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BY  
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PERSON » NOAH CYRUS



As if controversial Disney princess Miley and her achy-breaky dad Billy Ray weren't enough to handle, there's a new Cyrus on the block.

It seems Miley's little sis - nine-year-old Noah - has her sights set on stardom as well. Or at least controversy.

The pint-sized wonder is collaborating with her best friend to design a line of pre-teen lingerie. Yes, you read that right. We fear for the future.

PLACE » ANGELS COSTUMIERS WAREHOUSE



If there's one thing we love more than a sale it's dressing up in costume. So the Angels Costumiers warehouse sale, which takes place today in Wembley, England, combines our two loves.

Angels Costumiers is a premier costuming firm that provides fanciful outfits for television and film production and is selling off a ton of previously enjoyed stuff, from sequined jackets to swords.

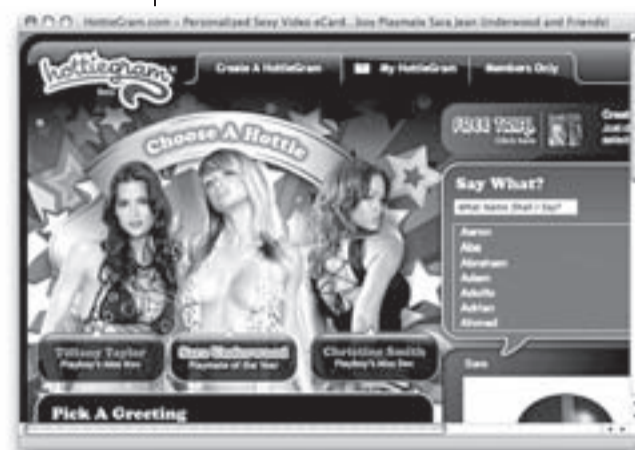
Quick trip across the pond, anyone?

THING » HOTTIEGRAM

Valentine's Day is just around the corner and a card is one of the best ways to show your sweetie how much you care. Especially if the card features another woman stripping off her clothes.

Yes, the Hottiegram ([www.hottiegram.com](http://www.hottiegram.com)) is Playboy's way of saying, well, we're not exactly sure what.

The animated cards let you pick your favourite playmate to send a sexy dance to a loved one. How sweet.



FEELING THE PINCH

For Gens X, Y and Z, the time of reckoning has come sooner than expected



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*Warning: This column contains dry-eyed realism, economic frustration and intergenerational resentment. Parents or young people wishing to preserve a sense of blind optimism about the future are advised to turn the page. Reader discretion is advised.*

So you thought Generation X was angry? Baby, you ain't seen nothing yet.

Gen X - strictly defined as the generational cohort born in the two decades following the baby boom - came of age during the recession of the 1990s, while the generation that followed - variously called Gen Y or the Echo Boom in the media - is bearing the true brunt of the economic collapse. As the voices of Gen X, Douglas Coupland and his ilk complained about having to take on McJobs in veal-fattening pens, but today's graduates should be so lucky. Times are tough, and there's no relief in sight.

I have expressed my indignation at the overlooked plight of youth in the wake of the global downturn in this space before, but it turns out that I may have underestimated the true cost of both this recession and our place in history.

My fellow Gen Xers and those younger than us have been robbed of our rightful inheritance, says David Willetts, author of the recently published book *The Pinch: How the Baby Boomers Took*

*Their Children's Future - And Why They Should Give It Back.*

While the book, which became available in Canada this week on Amazon.ca, is an exhaustive social history of postwar Britain to the present, the author's central thrust is this: In their embrace of their beloved counterculture of the 1960s, boomers across the Western world adopted a kind of radical individualism that broke with their parents' ways and eventually became the mainstream. Instead of feeling beholden to the generation before them - and, by extension, to future generations - the boomers saw fit to do precisely as they pleased. This included cool stuff like listening to rock 'n' roll, getting married young and burning bras, but also not-so-cool-stuff, like getting divorced, going into debt and throwing all their money into what they blithely believed was an eternally rising real-estate market.

