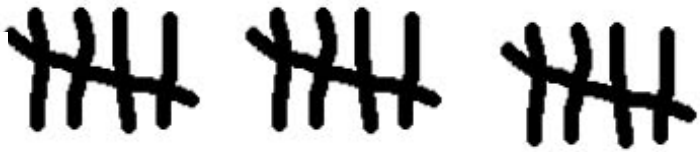
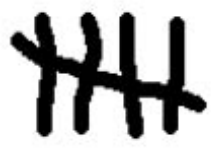
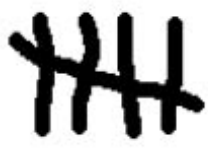

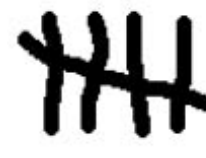



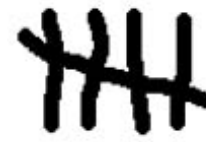








2004 

 Russell's   
Hottest

 131 



Russell's

Hottest

131

Russell B. Farr

A beetleg by ticenderogapaleeza productions.

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(Song lyrics used without permission, but then I'm not making a cent from this so I don't think I'm ripping anyone off. I seriously urge everyone who reads this to go and seek out the work of every artist mentioned. In the meantime, if anyone wants to sue the pants off me, go ahead. You obviously don't recognise a free plug when you see one.)

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise) without the express prior written permission of the copyright holder. After 8 years it's good to see the old Eidelon copyright statement get another spin.

Design by Russell B. Farr

Typeset in Royal Pain, Goudy Old Style, Arial, Century Gothic, Stencil, Courier New, Bullet Helz.

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**Name:** Russell Brian Farr  
**DOB:** 1 February 1973  
**Address:** rustle@iinet.net.au  
**Alias(es):** Punkrocker1991  
**Prior Convictions:** Playing The Smiths in company after midnight.  
Stereo nazism (multiple offences).  
Eating the last Kingston biscuit.  
Attempting to enliven a party by playing Nina Hagen at volume.  
Possession of a Hawaiian shirt with intent to wear.  
Failure to enjoy an Ani Difranco gig.  
**First single owned:** "Rainbow Connection" from the Muppet Movie soundtrack.  
**First single bought:** "Believe it or not (Theme from The Greatest American Hero" Joey Scarbury.  
**First musical experience:** Countdown 1975: "Sailing" by Rod Stewart is number 1.  
**First gig:** Icehouse, Perth Entertainment Centre, 1990, Code Blue Tour.  
**Sentence:** Leniency given due to offender's background. Offender sentenced to compile his Hottest 131 songs before 1 February 2004.



## It was a dark and stormy night...

So begins the bullshit. I love music, and that's all there is to this book. Six years ago, as my 25th birthday loomed sharply into view, I sat down with the idea of putting together my own Hottest 100, in response to the way the JJJ one had gone all lame-arse in limiting songs to a certain year. It's since gone even more lame-arse by having a selection process which ensures only the songs they want get even half a chance.

The Hottest 100 became a Hottest 101 when I realised I'd got all the way to the end without an L7 song. From memory the whole process was painful, involving much sleep loss, inner debate and an end result that I wasn't entirely satisfied. It was a stupid idea, and I should have sworn there and then on my copy of *Bricks Are Heavy* never to do it again.

But I didn't, which is why you're reading this. Instead, I thought expanding my list to 131 would solve all of my problems. I still limited my choice to a maximum of three songs per artist, so 131 should have been plenty of room.

Just like there were enough lifeboats on the *Titanic*. This time around my stupid idea led to a process that was painful, involving much sleep loss, inner debate and you can guess the rest.

It's not like the music here isn't satisfying, these are my favourite songs. The problem lies with having more than 131 favourite songs, a lot more. One day I might as well just list every song I love and derive the number from that, you know, something like *Russell's Hottest 1246, No Wait! 1247*. It just rolls of the tongue, doesn't it. *New York Times* bestseller list here I come.

Despite the end result, it has been a good experience: the challenge of belting out over 14,000 words in less than a week has to count for something; as does having spent a lot of time pondering the music that I love.

I'd especially like to thank the wonderful and patient Liz Grzyb, who has had to put up with me rant and moan and rave during these last few days. The revolution will not be televised, and the war will definitely be over by Christmas.

Happy birthday to me!

*Russell B. Farr*

# The Hottest 131

## [131] People Who Think They Can :: The Waifs (3:05)

(Simpson; from *Shelter Me*, 1998)

Without a doubt, Albany's finest. Sweet voices, great, down to earth songs and always proud to be indie. That's what I love about this song, it talks about aspiring to be successful and the option of selling out.

"You just wear the tightest one and smile in that certain way..."

## [130] All the Right Friends :: R.E.M. (2:48)

(Buck/Berry/Mills/Stripe; from *In Time*, 2003)

Embarrassing confession time. Sometimes I think this is the best song on R.E.M.'s best of. I know it's the novelty value of hearing a new track, but I'll take this one over "Bad Day" any day. It's an old song that the group dug out for the *Vanilla Sky* soundtrack. It's amazing how they've managed to recapture the old feel of the band, the best part of 20 years after the last time they played the song.

"I don't want to hang out now with the friends that just aren't mine..."

## [129] Waiting for the Great Leap Forwards :: Billy Bragg (4:34)

(Bragg; from *Workers' Playtime*, 1988)

I hope I don't get thrown out of the ALP for this. I really thought I'd included Billy's "To Have and to Have Not" earlier in the chart, but I must have lost it somewhere. I'm amazed as anyone that only one song from the purest voice of English socialism made the cut. It's a definitive Billy Bragg song, dealing with his own politics as well as pointing out how stupid the world, including Thatcher's Britain, is being. I had the pleasure of going on strike recently, for the first time ever, and *Worker's Playtime* got a decent flogging as I did housework (when you're the only person in the building on strike, maybe the only person in town, it ain't much good forming a picket).

"The revolution is just a t-shirt away..."

## [128] Teenage Riot :: Sonic Youth (6:58)

(Gordon/Moore/Rinaldo/Shelley; from *Daydream Nation*, 1988)

No one does fuzz pedals like these guys. *Daydream Nation* is an intricate weave of fuzz that is hard to imagine without playing it; imagine watching "snow" on tv but with it having an extra level of colour that draws you towards it. I love the way the guitars kick in.

"It's getting kinda quiet in my city head, it takes a teenage riot to get me out of bed right now..."

**[127] Charlotte Sometimes :: The Cure** (4:14)

(Smith/Tolhurst/Gallup; from *Standing on a Beach*, 1986)

This one's a late-night *Rage* favourite. It would come on while I'd be struggling to stay awake, confronting me with its spectral sound and strange, green-filtered images. Apparently the song is based on a children's book of the same title. I can't say I'm hunting the book down with a burning desire, but I love the song and always will.

"The streets all looked so strange, they seemed so far away..."

**[126] London Calling :: The Clash** (3:20)

(Strummer/Jones; from *London Calling*, 1979)

Sleep well Joe. The Clash always did more for me than the Sex Pistols. I remember buying a double cassette compilation sometime in the mid-80s and proceeding to flog it until it had almost worn out. Later I got *London Calling* on vinyl (I still have it in a box somewhere). The title track, with its pulsing guitar and revolutionary lyrics, is simply timeless. A couple of years ago a CD packaged as a miniature LP was released – except it credited "Train in Vain", a track originally pressed onto the album but not given a sleeve credit. One for the trainspotters.

"Now don't look to us all that phoney Beatlemania has bitten the dust..."

**[125] In A City, Girl :: Weddings Parties Anything** (3:32)

(O'Prey/Thomas; from *Donkey Serenade*, 1995)

There are songs that speak to the listener the first time they are played, while others can be grown into. This song is of the former type, from the first time I played *Donkey Serenade* I thought this was the stand-out track. Maybe this says more about me than the album, which has at least another 8 decent songs on it. I love the Weds, you'll be seeing more of them in this list.

"The other morning when I woke up under a four sheeted poster of Iggy Pop..."

**[124] Biko :: Peter Gabriel** (6:54)

(Gabriel; from *Peter Gabriel III*, 1980)

Steven Biko should have been a major figure in post-Apartheid South Africa. Sadly he was beaten to death by security officers in 1977 (for homework watch *Cry Freedom*). This almost 7-minute tribute has never failed to move me, every time I've played it since I first got a copy in 1986.

"The outside world is black and white with only one colour dead..."

**[123] Body Count :: Ice-T** (6:07)

(Ice-T; from O.G. *Original Gangster*, 1991)

Feel the angry power of Ice-T in this track, bringing you back to earth with the "Shit ain't like that!" You probably don't want to play this to your mother. I was lucky in my teens to have a best friend, Rowan, who got me into rap. Sure I'm a white boy, but who gives a fuck?

"(Tell us what to do) Fuck you!"

**[122] Silent All These Years :: Tori Amos (4:11)**

(Amos; from *Little Earthquakes*, 1992)

I'm a sucker for an intelligent, powerful chick singer, which is why you'll find a lot of Beth Orton and Tori Amos in this list. I love emotional songs, especially where that comes from the vocals. I love the little details that give life to this song: the nasty dress, 25 bucks and a cracker. Songs like this make me younger yet wiser.

