen. Why?

It could be because there was some love for the colours when Beckham was playing at Manchester United. Perhaps nowadays marketing became more important to them than a good game; they have probably all forgotten that there would be nobody to pay their wages if football had no fans.

Maybe the truth lays somewhere at the beginning of this article. Intelligence, talent and qualities that some people have and make them stand out from the rest of us demand the acceptance of the rest of us!



I could start this article like...perfect sculptured female bodies pokes fun at the gravity of artists' ancestors and their paintings... but that would be a bloody lie. If I was writing the same thing twenty years ago for an exhibition in New York then it wouldn't be a lie. It was a Boris Vallejo exhibition and, unfortunately, I was in the centre of Helsinki in one of the dozen galleries that exist in this city.

What's the matter with the Finnish people? Are you so proud for been copycats? Since when has being a copycat become art? Why copy one of the big names, at least find somebody who's unknown. Boris Vallejo is everywhere, or at least he was in the -80s and -90s, from posters to school notebooks. Today you can even admire his work in the internet.

However, I'm asking too much in a country that managed to copy even Donald Duck! Indeed, one of the 'paintings' you find in many Finnish houses is Kaj Stenvall's duck, which strongly resembles Donald; I'm just wandering what poor Disney would think about it.

The whole affair becomes increasingly embarrassing when you see the price of those paintings, sometimes higher than 600 euros when you can easily buy a poster from the original Boris Vallejo online for less than 40euros.

Yes, it gets worse when you consider that Finland gave somebody like Helene Schjerfbeck to the world. On my very first day in this country - and before I met the reason that made me return again and again - I visited Ateneum and found myself standing in front of a painting titled The Ill Girl for over two hours. At that very moment, I decided that whatever happens I will return to this country just to stand in front of this painting and relive the feeling of the thin El Greco style brush lines, the slim long faces and the passion.

After seven years in this country, I've been many times to Ateneum just to admire the work of this woman and her paintings have become some kind of oasis in this land of copycats.

People: If you don't respect anything else, at least respect the heavy legacy this woman has left for you and do some inspired art, otherwise please don't give up your morning fast food job just to be called artists. Making hamburgers is some kind of art anyway.

Call it art

By Thanos Kalamidas

Die-ignosis

By Asa Butcher



It began innocuously enough. I was drying myself after a particularly invigorating shower and noticed that my left armpit was hurting. I touched it a few times and confirmed that it was more of an aching feeling. Stood in front of the mirror with my left arm in the air, I began to examine the area more carefully, but could not find the source of this strange pain.

Once dressed, I launched my Net browser and, out of absent-minded inquisitiveness, typed in "aching armpit" into a search engine. The first page of search results blew my mind with words, such as 'cysts' and the dreaded C-word. My medical adventure had begun in earnest and it would take me to the dark depths of my imagination before it was over.

Stupidly the morbid side of my curiosity took hold and I delved further into this online medical diagnosis. Each site offered lists of common symptoms and, if my memory was not playing tricks (amnesia was listed on one), I was certain that I'd experienced a couple over the previous weeks.

My mind was spinning with the possibilities and I needed to retreat to the kitchen and calm my nerves. I put the kettle on and began to make myself a strong cup of coffee, before remembering that one of the websites had warned against caffeine beverages. Glass of fresh water in hand I returned to the self-diagnosis.

Page after page of telltale signs to watch out for and one site stated that an increased pulse, especially being able to feel the strong thump of your heart, was dangerous. The stress increased because I was certain that now my pulse had increased and it must be connected with the aching armpit.

Subconsciously my hand was rubbing my stubble and the back of my neck in an attempt to help me comprehend what was happening, and it was happening so fast. Hmm, I hadn't noticed that hard pea-sized nodule on my throat before...what?! Following another five-fingered check it was confirmed that there was something there.

Armed with this new symptom I was able to focus my search and it seemed that there was light cramp, no it was more of a tingling, was developing in my left arm. Panic was taking hold and it felt as though I should be proofreading my epitaph and writing my last will and testament. I heard a key in the front door and my heart sank, what will I tell my innocent wife?

That evening I decided to broach the subject and asked her to check my left armpit for me, "It feels a bit funny," says I. She sighs and angles my hairy pit into the light, "Hmm, it looks red, as though you scratched it. Did you use the rough side of your sponge when you were in the shower?"

Feeling slightly embarrassed, I have vowed to myself never to use another online medical dictionary ever again...although there is a funny mole on my leg..

There's an off button?!

By Asa Butcher

In January, the BBC broadcast Jerry Springer: The Opera on terrestrial television and received a barrage of abuse from religious groups, decency watchdogs and a host of other critics. The complaints were based upon the quantity of bad language, depictions of Jesus wearing a nappy and some other material deemed unsuitable for adults who can't find the off button.



The British Press reported that X-amount of complaints had been made concerning the show, but what did the viewing figures show the following day? Over five million people had tuned in to watch and it is inconceivable that all of them were offended: many were bored by it in fact. When it comes to television and radio, a vocal minority have more power than the majority, which is unfair when we all pay the same TV licence.

There are shows, I am most sure, that the regular complainers watch that I find boring, uninspiring and believe should

not be screened. What do I do? Do I sit down and send death threats and angry emails to the BBC's Director General or do I pick up my remote control and switch to another channel? Where does it say that everything broadcast should be suitable for everybody?