Well, we all know better now, don't we? Unfortunately, though, it's too late. The damage has been done. And that damage, according to Willetts, can be summed up in one very trendy-sounding word: fragmentation.

In essence, fragmentation means more people living alone, working alone and, to use a hippie phrase, "following their bliss." The problem is, all this radical self-involvement doesn't help young people coming up through the

ranks or society as a whole. It's good for one powerful generational cohort: the boomers. But who will pay the price? Their children, who, in fact, are already paying it.

According to *The Pinch*, 40 per cent of unemployed people in Britain right now are 25 or younger; by comparison, those aged 50 or older own four-fifths of the nation's wealth. In Canada, the situation is similar, although not quite as dramatic. The overall pattern, Willetts writes, is "a completely raw deal for the young people today compared to the experience of their parents."

As a 54-year-old Conservative MP and shadow cabinet minister for education and skills, Willetts (whose cabinet nickname is "Two Brains") has benefited enormously from the luck of his birth date. "The impetus to write the book," he tells me, "came from listening to my wife worry about how our teenaged sons were ever going to be able to get onto the property ladder or have the same advantages we had." (Short answer: They probably won't.)

And while the current credit crunch too shall pass, things are not likely to get much better for millennials in the long run. Willetts predicts that, once the inevitable pension crisis hits and the boomers' offspring (finally employed) find themselves working for companies whose

profits are being diverted to plug gaps in schemes not open to younger staff, the real resentment will start. "The demographic environment is now changing - and will be one of the biggest shocks to our economy since [the Second World War]," he says. "Having had easy sailing with favourable tailwinds, we will be battling against demographic headwinds for the next 20 or 30 years."

Yes, you read that right: He's talking about a 20-to-30-year decline from the heights of the postwar advantages that boomers enjoyed.

This drop goes far beyond the kind of intergenerational griping we've heard much of in recent decades. It makes the main characters in movies such as *Reality Bites* and books such as *Generation X* look positively soporific in their combat-booted disappointment at not having been handed groovy media jobs right out of university.

For the generation that followed mine, the stakes are much higher. The problems they are grappling with and will continue to grapple with are not existential but fundamental. In *Reality Bites*, suffering the indignity of folding sweaters at the Gap was among the protagonists' biggest hardships, but that pales next to such 21st-century realities as being laid off at 25 or getting saddled with a sub-prime mortgage. How can you "lower" yourself to take a job

at your local factory, moreover, when there are no more factories left?

After putting the bulk of their money in real estate and gambling away the rest on the markets, baby boomers are now holding on to their jobs and pensions for dear life. And who can blame them? The fact that subsequent generations will be forced into spending their prime earning years paying for their retirement with no promise of an inheritance is not the boomers' problem but all of ours. That's how ultra individualism works.

And it promises a raw deal indeed - one that Willetts likens to opening up a treasure chest and finding a bunch of IOUs that now have to be paid.

As a politician, Willetts doesn't want his book to be a bad-news story, but his solutions to this demographic quagmire sound a bit flimsy to me.

Among his recommendations are better career counselling, work and housing arrangements that intermingle generations and an increase in the retirement age in an effort to defer mass pension payouts.

Here's another one: The next time you're in a bar and the harried twentysomething cocktail waitress forgets your order, don't stiff her. Instead, leave her a big fat tip. At this rate, the poor kid is going to need it.

