



View from the Mountjoy

## Saving the sinking CD

By Sarah Lockwood



Driving home with friends after the recent Bloc Party concert, we discuss where I can buy their first album. My friend tells me I can buy it on the internet for \$18.

Where from? A glorious company that sends you CDs for \$10 less than a retail store?

"iTunes," he says. And my heart sinks. The digital bloody revolution. Megabytes in cyberspace versus shiny plastic gems.

In the first quarter of the year, EMI Group suffered a 20 per cent decline in CD sales. Apparently Terra Firma Capital Partners,

the new owners of EMI, are comfortable with the drop in revenue – and why might that be? Because they have a digital egg hatching of course!

That egg is EMI's venture with Apple that makes songs available on iTunes at a higher price but without traditional restrictions on how many devices you can play them on or number of times you can copy them.

While EMI is nursed into the digital age, Amazon has invested big bucks in AmieStreet – an independent site launched by American students. The site peddles tracks using a pricing plan that reflects how popular the download is – it starts free and the cap is one cent less than the average price of an iTunes song.

I have to admit I find the whole concept of consumer-driven pricing pretty nifty – as long as the maximum price is a rea-

sonable one. And I like that the site is open for uploading, so anyone can get their music out there and if the people dig it they'll make some money.

So I suppose I don't hate the digital revolution as it relates to music – I can see benefits and, yes, I have an iPod and I thoroughly enjoy using the wee thing.

What really upsets me is the death of the CD. There is something satisfying about taking it home in a paper bag, checking out the photos and the artwork and the lyrics inside.

Clicking on a song to "get info" from my iTunes library doesn't float my boat in the same way.

So I will soldier on in my crusade to support the CD. I will go to music retail outlets and I will pay \$10 extra.

Then I will go home, turn on my computer and rip it onto iTunes.



PHOTO: JOSEPH BARRATT

## Freedom to show breasts – in the name of business only

Editorial - Mike Kilpatrick

It's ironic that a pornographer and his topless harem brought Queen St's lunchtime traffic to a halt in the same week that Parliament passed legislation sanctioning three-month jail terms for streakers getting their kit off at rugby matches.

Screw the law-abiding citizens held up while fake boobs were thrust in every direction. But under the Major Events Management legislation, God help anyone who dares interrupt the sponsors' cash cow known as Rugby World Cup 2011.

I'm no prude, but the Boobs on Bikes parade turned my stomach.

And while there's no doubting the beauty of the nude form, the real beauties on Queen St that day were the old vehicles used to ferry the boobs.

Auckland City Council should be ashamed of gifting Steve Crow the freedom of the main street to peddle his erotica expo and plug his mayoral campaign.

Was the parade freedom of expression? Well, it certainly wasn't a campaign for social improvement – this was about

the prostitution of Queen St so a bald bloke in a flash car can buy more flash cars and encourage more women to expose themselves.

The crass commercialisation and sexualisation of breasts at lunchtime caused my venti latte to curdle.

But should we really be surprised this Government is further cracking down on personal freedoms by passing the Major Events Management legislation?

To the shame of many New Zealanders we have asylum seekers who have been in prison for years, without being charged and with no time limits on their incarceration.

We have a terrorist amendment bill which removes judicial safeguards against rogue Prime Ministers classifying someone espousing views they don't agree with as terrorists.

And we have party pill ingredients being re-classified as class C drugs, turning a whole generation of users into criminals.

It leaves a sour taste to think that this is being done under a Labour government.

Unfortunately, the political alternative is even more unpalatable.

## Journalism and capitalist media

Letter to the editor

I was delighted to read in Eloise Gibson's response to my *Dominion Post* column on the state of New Zealand journalism that she and her "optimistic, idealistic and passionate" colleagues "still want to change the world".

My response to her response, however, is: "Change it in what way?"

Are Eloise and her colleagues foes of capitalism? Enemies of globalisation?

And, if so, how do they propose to carry the fight to the enemy from within the belly of the beast?

I would have welcomed Eloise providing some hint as to this new generation's overall battle-readiness.

How many of her colleagues, for example, are already members of the journalists' union, the EPMU?

How many plan to join on gaining employment?

A quick show of hands at her next lecture might reveal fewer "world changers" among her colleagues than she thinks.

Good journalism has always emerged in spite of, rather than because of, the capitalist news media.

Fine writing and acute analysis have the power to break through the structural ideological barriers of media created to preserve and advance the interests of the ruling class.

My point is – only fine and acute journalists can provide it.

Chris Trotter  
Dominion Post columnist

## Fall of religion – Hallelujah!

By Dan Satherley



Religion is officially on the decline in New Zealand.

The first word that springs to mind is an oddly inappropriate one

for which I make no apologies: Hallelujah!

Census figures show the percentage of people identifying themselves as Christian dropped from 60.6 per cent to 55.6 per cent between 2001 and 2006.

In the same time frame agnostic and atheistic Jedi-box ticking infidels like myself have increased by more than 250,000 – from 29.6 per cent to a whopping 34.7 per cent.

Both Prime Minister Helen Clark and National Party leader John Key are openly agnostic,

much to the benefit of gay couples and strip bars, respectively.

As if to rub fire into the brimstone, Richard Randerson, the recently retired Dean of the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Parnell, earlier this year admitted he too was on the fence.

And I, for one, welcome our new semi-heathen overlords!

If Karl Marx was right about nothing else, it is that religion is indeed an opiate of the people, an escape clause from reality with no place in the structure of modern society.

Faith is, by and large, a belief in something without reason and, much like supporters of the Vodafone Warriors, religious leaders have it in spades.

But if there's one thing I'd like our elected leaders not to do, it's to base their political decisions on the ancient text of a jealous god worshipped by genocidal nomads.

The Government's refusal to name Christianity as New

Zealand's official religion earlier this year brought us fresh reminders of just how out-of-step Destiny Church's Brian Tamaki is with this new mainstream.

And if I recall correctly, it was none other than Graham Capill, then-leader of our most prominent religious political party, who was convicted on charges of child molestation.

To hell with it – how many people in history have ever been killed in the name of agnosticism?

Atheists shouldn't be feeling too smug either, however.

Their faith in nothingness and Richard Dawkins is akin to driving without insurance.

You'll probably get away with it, but God help you if you don't. Religion one of the pillars of society?

Bah, let it crumble.

As they say, a three-legged dog is still a dog.

And a three-pillared colosseum will stand just fine.