In the example of Jerry Springer: The Opera, it was broadcast after ten pm, after the watershed when kids and the easily offended should be tucked up safely in bed, so what is your problem? There is pornography in the newsagents but does that mean you have to buy it or have a quick flick through the pages? I feel it is the time to ask questions but there doesn't appear to be many sensible answers. In one of those countless email forwards I receive, it once said: why is it called common sense when it is so rare? So true...

Find the money

By Thanos Kalamidas

Carrying in her briefcase a new style, the former war hawk and the current Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice prepares the groundwork for the visit of President George W. Bush. The United States' agenda in Europe has only one issue: help for Iran.



average unemployment benefit in the United Europe is 350 euros, five million unemployed in only one country means 1,750,000,000 euros a month; 21 billion euros a year, which is probably the annual budget for countries such as Finland. Don't forget that these are very simplistic calculations.

Here we should never forget that Europe suffers from the effects of 9/11, competition from the East with cheaper products and the fear of an unstable market. Recent-

ly we have heard about companies which, even though they came with profit over the previous financial year, are still retiring employees with the thought that next year might be worse.

Perhaps the last year hides a message. Companies seem to have lost control of their own targets. Up until a few years ago, companies were worrying about their competition, the quality of their products, their production or their marketing, while

nowadays they seem to only be concerned about their stocks. Their products are being treated as a secondary issue to the price of the stock, which they oddly represent on the market. Suddenly we saw companies, services and products disappear from one day to the next in correspondence with their worth on the stock market; the only market that suddenly existed was the market

of money leaving the product they represented discarded and forgotten.

A result of this has companies dismissing employees, which then has the remarkable affect of making their stock price go up. And, of course, that will happen with the stock price of Siemens but unfortunately the German population has not been floated on any stock market. This leaves the United Europe with a huge problem that has to be solved soon before it becomes the nemesis of the Union itself.

The States failed, and that's a fact, in their democratization plan for Iran and now they need help from the only ones who can help them, the old Europeans. And by old Europe we refer to France and Germany. The Americans need the help of the Europeans in many ways, financial and in human resources if they want to keep the Middle East and the wider Arabic world on the agenda. Primarily, they need a stabilized Iraq, which means peacekeepers, a police force and money, a lot of money.

At the same time, the United Europe faces one of their biggest challenges in its history and that's not the expansion to ten more countries but the unemployment. Lately Germany reached the record number of five million unemployed. Five million people is the population of Finland. If we make some simple calculations and take it as fact that the



What you need to know

By John Pederson

Being an exchange student in Finland is harder than it looks. Sure you see us in the cafeteria taking hour-long lunch breaks and hear us talking about recent trips to Stockholm and St. Petersburg, but it's not all fun and games for us foreigners studying in Helsinki. Simply negotiating the cultural quirks can be a full-time job, especially for those of us visiting Europe for the first time. I had a lot to learn when I showed up here and did most of it the hard way, by jumping right in and embarrassing myself on a regular basis. So listen up all you exchange students and pass this info on to your friends planning Helsinki next semester. And to all you Finns, this list is also a plea for your continued

empathy for clueless foreign friends.

What you need to know for a happy and healthy semester in Helsinki:

1. If you find yourself at a sports bar during a USA-Finland world cup hockey match—whatever you do—do not cheer when the US scores. You will not make many friends if you do. If you'll be lucky just to make it out alive.

2. If you ask someone where the closest swimming pool is and they say, "Yrjonkadun uimahalli," with a rueful grin. It's because they are picturing the look on your face when you realize you are swimming with a pool full of naked old men.

3. For all you fellas looking for love, loose the facial hair. I thought my rugged cowboy look would give me an advantage over the smooth Swedish-speaking Finns at Hanken, but was sadly disappointed. But I now realize this is part of a larger issue. Any exchange student, no matter how exotic his name, or sexy his accent, should be aware that they are up against some pretty tough competition up here in Helsinki. I don't think I'm the only foreigner that has found it difficult to compete with the well-dressed, fashionably clad and paradoxically tanned Hanken hunks. It's not only the women here that are beautiful!

4. Fellow American's may want to practice a British or Canadian accent before they try pick-

ing up girls at the bars—that is unless they want to end up talking politics all night.

5. The word and concept associated with the English phrase "excuse me" either doesn't exist or is not used in Helsinki (even by little old ladies who ram you into the tomato display case at Stockmans, leaving you with a slight limp for several days.)

6. Being too chatty in the sauna makes Finns uncomfortable... but so does wearing a bathing suit.

7. Don't be alarmed if you're walking home at four in the morning and find people standing on street corners gazing at empty intersections. It is not the night of living dead, just civic-minded Finns obeying traffic laws.

8. Stay calm if you see young people in overall uniforms parading through the streets. It's not some strange army reserve drill or a NASCAR rally, just a bunch of college students dressed to party.

9. Lastly, light up and learn to laugh at yourself. Everyone else already is!

This is John Pederson... and I'm Just Sayin'!

Finland for Thought
Politics, events, culture

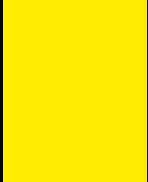
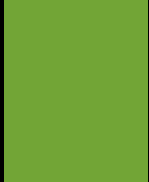


Le Métèque

How many frogs have you kissed

TODAY?





www.ovimagazine.com