OH, WHAT A WENCH  
» OHSOCOCO.BLOGSPOT.COM

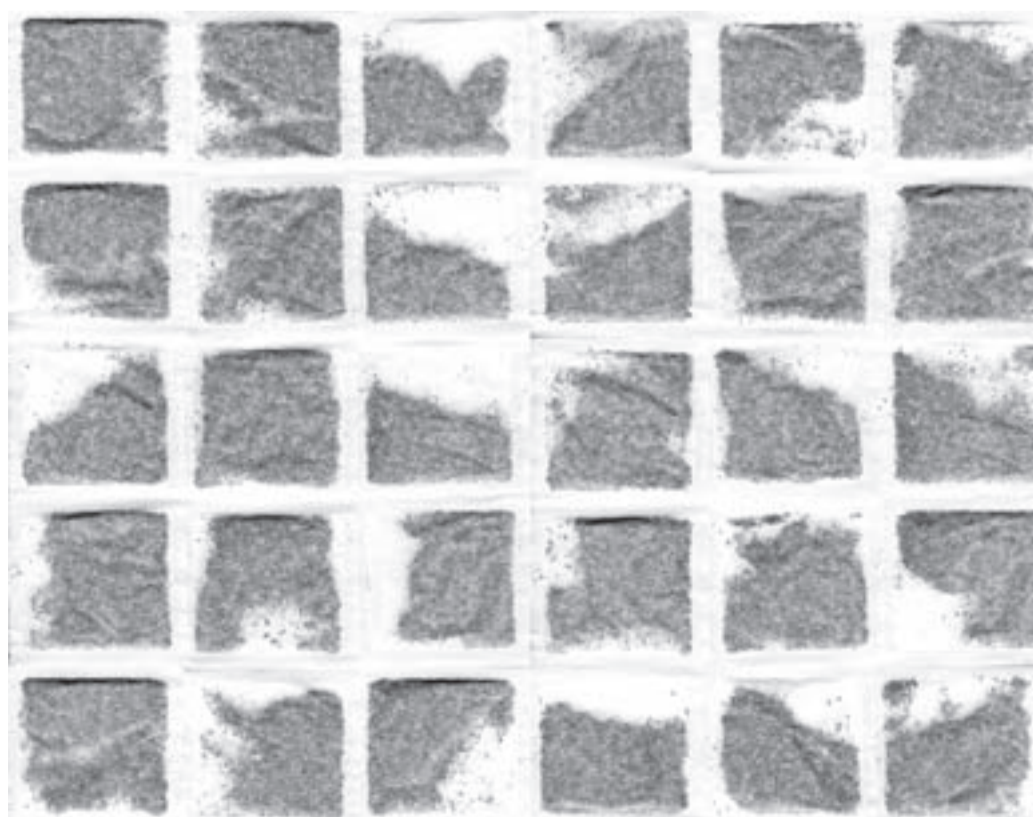
It's official: Canadian supermodel and Celtic-dance enthusiast Coco Rocha has finally unveiled a name for her forthcoming clothing line.

In November, Rocha put out a call to readers of her blog, Oh So Coco, to suggest monikers for her label. More than 400 comments and several months later, Rocha premiered both the name - Roco-co - and her first creation at the Grammys this week.

Roco-co seems to jibe with the gilded medieval getup she galloped around in, but The Cut blog reports that the name isn't actually hers. Rather, it came courtesy of a 21-year-old fan, Alejandro Smoker, whose contribution seemed to slip Rocha's mind when it came down to her big reveal this week.

We suggest that they resolve this in an appropriate fashion: a joust.

DESIGN CRACKERJACK » DESIGNCRUSHBLOG.COM



Talk about turning dry into juicy. The blog Design Crush got us hooked on designer Este Lewis's unique wallpapers. Under her label Soy Este, Lewis plays with the power of multiples to transform ordinary objects such as matches, sticks of gum and soda crackers into spellbinding motifs. Who would have thought that plain old saltines could look so delicious? And they make an ideal backdrop in kitchens.

NICE SWEATER!  
» RACKEDNY.COM

**"My date just showed up in the exact jumper I'm wearing. It's House of Holland. More embarrassing for him, I think..."**

Designer Henry Holland tweets about a recent dating disaster, as reported by Rackednyc.com.



THIS WEEK'S  
BLOG BUZZ  
BY TIYANA GRULOVIC