"So you found a girl who thinks really deep thoughts, what's so amazing about really deep thoughts?"

**[121] Throw Your Arms Around Me :: Hunters & Collectors (3:53)**

(Seymour/Hunters & Collectors; from *Human Frailty*, 1986)

I bet Mark Seymour never expected this to become an Aussie standard, up there with Cold Chisel's "Khe Sanh". Despite the hype, I still love this song, the way Mark Seymour exudes a powerful sexuality in his vocals. Probably, despite Paul McDermott, the least cheesy singalong out there. And exactly which 4 places did he mean?



"I will come for you at night time, I will raise you from your sleep..."

**[120] Scary Kisses :: Voice of the Beehive (4:12)**

(Bryn/Vettese; from *Sex & Misery*, 1995)

If there's been a tragedy in the 90s then it has to be Voice of the Beehive. For years I'd always thought they'd released 2 wonderful, thoughtfully boppy albums and then disappeared. Then, with the help of the ubiquitous innernet, found out they'd released 3 albums, their last, *Sex & Misery*, being allowed to sink like a stone before the girls went back to waiting tables. *Sex & Misery* has to be the greatest unknown album of the 90s; I urge you to amazon.com it now.

"Baby I want scary kisses, I want hits and I want misses..."

**[119] If I Only Had a Brain :: MC 900ft Jesus (3:46)**

(Griffin; from *One Step Ahead of the Spider*, 1994)

Canada's Mark Griffin seems to be a rather strange man. He's someone else who released 3 albums and then disappeared, which is a great loss. He defies classification, with humorous white-boy rap like this song to heavier electronic music. Check him out.

"Suppose I accidentally got my shit together, would I get a medal?"

**[118] Birdhouse in your Soul :: They Might Be Giants (3:20)**

(They Might Be Giants; from *Flood*, 1990)

Can you say, "Party track"? Part one of my 2 part combo to get everyone on the dance floor at parties – "Smells Like Teen Spirit" is the knockout blow. TMBG are basically nerd-rockers. "Birdhouse" is one of those songs to bounce to, as PWEI say, "Can you fucking pogo?"

"I'm your only friend, I'm not your only friend..."

**[117] Oliver's Army :: Elvis Costello & the Attractions** (3:00)

(Costello; from *Armed Forces*, 1979)

I wish I had more room in this list. This was a tough call, I love “Oliver’s Army” as the sentimental favourite, but think “Shipbuilding” is probably the better song. I guess it’s the first line of this track that does it, it pulls just the right strings. Blame *Countdown*.

“Don’t start me talking, I could talk all night...”

**[116] Get the Girl, Kill the Baddies :: Pop Will Eat Itself** (4:49)

(Pop Will Eat Itself; from *Live at Weird’s Bar & Grill*, 1993)

These guys wipe the floor with those other technorock bands that proliferated in the early 90s, like Caligula and EMF. They had the better, harder songs – the toughest choice was which song to include. I guess the sci-fi in this track won me over.

“Gonna get the girl, gonna kill the baddies, let’s save the entire planet...”

**[115] She Sells Sanctuary :: The Cult** (4:14)

(Astbury/Duffy; from *Love*, 1985)

Perennial dance floor filler at any alternative night. “She Sells Sanctuary” is one of those songs that can persuade even the most tired feet to dance to one more song. It’s almost irresistibly air-guitarable, too. (Yes, it’s a word now, we’re talking rock’n’roll, not Senior English here.)

“And the Texas sun makes my back burn...”

**[114] Dignity :: Deacon Blue** (3:59)

(Ross; from *Rain Town*, 1987)

I’m a sucker for Scottish-pop, which is why you’ll find Deacon Blue, The Waterboys and Aztec Camera in this list (Big Country *should* have been here, too). *Rain Town* is my work album, I can put it on and something about it makes me put my head down and produce. Maybe it’s the theme of work that runs through almost every track.

“There’s a man I meet, walks up our street...”

**[113] I Guess It Don’t Get Much Better Than This :: My Friend the Chocolate Cake** (3:28)

(Bridie; from *Curious*, 2002)

David Bridie is not afraid to stand up for what he believes in. He’s a staunch Melbourne supporter, so we’ve seen eye-to-eye about football exactly once. Politics is a different story, how could you not love a guy for dedicating “Kerosene” to Bronwyn Bishop, or for giving little johnny howard the flogging he does in this song. I love MFTCC, I think I’ve managed to see them at least once on every tour since 1996.

“This little country it’s little again...”

**[112] The Prole Song :: Snog** (4:02)

(Thrusell; from *Buy Me... I'll Change Your Life*, 1997)

David Thrusell is a rather strange individual. From what I gather he's a cult figure who spends a lot of time in the wilds of central Victoria, surfacing with a new album or a tour every year or so. Snog is basically him and friends. He's wonderfully anti-establishment and musically experimental. Dedicated to all the nine to fivers out there.

"We're happy little proles and we're on our way to work..."

**[111] Tender is the Night (The Long Fidelity) :: The Triffids** (3:44)

(McComb; from *Born Sandy Devotional*, 1986)

Without wanting to pre-empt the notes to "Wide Open Road", David McComb was probably the most talented songwriter Perth has ever produced. And between the last time I did a list like this and this time, he had to go and die on us. His legacy lives on in wonderful songs like this, a hollow emotionless song of separation.

"There's someone I want to forget tonight, don't you want to forget someone too..."



**[110] Supernova :: Liz Phair** (2:48)

(Phair; from *Whip Smart*, 1994)

Way back when dinosaur jr's walked the earth and Al and I had too much time on our hands, we'd drive around a lot, mostly to pubs and parties that were generally considered that little bit too far for most. To compensate, we made tapes. Somehow Al managed to put this song onto a tape, but neither of us knew who the fuck it was. I swore blind it was Voice of the Beehive. Then one night I crashed out in front of the teevee after a party at someone's house and the clip came on *Rage*. I wrote down "Liz Phair" and then proceeded to buy the 2 albums she had released to that point. Speaking of point, there wasn't really one to this story but I still love the song.

"Your kisses are as wicked as an M-16, you fuck like a volcano..."

**[109] Girlfriend :: Matthew Sweet** (3:40)

(Sweet; from *Girlfriend*, 1991)

If nothing else, Matthew Sweet cuts right to the chase on this song. I've always loved the lyrics just for that point. Matthew Sweet is an artist who really belts out a great tune, preferably when he's sad and lonely. Another recommended track is "Evangeline", which rings so true to everyone who's ever tried to hit on a religious grrl.

"I want to love somebody, I hear you're looking for somebody to love..."

**[108] Linger :: The Cranberries** (4:34)

(Hogan/O'Riordan; from *Everybody Else Is Doing It (Why Can't We?)*, 1994)

It's a perfect late night *Rage* song. Delores O'Riordan's gentle, haunting lyrics complement the music and the black and white film clip beautifully. Did I mention I had a thing for angsty female vocals?

"If you could get by, trying not to lie, things wouldn't be so confused..."

**[107] Swimming Horses :: Siouxsie & the Banshees** (4:05)

(Siouxsie & the Banshees; from *Twice Upon A Time*, 1984)

Siouxsie Sioux was the first goth grrl I ever lusted after. Former punk and Sex Pistol hanger-on, it didn't take long for her to come to the fore with her amazing voice. Add Steve Severin and you have an incredible duo.

"This weightlessness under water forgets in slow motion..."

**[106] Sunday Morning :: Velvet Underground** (2:52)

(Cale/Reed; from *Love & Other Catastrophes Soundtrack*, 1996)

Sadly, it is entirely possible that the first Velvet Underground I ever heard were R.E.M. B-sides. I can't take all the blame, for too many years no one heard of the Velvet Underground, and you could be forgiven that Lou Reed didn't exist before "Walk on the Wild Side", at least not so far as anyone in Perth knew. But I'm free of such dark ages now, and to show this have steadfastly avoided picking a song off the banana album. *Love & Other Catastrophes* was my favourite film of 1996, and the soundtrack is brilliant too.

"Watch out! The world's behind you..."

**[105] Better Man :: Pearl Jam** (4:28)

(Vedder; from *Vitalogy*, 1994)

There have been periods in my life where I haven't listened to the radio, and a chunk of 1994 was one of these. So, unlike the rest of civilisation, "Better Man" wasn't flogged to death in front of me. That didn't happen until a couple of years later when I got a copy of *Vitalogy*. I flogged it to death then. It's a great song, underneath it all, and deserves to survive all attempts by rampant capitalist radio stations to murder it.

"She lies and says she's in love with him, can't find a better man..."

**[104] Bloodsport for All :: Carter the Unstoppable Sex Machine**

(5:05)

(Morrison/Carter; from *30 Something*, 1991)

How can anyone not love a band whose members are named Jim Bob and Fruit Bat? Back in around 1990 there used to be a show on the ABC before *Rage* that would talk about bands and play clips, and there I first heard Carter USM, Gary Clail and Jesus Jones, among others. There was an interview with Clail that was quite interesting, but I've just finished Stuart Coupe's *The Promoters* and apparently the guy is a complete wanker in the flesh. Enough already, play the damn record.

