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For College Students, By College Students with **Newsweek**

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Inside Sinead's Shaved Head

THE IRISH SINGER SETS THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON HER FAITH AND SEXUALITY

In 1992, Sinead O' Connor dared to be bold. She tore up a picture of Pope John Paul II on Saturday Night Live to protest child abuse scandals within the Roman Catholic Church. In the aftermath, she was booed, banned, teased and considered by her supporters to be one of the most misunderstood artists of her time. In subsequent years, O'Connor made headlines with rumors that she was a lesbian. During the fall tour for her critically acclaimed new album, *Theology*, the Irish pop singer talked with *Current's* Souleo about her faith, sexuality and love of a good ole shag.

On the new album, the song "The Glory of Jah" refers to your embrace of the Rastafari faith. You once stated that Rasta saved your life. How so?

I grew up in a Catholic country—a very black-and-white way of thinking, symbolized even by what the priests were wearing. It was really a religious dictatorship. The Rastas would laugh and joke about how stupid and ridiculous Catholicism was. When you take something that is a bully and frightening, and you actually bring it down to size by mocking it, that somehow helps you overcome the negative effects of having been oppressed by that thing.

Ultimately, did your experience with the Rastas make you more or less comfortable with your Catholicism?

I've always been comfortable with my Catholic faith. The fact that I might have arguments with the Church doesn't mean that I'm not comfortable with my faith.

You once came out as a lesbian and then retracted that statement. How do you identify sexually now?

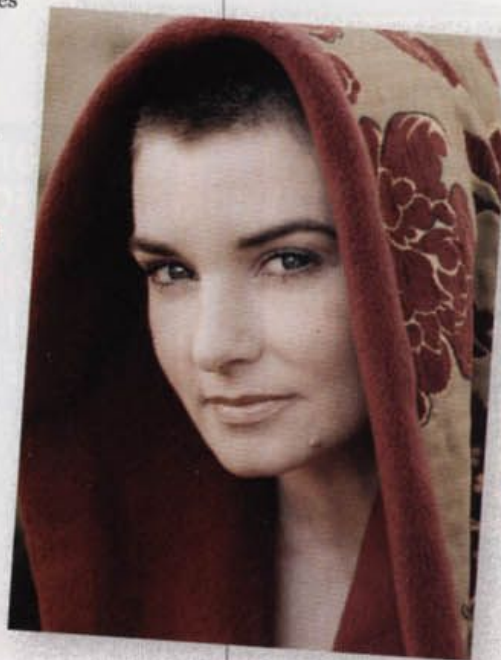
There are two points I should make. I've had relationships with women, or not so much relationships, but, uh, sexual trysts. [Laughs] In my life I have kind of explored my sexuality in as many ways as I could without getting strange.

You've loved.

Yeah, but also sometimes you wanna f**k as well. Basically I've shagged a few women. I don't know where that puts me but I like big, hairy men better.

How do you reconcile your sexuality with the strict orders from Catholicism and Rastafari against any homosexual behavior or thoughts?

I can take on board the good things about a religious tradition, and the pointless and stupid rules would roll off me like water off of a duck's back. Those are rules that men made. I don't believe that God made those rules. For example, God created gay people, so what's everybody bitching about?



So what is the faith of Sinead O' Connor?

If I had to describe it, I like the Holy Spirit. There's a spirit—it doesn't matter what you call it or where you find it. In our tradition of Catholicism, they symbolize it as a bird so it's a thing that can fly anywhere. It's a free thing. It's not something that you can tie down with rules and regulations or hide behind golden cupboards.

Do you still identify as a Catholic religiously?

I don't know how to answer that because I identify as a number of things. I don't put one thing on it. I just identify as me, really.

Is there anyone in today's contemporary musical scene that you enjoy?

Amy Winehouse I love, and Lily Allen. I like [artists] like 50 Cent and all that. I like the sound of his voice. I don't like that he would vote for George Bush, though.

You were a pioneer for the clean-shaven-head look for women in the mainstream media. Were you excited when Britney Spears shaved her head?

Well I thought to myself, 'I think she must have been listening to my records.' I wouldn't be surprised.

As a mother, what do you try to instill in your kids?

I don't deliberately instill anything because I don't feel that I have the right to project my beliefs onto them.

What else do you wish to accomplish in your personal and professional life?

In my personal life, I suppose, just to settle my family well, which I have. And eventually move in with my boyfriend and his children, and have a nice big house with loads of f***ing land around it. [Laughs] And have a lot of sex with my hairy boyfriend. He's a big, hairy ride, as we say in Ireland. ■

clipfile

"There's an academic tradition called the 'Last Lecture.' If you knew you were going to die and you had one last lecture, what would you say to your students? ...For me, it wasn't hypothetical."

—Randy Paus, a popular Carnegie Mellon professor who is dying of pancreatic cancer, in his last lecture.

