

## Spoiler warning: plot details and/or reality to follow

WITH JACK BAUER BACK, KICKING TERRORISM IN the gonads and screaming in the face of every evil-doer he can tie to a chair or water pipe, the world can feel safe knowing that the planet's best counter-terrorism agent is keeping us safe again—on TV at least.

In the real world, however, there's no Jack Bauer, and that's why just in the past week the US Embassy in Athens was rocked with an explosion, while three bombs killed five people in the Philippines. When the world needs a saviour, maybe it's a good thing that *24* is back for another season; that way, you at least know that Jack, Tony and the gang will always get their man.

FOX's hit was never as relevant as it was in its first two seasons. Had the show aired a couple months earlier, it probably would have been unbelievable. After all, guerrilla terrorists didn't have the financial and tactical means to blow up an airplane and assassinate a president. But when the World Trade Center attacks proved that these types of violent acts were in fact possible, the Western world's perception of what people are capable of doing to each other shifted. It was no longer implausible for there to be Muslim terrorists supported by Arab governments acting as sleeper agents within the United States, and this enabled *24* to thrive.

When Jack was killing 30 nameless hired goons in season two, real-life terrorists were bombing the Chechen parliament and blowing up buses in Israel. While he stopped 13 terrorists and his asshole boss as season three aired, 57 died in bombings in Istanbul. Public transportation continued to be unsafe in many parts of the world as Hamas destroyed Israeli buses, with the Israeli Army returning the favour; a Filipino ferry was bombed, killing 116; two Russian trains went down, taking over 90 people with them; and more trains went down in Madrid, killing 191 and injuring about 1500 more.

As the Bauer kill-count jumped to 44 in season four, so too did the number of real-life casualties. In 2005, we saw unrest in Thailand escalate into terrorism and a suicide bomber attack in Kandahar, while Myanmar got drawn into the fray as well. Then, on 7 July, the London bombings occurred, killing 52 people.

2006 saw 38 bad guys killed during season five; 57 Sunnis killed in Karachi, Pakistan; and 64 killed on a bus in Sri Lanka. 187 more died in the Mumbai train bombings. Happily, 2006 also featured the first truly Baueresque moment: the foiling of a terrorist plot in London on 10 August.

It seems that the more Jack eliminates the terrorist threats on Monday night, the more real-life bad guys there are seeking revenge Tuesday morning. But as *24* winds towards the end of the series in the next couple years, we can hope that with anti-terrorist breakthroughs such as those in London, the days of serious terrorist attacks may also be coming to a close—it's just a shame that FOX can't cancel terrorism like they do everything else. Either way, there will come a day that TV Land will no longer need Jack Bauer to save the day from Serbians, Arabs, Mexicans, Chinese or even the American president himself—and we can all hope that when that day comes, the real world won't have any need for him either.

PAUL OWEN  
Sports Editor

## Micture this

ON FRIDAY, A 28-YEAR-OLD CALIFORNIA WOMAN died of poisoning while trying to win a Nintendo Wii. The malicious substance? Bottled water. The contest, called "Hold Your Wee for a Wii," challenged participants to see how long they could suppress micturition. While some may be quick to blame KDND 107.9 for their idiotic competition, or Ms Strange for dismissing her poor bladder's cries for help, the blame obviously falls squarely on God's shoulders. Clearly, biology should have kicked in, and Strange should have pissed herself long before she diluted the sodium levels in her body to such an extent that she suffered massive bodily failure. For shame.

MATT FREHNER  
Editor-in-Chief

## LETTERS

### Arts requirement courses still up to par

Thursday's issue of the *Gateway* featured two articles about recent developments in the Faculty of Arts. These are exciting changes for the Faculty; however, some of the information presented in these articles requires clarification.

(Re: "Faculty of Arts subtracts math and sciences from admission equation," 11 January). In the last paragraph of the feature box of this article ("Arts Requirements: Now & Then"), this article states that, "Compared to other universities across Canada, the U of A's Arts admission standards are now significantly less academically diverse, as most other schools require at least an equivalence of Pure Mathematics 30 and at least one 30-level science course."