"Lay down play dead for Di and Fergie..."

**[103] Joey :: Concrete Blonde** (4:08)

(Napolitano; from *Bloodletting*, 1990)

Alcohol. Love it, hate it, wake up swimming in it. We've all been there. Back in 1991 I was at a farewell party for a school friend, who was a singer off to the U.S. to become famous or something. Between sets, a rather drunk me went up to her and told her how sorry I was to see her go, and hoped she'd do big things: the sort of things one may be prone to saying

when in one's cups. Anyway, during the next set they played "Joey". Maybe it was on the cards, but I felt like it was for me. My name is Russell and I'm an alcoholic.

"And if you're somewhere out there passed out on the floor..."

**[102] Fools Gold :: Stone Roses** (4:18)

(Squire/Brown; from *The Complete Stone Roses*, 1989)

Acid. I never understood the 10 minute version of this song until I dropped acid for the first time and it was played. There's just something to swirling your hands around, watching the afterglow, that alcohol just doesn't do. All the stars – so many more stars than usual. Oh how an innocent schoolboy's fave becomes corrupted. Time for another PWEI quote: "Don't do drugs, don't have sex and don't listen to dodgy rock'n'roll bands".

"The pack on my back is aching, the straps seem to cut me like a knife..."

**[101] Bigmouth Strikes Again :: The Smiths** (3:12)

(Morrissey/Marr; from *The Queen Is Dead*, 1986)

For all the mastery of "How Soon Is Now?", The Smiths could really belt out a damn fine three-minute masterpiece. And old Steven Patrick didn't mince words, either (I bet he writes the sweetest xmas cards). Parents, do your kids a favour and lock up all your records.

"Now I know how Joan of Arc felt as the flames rose to her Roman nose..."



**[100] For A Short Time (live) :: Weddings Parties Anything** (7:46)

(Thomas; from *They Were Better Live*, 1999)

Ooooh this song just hits every nerve. Michael Thomas is a master songwriter, and this gem is a song that anyone would be proud to have written. Played live there is barely a dry eye in the place. I love this version, as Amy, Sally and Lou from Tiddas give it that extra something. The first time I heard the song was when I was house-sitting Jonathan Strahan's place and I gave his Best of the Weds a good flogging. This song stopped me cold, I sang it to myself for days. If there's one show I regret not seeing, it was their final Perth gig at the Belvior. I'm living in the wrong alternate universe.

"You might have cried then if you could..."

**[99] Uncertain Smile :: The The** (6:53)

(Johnson; from *Soul Mining*, 1983)

I can't put it better than I did in the last book, "The four minutes of piano solo just does it for me". It's an amazing song, timeless. Matt Johnson creates honest, gritty music, baring his soul to the world.

"Pushing the skin back from my eyes, I felt surprised..."

**[98] Going Under :: Evanescence** (3:35)

(Moody/Lee/Hodges; from *Fallen*, 2003)

Where the fuck did these guys come from? (Yeah, Little Rock, Arkansas, I know that.) I was bracing myself for a year where my listening would be dominated by new releases by

old artists, then up jumped Evanescence, a heavy goth outfit. When it comes down to the crunch, they rock. My prediction, though, is that their second album will suck. Sigh.

“Always confusing the thoughts in my head so I can’t trust myself anymore...”

**[97] Tantalized :: The Church** (4:58)

(The Church; from *Heyday*, 1985)

Me and The Church go back to the early 80’s, the days of *Countdown* and, if my failing memory serves me correctly, *Hey Hey It’s Saturday* (then on Saturday mornings). I’m sure they played the film clip to “Almost With You”. The *Hindsight* compilation was an integral part of my late teens, it barely left my walkman. “Tantalized” is a solid rocking tune.

“I was hired and fired yet never inspired...”

**[96] Size of a Cow :: The Wonder Stuff** (3:12)

(The Wonder Stuff; from *Never Loved Elvis*, 1991)

Right now I wish life was a bed so I could sleep but with another 96 tunes to go I’ve got a long way before I get re-acquainted with my pillow. As you may have guessed, I’ve had a drink or two in my life, if you’re unlucky I’ve thrown up in your toilet (if you’re really unlucky it was your lawn). “Size of a Cow” is a great drinking song.

“I like to think that life is like a drink and I’m hoping that it tastes like bourbon...”

**[95] Crazy For You :: Madonna** (3:45)

(Bettis/Lind; from *The Immaculate Collection*, 1990)

Quick! There’s Elvis! Damn, you caught me sneaking the Madonna song into the list. It’s true, I like Madonna, despite the hype I think she has something to say a fair bit of the time, she’s still sexy as hell and I’m not surprised Britney snogged her. I once had an argument over which song was better, “Crazy for You” or “Vogue”. I still say it’s this one, Janie.

“Smokey room as the music starts, strangers making the most of the dark...”

**[94] Time Bomb :: Nick Barker** (4:54)

(Barker; from *JJJ Hottest 100 Vol. 2*, 1994)

Nick Barker is too fucking nice for rock’n’roll, even if he has been around the scene for the best part of 20 years. He does an amazing acoustic set, and is the only person I know of who has written a lyric about a door snake. I love his version of “Come Up & See Me (Make Me Smile)” even if the mix ain’t the best. I like the dark edge of “Time Bomb”.

“All the basket-weaving and therapy sessions are barely enough to dampen obsessions...”

**[93] This Time :: INXS** (3:09)

(Farriss; from *Listen Like Thieves*, 1985)

When I started high school in 1986, boys liked INXS and girls liked Ah-Ha. Probably the first and last time the group with the testicles were in the right. *Listen Like Thieves* came out when I was 12, and I remember in the final days of primary school we’d sit around

listening to the tape and loving it. Richard Lowenstein's video to the title track was magnificent. "This Time" is the track that plays in my head when I think of the album, though.

"We are always wanting things we cannot find..."

**[92] Loaded :: Primal Scream (7:00)**

(Gillespie/Innes/Young; from *Screamadelica*, 1991)

Oh yeah sums this one up. A great, mellow dance track that also probably needs drugs to fully dig but works just fine with a couple of beers.

"Oh yeah..."

**[91] Spring Rain :: The Go-Betweens (3:16)**

(Forster/McLennan; from *Liberty Belle & the Black Diamond Express*, 1986)

Come one! Come all! Come see the Australian suburban nightmare revealed in song! I'm also a sucker for great harmonies, and Robert Forster and Grant McLennan do this so well in the chorus.



"Dressed in a white shirt with my hair combed straight..."

**[90] Disarm :: Smashing Pumpkins (3:17)**

(Corgan; from *Siamese Dream*, 1993)

There's something about the *Siamese Dream* album that works for me where other Pumpkins' albums don't. Maybe it's because it lacks the self-indulgent wank that *Mellon-Collie* had, or something. I'm thinking that this list has been quite mellow to date, but from here on in the angst music really begins to take over. I'm reminded of the quote from *High Fidelity* about the dangers of listening to music.

"Disarm you with a smile, cut you like you want me to..."

**[89] Gloria :: Patti Smith (5:54)**

(Morrison; from *Horses*, 1975)

Two albums were released in 1975 that pretty much changed life on Planet Rock. One was The Dictators *Go Girl Crazy*, and the other was *Horses*. The latter was exactly what you'd expect to get when you combined a hard talking experimental poet with a fine rock band. The album is fused with an almost tribal rhythm, a combination of solid beats and pulsating vocals. The opening track, "Gloria" is as fine a kicking as you could do to a Van Morrison song.

"Jesus died for somebody's sins but not mine..."

**[88] Vengeance :: New Model Army (4:08)**

(New Model Army; from *The Politics of Punk Vol. 3*, 1998)

New Model Army are like an English V.Spy V.Spy (and if Blocko ever reads this, I'm sorry I couldn't sneak in a track but even if I live to 131 I'd never fit in every great song – maybe

for my 33 1/3 I'll put together a list or 333 songs). Anyway, where was I? Solid rhythm section kicking the song on, social commentary in the lyrics and the guitar just adding an accent or highlight to the song. A song for the vigilantes in our midst.

"I believe in getting the bastards..."

**[87] Still in Hollywood :: Concrete Blonde (3:44)**

(Napolitano; from *Concrete Blonde*, 1986)

In all honesty, I don't like this song. Let me rephrase that, I don't like what this song represents in my life. "Still in Hollywood" is the song I play in my head when I feel like I'm stuck somewhere and I'm wondering where the fuck my life is going. But the song is a part of me that I carry around, it doesn't matter if I'm broke and cold in Melbourne, or having a shit day in Narrogin, it's there, representing a less than desirable state of affairs.

"I'm still in Hollywood, I thought I'd be outta here by now..."

**[86] Heaven or Las Vegas :: Cocteau Twins (4:56)**

(Cocteau Twins; from *Heaven or Las Vegas*, 1990)

The internet is a weird place. While putting together this parcel you're presently reading, I found out that there are sites out there full of Cocteau Twins' lyrics. Now that's just a bizarre concept. For me the Cocteau Twins aren't about lyrics, they're about luscious melodies and Elizabeth Fraser weaving an intricate vocal track into them. The *Heaven or Las Vegas* album is about long nights at the Moon Café in the mid-90s, fine coffee, friendly staff and great company.