INNOVATION

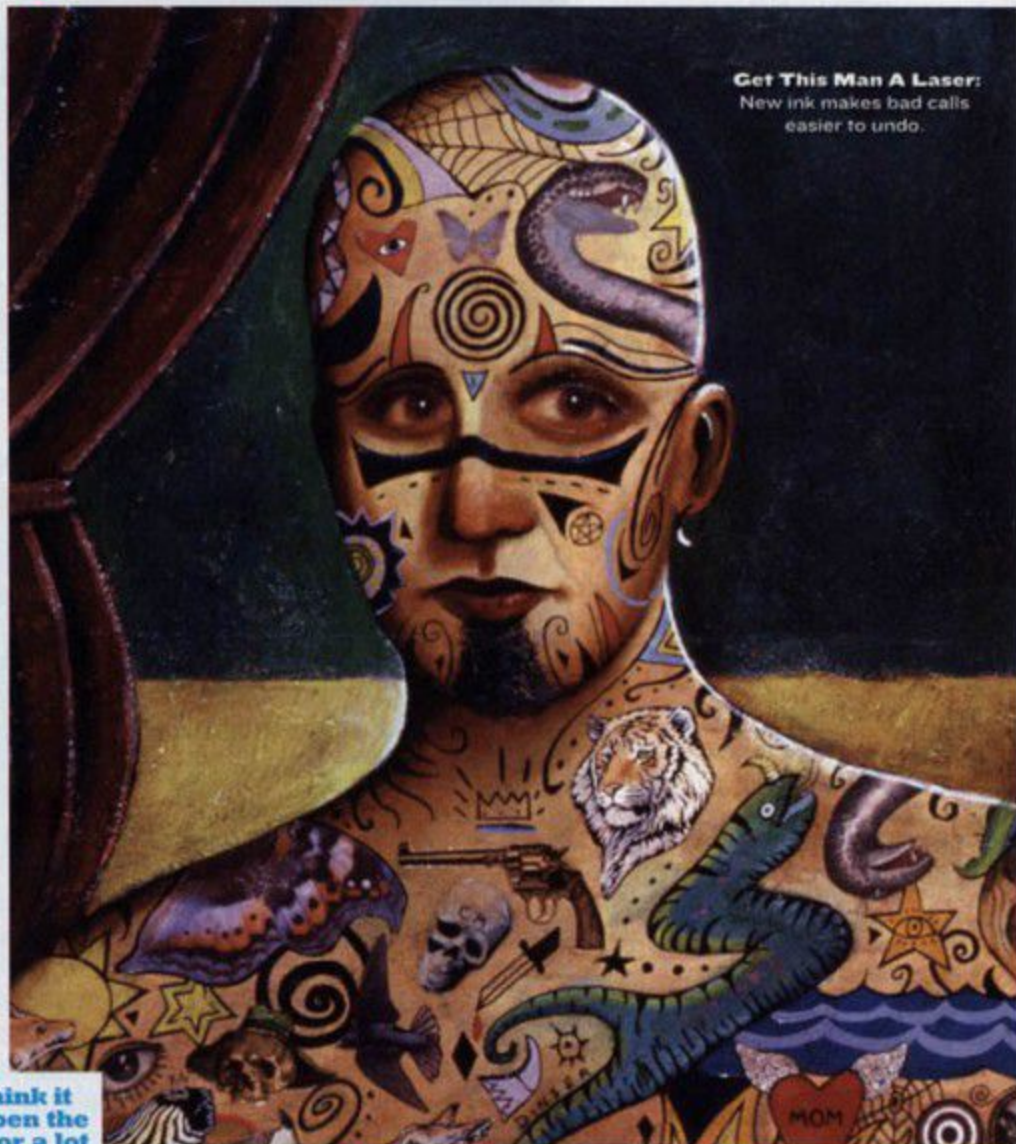
INVISIBLE BODY INK

by Souleo,
Brown University

The naked lady lying seductively on your back; the initials of a long-gone lover branded permanently on your bicep. Sure you may be young and fit now, but those images won't look so hot once your skin begins to wrinkle and droop like a marshmallow over an open flame.

Luckily, a new ink called Infitink allows for permanent tattoos that can be removed after a single laser treatment. Once Infitink—which is kept from leaking through a process referred to as microencapsulation—is "ruptured" by a laser, the pigment inside is released and reabsorbed by the body.

The lead developer is Edith Mathiowitz, a medical science professor at Brown, who three years ago joined this project, initiated in the '90s by researchers from Duke and Mass. General Hospital. The new ink arrived last month at select tattoo parlors in eight American cities, with expansion expected to follow quickly. The new product is more expensive than traditional ink, with the exact premium varying by parlor, but Freedom-2, the company marketing Infitink, doesn't think that will be a prob-



Get This Man A Laser: New ink makes bad calls easier to undo.

"We think it will open the door for a lot of people to walk into tattoo shops and ask for a tattoo."

lem. "We think it will open the door for a lot of people to walk into tattoo shops and ask for a Freedom-2 tattoo," says Kurt Mussina, the company's vice president of marketing.

Adrienne Allen, a senior at Brown, was always hesitant

about getting a tattoo, but says that she's "more likely to try out a physical alteration that can change as often as I change my mind, personality, and lifestyle."

Several individuals have already used the ink successfully with no reported side effects. Additional human studies are

expected to be underway within a year.