This statement is incorrect. In fact, many other Arts faculties in major postsecondary institutions across Canada—including the universities of Toronto and Queen's—also do not include math and science courses in their admission requirements. This change to our Faculty's admission requirements is *not* an effort to dissuade future Arts students from taking math and science courses; instead, the change will simply help students to pursue more relevant course choices if math or science classes will not be required for their future academic career. At the same time, it will allow students to apply to University using a wider range of high school subjects than previously, thereby expanding access. Students who will need particular math or science courses for specific degree choices will be advised of this in the calendar, again consistent with practices at the peer institutions mentioned above.

(Re: "Arts grads seek better career advice"). This article announced the impending creation of a new position in the Faculty of Arts: an Arts Career Advice and Work Experience Officer. I would like to make the Faculty's position on this matter clear—especially since an error was made in this article, in which someone else's quotation was attributed to me. This position is not being created to compete with the work of CAPS, nor because of any concern on my part about the service it provides. On the contrary, CAPS has proven itself to be an important ally of the Faculty over many years. Time and time again, the staff members at CAPS have demonstrated their ability to offer valuable career advice to Arts students.

Over the last several years, Arts has made great strides to increase our communication and constructive collaboration with central administrative services. In areas such as Fund Development, International Student Relations, and Research Services, we have found that having an "in-house" Faculty contact can only enhance the understanding of Faculty issues at the University level; it also leads to the efficiencies of mutually complementary, rather than duplicating, operations. These successes, and the wish to have an officer available in proximity to our Undergraduate Student Services office, motivate creating a position in the area of career advising.

The Faculty of Arts looks forward



CONAL PIERSE

to this new opportunity to collaborate with and enhance the services of CAPS.

DANIEL WOOLF  
Dean of Arts

### CAPS critique misplaced

The *Gateway* article "Arts grads seek better career advice" (11 January) grossly misrepresents the services offered through Career and Placement Services (CAPS). In fact, the inaccuracies make one question whether the Arts' Student Association (ASA) ever stepped inside of CAPS.

Mr Trivedi, ASA Vice-President, states that when he came to CAPS he was "offered an entry-level position working at Tim Hortons." The implied assumption is that this is a failure on the part of CAPS; this is wrong.

First, CAPS does not "offer" positions. Perhaps Trivedi looked at the online job postings. If this were the case, Trivedi would have viewed three postings for Tim Hortons. One posting is for the Tim Hortons Children's Foundation offering full-time summer work. The second and third positions are for the TDL Group Ltd (Tim Hortons' marketing department). All three postings offer valuable experience and enviable opportunities for learning. CAPS and the U of A are proud to be associated with Tim Hortons. If the opportunities are not right for Mr Trivedi perhaps they are for other students.

Secondly, CAPS does *not* function

like an employment agency. CAPS plays a vital role in *connecting* students and employers. It also provides essential educational opportunities to ease students' transition to the workforce.

As the familiar parable states, give a person a fish and you will feed them for a day, teach a person to fish and you will feed them for life. CAPS provides educational opportunities to clients so that they can walk away with career development skills that they can rely on for many years to come.

CAPS offers a wide range of services to support Arts students. From workshops to free seminars, from career forums to career fairs, CAPS aims to help Arts students ease into the working world. I am surprised that Trivedi did not take advantage of these services.

CAPS continues to work with the Faculty of Arts to bring career services to their students. Any input from the ASA would be appreciated if they would like to meet. Despite our invitations, the ASA has never met with CAPS to discuss the career services offered to Arts students.

WENDY L COFFIN  
Director  
Career and Placement Services

### Science experiment not foolproof

Despite the selective quotes offered in Thursday's article on the elimination of math and science from

the Faculty of Arts high school admissions requirements, I did vote against the proposal when it came to the Arts Executive Committee (re: "Faculty of Arts subtracts math and sciences from admission equation," 11 January).

While I do see a number of legitimate benefits arising under the scheme, my vote was based on equally significant concerns about the need to encourage scientific literacy among prospective students. High school science and math are huge assets to undergraduate education in the Arts, especially in social sciences. Although I did say that it's not fundamentally necessary that people have those courses in order to succeed, I still think that they're better off with them than without.

ALAN CLIFF  
Arts Executive Committee member

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