"It must be why I'm thinking of Las Vegas..."

**[85] Echo Beach :: Martha & the Muffins (3:38)**

(Gane; from *Far Away in Time*, 1980)

Long ago in a job far, far away I sampled the quote below and made it the default new mail sound on my work computer. That, and the proximity to Dada's Music kept me sane and broke for over 3 years. It's a shame that some other Martha & the Muffins songs never made it the way "Echo Beach" did over here, 'cause they had some great stuff.

"My job is very boring I'm an office clerk..."

**[84] Exit Only :: Fugazi (3:12)**

(Canty/Lally/MacKaye/Picciotto; from *A Steady Diet of Nothing*, 1991)

Punk means never having to say you're alternative, and what the fuck is emo-core anyhow. Fugazi are straight rock'n'roll, no further label needed. One of the best grounded rhythm sections around, Joe and Brendan hold the fort down while Ian and Guy raise a whole pile of hell. UWA Refectory 1997 was the best damn mosh pit of my life, an hour of that fine line between life and death, murder and mayhem, sweat and tears. Play it loud.

"This is three minute access so pop the question..."

**[83] Round Here :: Counting Crows (5:30)**

(Duritz/Janusko/Jewett/Roldan/Bryson; from *August & Everything After*, 1993)

While Counting Crows don't really do it for me, "Round Here" is a magical song. It is

poetry, set to music, a tale of the hanging desperation that comes with lost dreams. I love references to childhood in lyrics, like in “Scary Kisses” when they sing about starting over at the count of 10, and also in “Round Here” when they sing of staying up late. It’s after 1, the virus checker has kicked in and my pillow calls. Just one more tonight, one more.

“Step out the front door like a ghost into a fog where no one notices the contrast of white on white...”

**[82] Bastards of Young :: The Replacements (3:38)**

(Westerberg; from *Tim*, 1985)

Paul Westerberg has a way with words. His lyrics often involve turning cliches on their heads of honestly expressing concepts that many tiptoe around. This song is no exception. The line about dying to please while ignoring those that love us best strikes a deep chord for me, and I imagine it does for others. The desire for approval, but what do you do with it once you get it?

“The ones that love us least are the one’s we’ll die to please...”

**[81] Fascination Street :: The Cure (5:18)**

(Smith/Gallup/Williams/Thompson/O'Donnell/Tolhurst; from *Disintegration*, 1989)

This song kicks along solidly (I love that description: a solid song is one where the bass and drums form sturdy foundations that you could dance to regardless of the rest of the song, a bass line that vibrates up the spine). The day I bought *Disintegration* I walked into the record store and this song was playing, how could I resist? Many have said that The Cure have produced 3 outstanding albums: *Chinese Whispers*, *Bloodflowers*, and this one. I agree. If I was able I'd dance right now.



“Just put on your hair, and put on your pout...”

**[80] The Revolution Will Not Be Televised :: Gil Scott-Heron (3:05)**

(Scott-Heron; from *The Best of Gil Scott-Heron*, 1984)

More people ought to know about this guy. He’s the grandfather of rap, and, as I wrote last time around, “is black, cool, has a heck of a voice and knows what to say”. This song is about as old as I am, and yet is still relevant today. Whether or not I’m still relevant, or was ever relevant, is a completely different debate. Michael Franti wouldn’t exist if it wasn’t for this guy.

“You will not be able to tune in, turn on and cop out...”

**[79] Kiss Off :: Violent Femmes (2:56)**

(Gano; from *Violent Femmes*, 1983)

The Femmes. These bastards played Perth the night before my English TEE exam, so do you think I made it to the gig? Nope. Then the drummer left, and Gordon Gano started taking himself way too seriously, and the fun kinda took the next boat out of town. Despite

all the crap they did in the 90s, the Femmes still produced their self titled debut, possibly the one album every 15 year-old should own.

“I hope you know that this will go down on your permanent record...”

**[78] Ribbons :: Sisters of Mercy (5:25)**

(Eldritch; from *Vision Thing*, 1990)

Love them or hate them, Sisters of Mercy, otherwise known as Andrew Eldritch and friends, are a seminal goth band. I remember being an impressionable 17 year-old punk watching *Rage* or MTV and whoever it was played the video to “More”. I’m like, *who the fuck are these guys, is this Aerosmith on speed?* Songs such as “More” and “This Corrosion” are essential examples of the bloated Gothic song, par for the course with a producer like Jim Steinman. “Ribbons”, weighing in at 5:25, isn’t in their league, it’s a knee-length dark number with long black boots and heels.

“Her lovers queued up in the hallway, I heard them scratching at the door...”

**[77] Stolen Car :: Beth Orton (5:26)**

(Orton; from *Central Reservation*, 1999)

I’ve said before that powerful grl singers are a weakness, and Beth Orton and Tori Amos would have to be my favourites. Beth is amazing; the time I walked out of a record shop with her *Central Reservation* and *Daybreaker* CDs I’d also had the girl behind the counter propose to me. “Stolen Car” is a magical song, full of deep, droning guitars with Beth’s wonderful poetry over the top. Turn up, lie back, get mellow and find yourself in the angst.

“I couldn’t help but notice a lie that was long gone still burning strong...”

**[76] A Midlife’s Tale :: My Friend the Chocolate Cake (3:27)**

(Bridie; from *My Friend the Chocolate Cake*, 1991)

Fuck I hope they’re not singing about me in ten years’ time. MFTCC, Australia’s musical lefty conscience, have put together a song for the aging revolutionary. Is there such a thing as growing old gracefully, and does it involve having the old guy next door over for half a carton of VB and a long discussion on Karl Marx and Norm Gallagher? Where the fuck am I again, it’s light outside... have I slept or just ruffled the sheets for a while?

“Singing liberation songs out on the front verandah...”

**[75] The Ship Song :: Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds (4:42)**

(Cave; from *The Good Son*, 1989)

Speaking of growing old gracefully, in the black corner we have Mr Nick Cave, who must be pushing 50 yet still knows how to belt out an amazing sermon. Back in my youth, the lucky few knew two Nick Cave songs, this one, and “The Mercy Seat” (which probably made this list, too). They were the only songs that you’d catch on *Rage* or *JJJ*, and it wasn’t until I got an ugly job next to a record shop that I really knew much better. Then some rasta bastard ripped off my A-C at a party and I’ve been rebuilding ever since.

“Come sail your ships around me and burn your bridges down...”

**[74] Shit List :: L7** (2:55)

(Sparks; from *Bricks Are Heavy*, 1992)

These grrls shit on Courtney Love from a great height (as do 7 Year Bitch, Team Dresch and even the fucking Go Go's for that matter). Hard, fast punk rockers who get in, get the job done and are out in under 4 minutes. Hmm, maybe they're men. Anyway, I couldn't have a hottest list without them, even to the point of stretching the last list to 101 to include them. Thanks Nicole, for the beer, vodka, lazy afternoons and music. Love your work.

"When I get mad and I get pissed, I grab a pen and write out a list..."

**[73] Girl U Want :: Devo** (2:57)

(Mothersbaugh/Casale; from *Hot Potatoes*, 1980)

Never mind TMBG, Devo were the prototype nerd rockers. They took flowerpots out of the garden and put them on heads, where they rightfully belong. I can't help but wonder what got dumped in the tap water in Akron, Ohio, to produce such a great band of freaks. All hail the neo-traditionalists, lead us into revolution! They also did amazing cover versions of such classics as "Satisfaction" and "Secret Agent Man". You gotta love them.

"Look at you and your mouth watering, look at you and your mind's spinning..."

**[72] Psycho Killer :: Talking Heads** (4:25)

(Byrne/Weymouth/Franz; from *Stop Making Sense*, 1984)

Talking Heads, the yuppie/punk crossover band. I have a recurring dream of David Byrne playing CBGBs in a skivvy. Well, I don't, actually, the idea just popped into my head then, but you must admit it's a great image. Dinky nightclub, Johnny Thunders horsed out of his mind in one corner, Debbie Harry coked out of hers in another, and on walks this thin guy with an acoustic guitar, boom box and a skivvy. Just play along with me on this one, okay?

"I'm tense and nervous and I can't relax..."

**[71] Man Overboard :: Do Re Mi** (4:10)

(Do Re Mi; from *Domestic Harmony*, 1985)

This was the rudest song I ever heard in my impressionable, pre-teen years, honest. I remember blushing at Grandmaster Flash's "The Message", but this mentioned PUBIC HAIR! (I didn't even notice it also mentioned penis envy until years later). What was I, an innocent 12 year old, supposed to make of this song? Stuffed if I know now, but at the time I did what any kid would have done, I listened to the radio hoping to hear it again, and again. Then I started listening to the DK's "Too Drunk to Fuck" and the Pistol's "Friggin' in the Rigging", and it was all over. So ends a tale of innocence lost.

"I'm tired of staring at the ceiling while you point out my flaws..."