Mathiowitz—who is currently tattoo-free—says she isn't planning on taking advantage of the new invention herself: "I don't like to say that I will never get one, but I think I passed the age of rebellion." ■

INNOVATION

No Cash, No Card, No Problem

by Souleo,
Brown University

This fall, Brown University professor Donald Stanford hopes to make credit cards and cash obsolete for Rhode Island college students with the introduction of mPay, a free mobile phone payment system that allows users to conduct financial transactions on their cell phones as quickly as they can send a text message.

The mPay system—which launched in Poland in 2007 and registered more than 20,000 users there within three months—will debut in the U.S. exclusively to Brown, Rhode Island School of Design, Bryant and Johnson & Wales students.

The technology is simple to use, but, like PayPal, mPay requires that both parties involved in a transaction sign up and open an account. Signing up is free and there are no monthly charges, but there is a commission fee of 2 percent for the person or business



Man With a Plan: Donald Stanford is turning cell phones into credit cards.

receiving the payment. To send funds to other mPay users, just dial up, enter the seller's ID number and cost of the product, and a few seconds later you'll get a text confirming the transaction was successful.

Stanford's company, mPay USA, is in negotiations with Starbucks, CVS and Dunkin' Donuts, but has yet to sign any agreements, and there's no definitive timeline for the product going national. But for now, for a select Rhode Island few, wallets may soon be no more than a fashion statement. ■

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Beijing bound?

Olympic hopeful Alicia Sacramone balanced her courseload at Brown with her gymnastics training.

Modern Day Impressionist

AMY POEHLER OF 'SNL' ON IMPERSONATING HANSON BOYS AND BEING MAD RICH

by Souleo, Brown University



To stand out on a classic television program like "Saturday Night Live," it helps to have timing that delivers better and faster than UPS, a willingness to get ugly and the ability to embrace your quirks without hesitation—all things that Amy Poehler possesses in abundance. For 15 years and counting, she's been a regular performer and writer with the comedy group Upright Citizens Brigade, and in 2001 Poehler joined "SNL," where she made a name for herself by delivering spot-on impersonations of Paula Abdul, Avril Lavigne, and even Michael Jackson. This year you may have heard her as Sally O'Malley in the film "Horton Hears a Who," and you can soon watch her co-star with former "SNL" member and long-time friend Tina Fey in the film "Baby Mama." Also out this year: her new animated series for Nickelodeon, "The Mighty B." Amid her packed schedule, Poehler found time to talk to Current's Souleo about poking fun at Hillary Clinton, wishing she could be the "middle boy" from Hanson and planning to have kids—or at least to steal someone else's.

Thanks for giving me the last page of your magazine.

Yes, on the very back.

It's like the back of the bus. It's where all the cool people sit right?

Exactly. So when did you realize that you were funny?

When I was studying acting, I would do a lot of dramatic pieces and people would always end up laughing. So I think I discovered I was funny by accident.

You've done parodies of Hillary Clinton on "SNL." Are you supporting her for president because it will give you more material? I don't decide who to vote for by who I think will be the best to make fun of, or I'd be voting for [Mike] Huckabee or something.

You said that you've always wanted to be a rock star. Which rock star would you most like to be—or at least impersonate?

When I was growing up I'd probably say Debbie Harry, and now that I'm older I'm gonna say the middle boy from Hanson. I think we look a lot alike.

I read that you were third runner-up for "most casual" in high school.

I tried too hard. See that's the problem with "most casual" is you can't try too hard or else you won't get it.

What kind of college student were you at Boston College?

I was a communications and theater major in school. I kind of wish sometimes I could go back now and be a little less hung over.

In "Baby Mama," you play a surrogate mom who's the polar opposite of Tina Fey's character.

That's right, we're Amy Poehler opposites!

Are you two as different in real life as you are in the film?

You know we're actually not. I think we're more alike in real-life than you would think.

You're also working on your new animated series, "The Mighty B," for Nickelodeon—

Yeah, that's gonna be really cool! I think all you stoner college kids are gonna like "The Mighty B." I'm working on it with some of the people who worked on "Sponge Bob Square Pants." It's a really funny, great show about this girl who lives with a single mom in San Francisco. She skateboards and has fantasies that she's a superhero, and she's part of a Girl Scout group. It's really, really fun, and I'm really proud of it.

I have to ask: you've got "Baby Mama" plus two animated children's projects in the works now. Any significance to that? Are you and your husband, comedic actor Will Arnett, thinking about having kids soon?

You mean in terms of kidnapping or stealing other people's children? We think about it all the time. We often go up and down the street and look into children's stores or day care centers and think about stealing other people's children.

So I came across an interesting piece of trivia that lists you as the highest grossing film actress currently employed by "SNL."

Whoa, I can't wait to shout that down the hallway. Hold on a second. [Amy shouts down hall] Hey you guys, I'm the highest grossing—

It gets better; they say that your films have earned a total of over \$800 million worldwide. How does that make you feel?

It makes me feel mad rich! It's only a billion dollars short of my goal: one billion and eight hundred million dollars. So I better get cracking. ■