**[70] At First Sight :: The Stems (4:03)**

(Mariani; from *At First Sight Violets are Blue*, 1987)

For the most isolated city in the world, Perth has produced some fucking fine musical talent. Take The Stems for example, a band that knew how to make plain, straightforward rock'n'roll, so they did. There's always space in my CD collection for another guitar-pop love song, hold the cheese, hold the relish, just serve it straight.

"Just say the word and I would die for you..."

**[69] Winter :: Tori Amos (5:42)**

(Amos; from *Little Earthquakes*, 1992)

Immensely powerful grrl singer alert. "Winter" wasn't one of the songs that immediately grabbed me off the *Little Earthquakes* album. I won't hold back on the praise, though, it's a great album and as good a debut (not counting the curiosity otherwise known as Y Kant Tori Read) as any artist, better than most. "Winter" crept up on me, I first wrote it off as one of those cool, slow songs between the kickass opening of the likes of "Crucify" and the kickass closing. But then I got to listening more to the cool, slow songs and man, they're fine too.

"Boys get discovered as Winter melts..."

**[68] Jane Says :: Jane's Addiction (4:53)**

(Farrell/Jane's Addiction; from *Nothing's Shocking*, 1988)

I read an interview once that labelled drag queens as the toughest sons of bitches around: anyone who got that much crap as part of their day can surely do a bunch of damage when pushed. And there sure is nothing like watching women wish for the legs on some of them. Sergio had better watch out. This is one of those songs from the days Al and I used to drive badly and sing worse. Heck, ain't sure much has changed except the bastard is the other side of the Prime Meridian.

"Jane says have you seen my wig around?"

**[67] Sign o' the Times :: Prince (3:43)**

(Prince; from *Sign o' the Times*, 1987)

Sturgeon's law applies to the artist formerly known as Prince Rogers Nelson as much as it does to anybody else, except his 10% is exceptional. The guy is never borderline, he either hits with a great tune or misses by a country mile. And he's too damn prolific, churning out albums faster than just about anybody around, which means there's more crap to wade through to get to the great stuff. This track is a gem.

"A man ain't happy truly until a man can truly die..."

**[66] Tomorrow Wendy :: Andy Prieboy (4:40)**

(Prieboy; from *Upon My Wicked Son*, 1990)

Songs don't come much better than this. There's just enough music to carry Andy's dirge and Jonette Napolitano's refrain. It's another *Rage* favourite, and was top 10 at least one

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year in the hottest 100 as it used to be. I had a lot of hassle tracking this album down, but eventually found it in a bargain bin at 75% off or something stupid.

“It is complete now, two ends of time are neatly tied...”

**[65] Cattle & Cane :: The Go-Betweens (4:20)**

(Forster/McLennan; from *Before Hollywood*, 1983)

Grant McLennan’s trip down memory lane is an Aussie classic, and deserves a place up there with “Throw Your Arms Around Me”. A stripped back song, nothing fancy, just a solid beat over which McLennan almost speaks the lyrics.

“I recall a bigger brighter world, a world of books...”

**[64] Runaway Train :: Soul Asylum (4:27)**

(Pirner; from *Grave Dancers Union*, 1992)

The next two tracks pretty much represent my failed attempt to move to Melbourne in 2001. If you’re listening to the music from 1 to 131, then this song comes second. “Runaway Train” was one of those songs that kept cropping up on the CDs I made for myself at the time. And the times weren’t always great: mixed performances by Hawthorn, difficulty finding work, an appallingly bad income, trouble finding a place to live; not to mention that this was in September of that year. Eventually it all got too much so I caught the train back, and ended up in Narrogin.

“One more promise I couldn’t keep...”

**[63] Without A Trace :: Soul Asylum (3:40)**

(Pirner; from *Grave Dancers Union*, 1992)

This song initially captured the packing up and leaving for Melbourne, having had enough of Perth and wanting to follow an old dream. I still dream of living in Melbourne, going to the footy three weekends in four, seeing great bands every week, but next time I’m going to be more prepared. Maybe it’s time to look at the fallback plan, where I get a job that allows me to live in Melbourne for 6 months of the year and Perth for 6 months.

“See the open mouth of my suitcase saying leave this place...”

**[62] Inside My Kitchen (live) :: Tiddas (3:50)**

(Tiddas; from *Flat Notes & Bad Jokes*, 1994)

Tiddas were a fine band. Amy, Sally and Lou all have amazing voices and wonderful senses of humour, and were great live. I was fortunate to score the second last ticket to the second of two shows at the Continental Café which were recorded and released as their wonderful final album, *Show Us Ya Tiddas*. But I guess sometimes it’s the early favourites that hold the most magic, so I’ve picked the title track off their first EP.

“You can settle and I will listen to the problems that you find...”

**[61] The Face With No Name :: The Passengers (2:54)**

(Sullivan; from *Do the Pop!*, 2002)

What I know about this band could fill a small paragraph, kind of like this one. Fronted by Deniz Tek's girlfriend, Angie Pepper, The Passengers recorded maybe a handful of songs in the late 70s that were impossible to get until a couple of years ago. Not that I gave a shit because, until I got the *Do The Pop!* compilation, I'd never heard of them. Imagine The Doors but with a grrl singer more interested in singing than what's in her pants and you're kind of on the right track.

"I saw him again, the face with no name..."



**[60] Kool Thing :: Sonic Youth (4:06)**

(Gordon/Moore/Rinaldo/Shelley; from *Goo*, 1990)

It ain't the best from the master's of the fuzz, the supremos of the bizarre tuning, but it's a perennial crowd pleaser, and easier to dance to than a lot of their stuff. Chuck D tops it off with a cameo.

"Are you gonna liberate us girls from male white corporate oppression?"

**[59] Electric Lash :: The Church (4:27)**

(The Church; from *Hindsight*, 1988)

Another favourite off that overworn double cassette compilation. Kilbey's unusual lyrics first drew me in, where I was firmly gripped by the tune and made to sit by Richard Ploog's drumming. While their more recent stuff hasn't always measured up, they had a decade of great material in the 80s that most bands could only dream about.

"Our eyes meet, and I love her, I suspect she already knows..."

**[58] Cinnamon :: Clouds (3:13)**

(Phyllis; from *Futura*, 1996)

I'll let y'all in on a secret. Clouds played this song for me on my 24th birthday. In almost 40 degree heat they played an upstairs request gig at 78s, and after they played "4pm" for Jodi I yelled out for this tune. Live, stripped back and without the horns this is a fine rocker. I think Clouds' live shows were severely under-rated, sure there weren't always catchy, sing-a-long choruses and some songs were a little hard to dance to, but they had an energy that needed to be released, needed to flood the venue. It's easy to bag that kind of thing when you're a journo getting in for free.

"We seek you out, there's a lot of us about..."

**[57] Alison (live) :: The Pixies (1:15)**

(Francis; from *Death to the Pixies*, 1997)

Watching *Rage*, drinking instant coffee in tap water just to stay awake, when all of a sudden less than a minute and a half of musical energy explodes out of the teevee. What the fuck

was that? One minute the Pixies are on motorbikes then they're playing live then it's all over, leaving you with a word: Alison. Not Alison, but Alllllison. Love it.

“And when the planet hits the sun I saw the face of Alison...”

**[56] Blue Monday :: New Order** (7:29)

(New Order; from *Substance*, 1987)

The best selling 12 inch record of all time, guaranteed dance floor filler and all round swell song. Was Bernie taking the same drugs while writing this song that he was when he wrote “World in Motion”? I don't think so. The moral of the story: don't write songs over a couple of pints of lager and a curry, and don't let John Barnes have a speaking part. Why did I write this? Because I doubt I could say something about “Blue Monday” that hasn't already been said. No, wait a minute! Here's one. I once went to a disco in my early teens, dressed badly, and the DJ mimed and acted up badly to this song. I didn't score, and I doubt he did either: Impossible Mission Vs Illegal Mission.

“How does it feel when your heart grows cold?”

**[55] How Soon Is Now? :: The Smiths** (6:45)

(Morrissey/Marr; from *Meat Is Murder*, 1984)

In an alternate universe Steven Patrick Morrissey and John Maher got together and wrote songs happier than Stock Aitken and Waterman, and Billy Bragg wrote, “You're the one for me, Maggie”. But that thankfully ain't this one. In this one, 1990 sealed my fate. First Cameron tapes *Louder than Bombs*, *The Queen is Dead* and *Strangeways Here We Come* for me and then Lisa gets me hooked on Sylvia Plath. I discovered Jack Kerouac around that time, too, all by myself. I'd probably be a bigger basket case now if I hadn't.

“I am son and heir of nothing in particular...”

**[54] Runaround :: James** (4:09)

(James; from *The Best Of*, 1998)

Why do people always ask, “Who the fuck are James?” and then go “ahhh” after I eventually tell them they're the guys who did “Laid”? James, like Pulp, are one of those English bands that have been turning out great songs and albums for a lot longer than most people realise. Back home in the UK, they vary between being huge and extremely huge, depending on the month, but out here no one's heard of them. So sit back and prepare yourselves for an experience.

“For every woman you will leave an open door...”

**[53] London Still :: The Waifs** (3:47)

(Simpson; from *Up All Night*, 2003)

I almost wrote this song in 1998. Well, I wrote about this song, anyway, in Chapter 3 of my well and truly unfinished novel, *Dolphin Boy*. The band wasn't exactly The Waifs, but they were from Perth, and released a song about still being in London. The only surprise is why didn't a song like this happen sooner, given the way Aussie bands have been setting up long term bases in the UK for years. But when the song did arrive, it was magnificent,

Donna Simpson's heart-felt vocals, that hint of angst when she sings "Today I dreamed of home and not of London anymore". This song is going to stay with me for a long, long time.

"I miss you like my left arm that's been lost in a war..."

**[52] Shadowtime :: Siouxsie & the Banshees (4:20)**

(Siouxsie & the Banshees; from *Superstition*, 1991)

As I write this I've got a dog desperately trying to attract my attention, but it's a hot night threatening thunderstorms and I ain't gonna be struck by lightning kicking a tennis ball around a back yard. Australian Summer Gothic, if there is such a thing. Why does a self-confessed punk like so much goth music? I love the feel of it, it's a very sensual genre full of atmosphere, of long archaic words no one uses anymore, of distinctive vocalists. It has such ranges, from the Spartan "A Forest" to the over-indulgent "This Corrosion". And it has Siouxsie Sioux.

"Turn your wish to a vapour, the silhouette fades..."

**[51] New Dawn Fades :: Joy Division (4:48)**

(Joy Division; from *Unknown Pleasures*, 1979)

Ian Curtis may not have looked the part, with his untidy short brown hair and collection of sensible shirts, but Joy Division made gothic music. Dark, brooding lyrics and ethereal, atmospheric music, close your eyes and be taken away. It's amazing how the band left such a legacy from such a short period of existence.



"A change of speed, a change of style; A change of scene, with no regrets..."

**[50] Talking to a Stranger (edit) :: Hunters & Collectors (3:53)**

(Seymour/Hunters & Collectors; from *Collected Works*, 1982)

We're now into the top 50 and I bet your undies are filling with excitement. Ah, who am I kidding, I bet the lot of you bastards turned to the back the minute you got this to see who the number 1 is. I bet you do the same when reading detective novels, too. Tell you what, go ask the closest person if they speak French and ask them what the quote means. The Hunnas were a great band that successfully managed to transform themselves from a bizarre art combo into a radio-friendly independent giant. Compare and contrast "The Slab" with "Holy Grail" in 1,000 words or less. "Talking to a Stranger" is one of those earlier songs, with its muddy sound and in your face percussion. It's not a case of better or worse, it's just the Hunnas.

"Souvent pour s'amuser les hommes d'equipage and it's like talking to a stranger..."

**[49] Before Too Long :: Paul Kelly & the Coloured Girls (3:23)**

(Kelly; from *Gossip*, 1987)

This song was the first Paul Kelly to enter my life (I've mentioned my sheltered upbringing before). In my youth I devoured every music show I could, and when this song came on,

with its low budget let's film Paul Kelly driving a car film clip, I loved it. Michael Barclay, the all too humble drummer in the Coloured Girls, once promised to take me through the *Gossip* album track by track and tell me whose drumming he'd ripped off.

"Before too long the one that you're loving will wish that he'd never met you..."

**[48] Deadbeat Club :: B-52's (4:54)**

(B-52's; from *Cosmic Thing*, 1989)

Remember them kids at school who formed their own little circle because none of the more popular cliques would let them in? I was one of those kids, and I'd guess that the friendships formed in those "deadbeat clubs" were stronger than most of the other school-friendships. When you didn't have to spend all your time fitting in with this week's brand of cool you could talk about, you know, deep stuff. Well that's what I think, anyhow. I love the B-52's, and so when this song came out it struck that extra deep chord in me. I latched onto it and haven't let it go since. Sure, "Rock Lobster" and "Love Shack" are better party tunes, but this is my list.

"Get a job? What for?"

**[47] No Surrender :: Bruce Springsteen (4:00)**

(Springsteen; from *Born in the USA*, 1984)

The Boss. A great man sadly under-represented in this list. I doubt there's a more misrepresented artist out there; "Born in the USA" became an anthem even though he's actually hammering the hypocrisy of the joint. "No Surrender" takes me back to my high school days, like way too many songs here. It's a song about digging your heels in and taking on the world: the mission of youth

"We learnt more from a 3 minute record than we ever learnt in school..."

**[46] Until the End of the World :: U2 (4:39)**

(U2; from *Achtung Baby*, 1991)

U2 also suffered at the hands of this list, having a couple of tracks bumped to make way for others. Have I mentioned that 131 just isn't enough? Nothing could make me bump this song, though it's a sign of my musical passion that even though it's one of my favourite song it barely made it into the top 50. U2 and Fugazi have about the strongest bass and drum combos you're likely to hear, leaving the guitarist and singer to do what ever they want. Clayton and Mullins Jr work magic on this track, giving the Edge plenty of room to make his guitar scream and Bono plenty of time to sing about being a bastard. And that's a fence I've been on both sides of.

"In the garden I was playing the tart, I kissed your lips and broke your heart..."

**[45] Gardening At Night (Different vocal mix) :: R.E.M. (3:31)**

(Buck/Berry/Mills/Stripe; from *R.E.M. In the Attic*, 1997)

I first heard R.E.M. in either 1988 or early 1989, but I didn't hear enough. They played Perth in 1989 and pretty soon after I decided they were the greatest band in the world. Then the bastards stopped touring for six years, but I was there for both Perth shows in

1995. "Gardening at Night" was one of those mysterious early songs with lyrics I knew I liked even though I didn't understand them. It was on *Eponymous* which was one of those tapes that were sentenced to life in my walkman. Few ever made it out alive, and this wasn't one of them. Once I could afford all the CDs I rediscovered this wonderful, still mysterious song.

"It must be time for penitence..."

**[44] Fisherman's Blues :: The Waterboys (4:23)**

(Scott/Wickham; from *Fisherman's Blues*, 1988)

The Waterboys are part Scottish, part Irish so I'll call them Celtic and be done with it. If the three Weddings Parties Anything songs haven't given it away (you've passed two and there's another to come) part of me loves folk-rock. This song plays straight into that.

"I wish I was a fisherman, tumbling on the seas..."

**[43] Beth :: KISS (2:46)**

(Criss/Penridge/Ezrin; from *Double Platinum*, 1978)

In the 70s, kids used to dress up like KISS. The really devoted ones even staged mock KISS concerts for their family and friends. The set list had all the big rocking standards, which obviously didn't include "Beth". I'm sure this song was only recorded so the drummer could get laid. Coincidentally, I was sacked as drummer from a mock KISS, and years later the same guy sacked me when I played drums in his garage band. At least I turned up more often than the bass player.

"Beth I hear you calling but I can't come home right now..."

**[42] Blitzkrieg Bop :: Ramones (2:05)**

(Ramones; from *Its Alive*, 1979)

What else can I say but 1, 2, 3, 4? It's been a sad couple of years, with both Dee Dee and Joey passing on. How Dee Dee lasted as long as he did was nothing short of miraculous, but, like Howard Waldrop said, it's the alcoholics that drop first and the junkies that just hang on. There was only one band like the Ramones, and no one has ever done more with a four count, three chords, two verses and one hell of a good time.

"Hey ho, let's go, shoot them in the back now..."

**[41] Last Goodbye :: Jeff Buckley (4:35)**

(Buckley; from *Grace*, 1994)

It was a fucking awful week: the Clouds announced they were breaking up and then Jeff Buckley died, leaving behind a single album that was somehow supposed to make everything all right but just left us wanting more. I guess it's the way every musician should go, leaving the audience hungry, not over sated. Winter 1998, every Thursday night Al and I would make the jukebox at the OBH scream this song while we drank too much beer and played too much pool. There's no time like the present, pass it on.



“Kiss me out of desire baby not consolation...”

**[40] Visions of China :: Japan** (3:31)

(Sylvian/Jansen; from *Tin Drum*, 1981)

David Sylvian has one of the most unique voices around, perfectly suited to hauntingly beautiful songs such as this one. I remember Japan from my *Countdown* days, they looked a little like Duran Duran but didn't sound anything like them. They didn't sound like anyone.

“I'm walking young and strong, just a little too thin...”

**[39] God Bless :: Died Pretty** (3:31)

(Hoey/Peno; from *Doughboy Hollow*, 1991)

You'll never convince me that there was a better year on planet rock than 1991. I'd just started Uni and great music was all around. Late one August night I've just witnessed my friend Damian get his ear pierced in a procedure involving beer (anaesthetic), a safety pin and an ice cube. Well, I'd been paying more attention to *Rage* and one of the piercers, who I had the hugest crush on, but take it from me that Damian did get his ear pierced. At some point there was a film clip by a band singing about the Sunnyboys. I checked them out, and *Doughboy Hollow* remains one of my favourite albums. I also started checking out their earlier stuff, the likes of “Everybody Moves” and “Stoneage Cinderella”, which were even more remarkable. But “God Bless” is the song that has the fonder place in my memories.

“The Sunnyboys god bless them, and god bless you...”

**[38] Surrender :: Cheap Trick** (4:12)

(Nielsen; from *Heaven Tonight*, 1978)

Cheap Trick are one of those bands that come and go in my life; when they're good they're fucking great and when they're not they are just a little bit too vanilla. “Surrender” is a kick ass rocker, pure guitar driven the way good rock'n'roll should be. The lyrics really do it, though, they are just out there.

“Mummy's alright, daddy's alright, they just seem a little weird...”

**[37] Away Away :: Weddings Parties Anything** (3:51)

(Thomas; from *Scorn of the Women*, 1986)

The Weds again, folk-rock's finest. One day I might poll WPA fans on their favourite songs and I reckon this will top the list. It doesn't matter that it's 20 years old, “Away Away” was the song that established the band, showcasing everything from Mark Wallace's accordion riffs to Mick's Australian accent and angst-ridden lyrics; their best songs are tales of angst and pain.

“I see you in black and white, even in my wildest dreams, even on my darkest nights...”

**[36] Our Lips Are Sealed :: Go Go's (2:46)**

(Wiedlin/Hall; from *Greatest Hits*, 1990)

The original grrl indie-pop group, featuring none other than Belinda Carlisle but don't hold that against them. For the record, I've never misunderstood the title of this song.

"Can you hear them, they talk about us, telling lies well that's no surprise..."

**[35] Knowledge :: Operation Ivy (1:42)**

(Mello/Michaels/Freeman/Armstrong; from *Energy*, 1989)

Op Ivy climbed their way to the top of San Francisco's indie scene, recorded a kick ass album, held a launch with Green Day as support, flipped out and called it a day. That record has shifted thousands of copies. You can't go past them if you want hard, fast punk-ska music filled with the energy, hunger and naivety of youth.

"All I know is that I don't know nothing..."

**[34] Fight the Power :: Public Enemy (4:42)**

(Shocklee/Sadler/Ridenhour; from *Fear of a Black Planet*, 1990)

East Coast rap never had it so good when Public Enemy were in their prime. Chuck D and Flava Flav held court and dished out the truth and the word. Call me a sad old school disciple but rap had something back then, the music was part of it, not some minor beats to talk over the top of. It was new, fresh, experimental, not the self-promoting I'm bigger/badder/nastier/nicer than you stuff polluting today's airwaves. It was real.

"Elvis was a hero to most but he never meant shit to me..."

**[33] Smells Like Teen Spirit (live) :: Nirvana (4:47)**

(Cobain/Nirvana; from *From the Muddy Banks of the Wishkah*, 1996)

I have to wonder how Nirvana will be perceived by the youth of 5 years from now; kids born well and truly after Kurt's brains became part of the wallpaper. As I write, Dave Grohl has been in the Foo Fighters about twice as long as he was in Nirvana. I'm guessing that, sadly, we're facing a new generation who won't understand how Nirvana shook the world, putting flannel on to the cover of *Vogue* and all the bullshit that came to town with the big white hype monster. The hype has gone but some great music remains. Turn it up and slam with me one last time.

"This little group has always been and always will until the end..."

**[32] Glycerine :: Bush (4:25)**

(Rossdale; from *Sixteen Stone*, 1994)

From here on in we're well and truly into the realm of songs that are more than just great records to me. "Glycerine" takes me back to an emotional night spent with a friend who is damn near family. We drove through the orange lights of Albany Highway in Cannington singing along to this song, before spending a couple of hours talking at a lookout in King's Park, watching Perth shut down, before she dropped me home to Nedlands. Her parents had separated, she was about to leave on a long stay in the UK, and we talked until at least 2am.

"It must be your skin I'm sinking in..."

**[31] Happy Birthday :: Concrete Blonde (2:18)**

(Concrete Blonde; from *Free*, 1989)

I latched onto this song sometime in 1990 or 1991, and have played it on my birthday every year since. I played it after midnight as I sat out on the balcony of a flat in Victoria Park, having moved out of home less than a month before; I've played it loudly in Nedlands, Mt Lawley and Narrogin, every damn year. I ain't about to stop. For me it marks a turning point in the year, the point where I can reflect on having survived another lap around the sun; and wake up to a new day and a new lap.

"It's just after midnight I guess I'll be alright..."



**[30] Lorelei :: Cocteau Twins (3:43)**

(Fraser/Guthrie/Raymonde; from *Stars And Topsoil*, 2000)

There is an indescribable beauty to the Cocteau Twins, if you don't believe me just sit down and read what other people have written about them. You probably won't find two reviews that read like they're even remotely talking about the same band. A Weds fan once told me that he'd happily hear "Mick sing the phone book", and a perverse part of my mind wonders what a Cocteau Twins version of the phonebook would sound like.

"Get off the car, kick his chain, kick his pride..."

**[29] The Crying Scene :: Aztec Camera (3:35)**

(Frame; from *Stray*, 1990)

For much of my life I've been fascinated by the metaphor that life is like a movie. I recall the title of a poem I once wrote was "Which Scene are You From" or something like that, I'm sure it was a dreadful poem like most of my writing. Sturgeons Law says that maybe 15 of these song notes are more than just crap. Where was I? We all act in our day to day roles, heck I'm acting at least 50% of the time when I answer the phone at work and sound cheerful. So I'm right behind Roddy Frame on this song. It certainly doesn't hurt my enjoyment that it's yet another kick ass rocker with great lyrics.

"Life's a one take movie and I don't care what it means..."

**[28] Rain Town :: Deacon Blue (3:50)**

(Ross; from *Rain Town*, 1987)

It's all Iain bloody Banks' fault. In his sensational book, *The Crow Road*, his protagonist relates one of the characters to the Deacon Blue song, "Born in a Storm". I loved the book so I had to get the album, which I then also thought was fucking brilliant. So it's not my fault.

"I'm down here working on some dumb show..."

**[27] Slow Emotion Replay :: The The (3:54)**

(Johnson; from *Dusk*, 1993)

This is your final warning, you are entering the serious angst zone. From here on in you'll experience a level of angst that has been found to be fatal to very susceptible subjects. Matt Johnson is right on the mark with this track. Fucked up individuals are a dime a dozen on this crazy hill of beans, but those who know they're fucked up are somewhat rarer. The idea of looking inward to work things out before looking outward clicks with me.

"I don't even know what's going on with myself..."

**[26] Alone With You :: Sunnyboys (3:58)**

(Oxley; from *Sunnyboys Play the Best*, 1991)

A guy, a girl and something to drink, it doesn't get simpler than that. The Sunnyboys were simply one of the best party bands ever to come out of Australia. Straight up rock'n'roll for every occasion, as long as every occasion was a big night out.

"All I have is alcohol so let me go..."

**[25] Temple of Love (extended version) :: Sisters of Mercy (7:42)**

(Eldritch; from *Some Girls Wander by Mistake*, 1983)

Our man Eldritch again, doing what he does best. Flicking back to the 1998 list, I referred to the Sisters as the "Anti-Ramones", and I dig that. Back then Al and I could cross suburbs before the end of the song; back then I had the stamina to dance to the Sisters all night. Last time "This Corrosion" was played, Jeremy Byrne and I looked at each other and decided to sit out the first six minutes, knowing our limitations. "Temple of Love" works wonderfully as a contender for the ultimate gothic song: it has marvellously dark and descriptive lyrics, a great dancing beat and, unlike the Tim Tams, lasts and lasts.

"Life is short and love is always over in the morning..."

**[24] White Man (in Hammersmith Palais) :: The Clash (3:59)**

(Strummer/Jones; from *Clash on Broadway 1*, 1991)

My favourite Clash song. I'm not entirely sure why, maybe it was because, unlike a lot of the widely played singles like "Train in Vain" and "London Calling", I was able to discover this one for myself on that marvellous compilation. Something about it stuck out for me, beyond the cacophonous opening bars and the reggae beat. Maybe it's just the lyrics, but maybe there's just something about it that can't be measured, described, briefed, debriefed or numbered.

"They've got Buckland suits, ha! You think it's funny turning rebellion into money..."

**[23] Pink Glove :: Pulp (4:48)**

(Cocker/Senior/Mackey/Banks/Doyle; from *His 'n' Hers*, 1994)

The first time I played this song I swore I'd heard it before. I played to for a bunch of friends and they'd never heard it, either. Then I bought the CD, some rasta bastard stole it with my A-C, and by the time I got another copy everyone was raving about Pulp. But do you think any of the bastards credited me with playing it to them first, and thereby turning

them onto bizarre sex in working class England? Ungrateful sods. "Pink Glove" is still my favourite, it has a wonderful ambiguity and is, after all, downright kinky. I can't say pink does it for me, though.

"He doesn't care what it looks like just as long as it's pink and it's tight..."

**[22] Aloha Steve & Danno :: Radio Birdman (3:30)**

(Tek/Younger/Stevens; from *Radios Appear*, 1995)

It had to be here. It puts the P into perennial favourite, the P into party music and the P into Play it LOUD. I was hoping to come up with some witty word game where the letters spelt something, but all I got were three Ps and no triple word score. Forget the Saints, who just fucked off to England in the late 70s and fought a lot, Radio Birdman were at the forefront of so much music in Australia in the late 70s and early 80s. When the Birdman crashed, just about every member went off and formed their own band, and for a while in Sydney if you band didn't have someone who'd played with someone who'd been in Radio Birdman you must have been from out of town.

"Steve I want to say thank you for all you've done for me..."

**[21] The Mercy Seat :: Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds (7:17)**

(Cave/Harvey; from *Tender Prey*, 1988)

Another guy who fucked off to England, but Aussies are nothing if not loathe to cease claiming people as our own. Born here, lived here for a while, have a sister who lives here, it doesn't matter, you're one of us. "The Mercy Seat" is more than a song, it's an achievement, an epic that builds up and up and up before it ends with a twist. Everything comes together on this track, from Blixa's thrashing guitar to Nick's passionate vocals to Mick Harvey's orchestrations. Beautifully dark.

"I hear stories from the chamber how Christ was born into a manger..."



**[20] Perfect Place :: Voice of the Beehive (3:34)**

(Bryn/Jones/Brooke; from *Honey Lingers*, 1991)

Just about every song in my top 20 is my most favourite song of all time, which didn't make this task any easier. Then again, nor did this stupid ass idea of annotating every song. Earlier you read how wonderful Voice of the Beehive were, and I jumped and sang with joy when I heard they were doing a bunch of reunion gigs last December in the UK. Sure I couldn't go to them but the last report I'd heard had Tracy and Melissa waiting tables, without even the slightest mention of music.

"And we always say, 'I will change tomorrow, this could be a perfect place'..."

**[19] Lock It :: Falling Joys (5:43)**

(Higgle; from *Wish List*, 1990)

At the end of 1990 this was my favourite song, so much so that I just about wore out my tape of *Wish List* by the end of 1991. Again, *Rage* has a lot to answer for, keeping me awake

with the rather purple and blue film clip. Every song on the album meant something to me, the other stand out being “Things to Come” which got a million plays every time I crashed and burned, which I did a few times that year. Falling Joys were on JJJ’s Live at the Wireless on New Year’s Eve in 1990, and I taped it as I was going to a party. Had I known then what I know now, I’d have used a better quality tape and looked after it, as the recording, which was never great, has deteriorated over time. I still have it though.

“Gave you a necklace of purple and blue...”

**[18] Anthem :: Clouds (2:12)**

(Young; from *Penny Century*, 1991)

Back to 1991, my old friend. Clouds came onto my scene, wrestling for space with the Joys. It didn’t help that the bands were pals with each other, it just made it harder for me to pick a favourite. The jury is still out, but I got to see both bands’ final Perth shows: Falling Joys at the Newport in 1995 and Clouds at the Fly By Night in 1997. Trish and Jodi reformed in 2001 to play a few gigs in Melbourne and Sydney and damn if I’d only planned the big move to Melbourne for sooner I’d have been there. But it’s gotta happen again, and I’ll be there. Oh, and by the way, “Anthem” rocks.

“I want something to fill my time, I don’t have much to do...”

**[17] Jezebel (live) :: 10,000 Maniacs (4:00)**

(Merchant; from *Unplugged*, 1992)

This is a cold, hard song of denouement with enough angst to keep me off the Smiths for another few minutes. I discovered 10,000 Maniacs around 1987, when I watched an interview with Natalie Merchant where they showed a couple of clips off the *In My Tribe* album. It may have been *Rock Arena* or one of those shows. There was something about Natalie and about the songs that drew me in, even if it took another couple of years before I had the disposable income to feed my growing music habit. More than any of their songs, “Jezebel” moves me, it makes me feel. I couldn’t ask for more in a song like this.

“Before I say that the vows we’ve made weigh like a stone in my heart...”

**[16] The Unguarded Moment :: The Church (4:15)**

(Kilbey; from *Of Skins And Hearts*, 1980)

Angst must be genetic: I loved this song years before I knew what angst was or had any reason to be angst-ridden. “Unguarded Moment” was the track that kick started The Church, and was apparently almost left off their debut album. Kilbey’s lyrics work so well for me, pulling all the right strings, and I love the unpolished feel the mix has. Once I turned into an angst-ridden teen, you couldn’t separate me from this song.

“So hard finding inspiration, I knew you’d find me crying...”

**[15] Black :: Pearl Jam (5:43)**

(Vedder/Gossard; from *Ten*, 1991)

How could I go past such an angst-ridden number like this one? In 1995, after having spent a year out of work, the CES in all their wisdom sent me on a medical receptionist course. It was an extra \$50 a fortnight back in the days when the dole was only around

\$300/fortnight, so it seemed fair. I soon became pals with Nicole, and we spent many afternoons after the course sitting in the Brass Monkey drinking beer, or the Northbridge Hotel drinking beer and playing pool, or at her small Lincoln Street place (you guessed it) drinking beer. Her two favourite bands were L7 and Pearl Jam, and I guess it rubbed off on me. Last time I saw her was at the Perth Entertainment Centre in 1998, at a Pearl Jam gig.

“Sheets of empty canvas, untouched sheets of clay...”

**[14] Love Will Tear Us Apart :: Joy Division (3:11)**

(Joy Division; from *Permanent*, 1981)

Got room for some more angst? Joy Division had barely recorded this song and were about to embark on their first US tour when 23 year old singer Ian Curtis hung himself. Like so many great artists, he didn't leave enough music behind, but what he left he deserves to be remembered for. Calling this song a perennial crowd pleaser doesn't do justice to the fact that it's a great song, removed from all the hype. I'll always remember the Hottest 100 when “Smells Like Teen Spirit” knocked this song into number 2. Ian, you're gone but not forgotten.

“You cry out in your sleep, all my failings exposed...”

**[13] Wide Open Road :: The Triffids (4:09)**

(McComb; from *Born Sandy Devotional*, 1985)

There are too many dead musicians on this list. When I compiled my Hottest 101 in 1998, David McComb was alive and well, but in January 1999 left us. The night I found out I was at a party where I'd been given the first double CD *Rage* compilation, which had this song. I took over the stereo and played it loud, one last time for David. I've loved this track since I first saw the film clip on *Countdown* in 1985 or 86, its ethereal beginnings, winding into the opening lyrics punctuated by the drums – for me possibly the seminal moment in Australian rock. It just doesn't get any better than this.

“The drums rolled off in my forehead, the drums rolled off in my chest...”

**[12] In Between Days :: The Cure (2:56)**

(Smith; from *Standing on a Beach*, 1985)

This is really Al's song, or at least it was his before I got hold of it. One day I'll get him to clarify but I think it helped him get back together with a girl or something. Then he started playing it in the car and at parties and soon it became that song that, if played, would lead to Al and Russell leaping around lots for the whole 2 minutes and 56 seconds. Nowadays it's that song I play that makes me jump around lots missing that bastard while I wait to win a lottery or some country wakes up, finds out what they've got and deports his ass back down under.

“Yesterday I felt so old I felt like I could die...”

**[11] Learn to Fly :: Foo Fighters (3:58)**

(Foo Fighters; from *There is Nothing Left to Lose*, 1999)

This is the newest song in the top 20, in that I really only began loving it in the last year. I've dug the Foo Fighters since they started, but had never dug them enough to actually put

money down for their stuff. Then *Rage* had a special last year and I got to catch up on what I'd been missing. Since then I've been outlaying wads of cash on their back catalogue. "Learn to Fly" has all I need: a rocking song, a hint of angst in the intelligent lyrics, and it's in the right range so I can wail along in all my flatness.

"Fix me up a new revolution, 'cause this one is a lie..."



**[10] You and Me Baby :: Kirsty MacColl (2:31)**

(MacColl/Marr; from *Kite*, 1989)

Fuck it devastated me when Kirsty MacColl died in December 2000. I'd barely got hold of her last album, *Tropical Brainstorm*, which hadn't then had an Australian release (but through Kate and Michele I managed a culture swap). It had been a long time since the previous album, and I thought that this new one was her strongest yet. And then, right before xmas, Michele called me as soon as she heard the news. It was a big loss. Kirsty had a wonderful voice and a fine sense of humour. "You and Me Baby", written with long-time friend Johnny Marr, is just beautiful. Feel the way Kirsty would just lay her vocal tracks over each other, giving her songs a lush, rich voice. Enjoy what we have left.

"Every time I took your hand I had a first class ticket to the promised land..."

**[9] Song to the Siren :: This Mortal Coil (3:30)**

(Buckley; from *It'll End In Tears*, 1984)

Turn it up, lay back and close your eyes. You are experiencing the most beautiful song in existence. You will never feel this way again. When I'm alone at night in a big house and played this loud, I can feel the hairs rise on my neck, goose pimples rising, and I can't help but shiver. It's also the best cover version you're likely to encounter, the original being done by Tim Buckley (father of Jeff).

"Did I dream, you dreamed about me?"

**[8] Blueprint :: Fugazi (3:52)**

(Canty/Lally/MacKaye/Picciotto; from *Repeater*, 1990)

David Bowie is playing in Perth in March and tickets are \$150. The last time I saw Fugazi play it cost me about \$17 and there were 3 support bands too. In the US you'd be unlucky if it cost more than \$10 to get into any of their gigs. Their CDs all cost less than \$30, sometimes less than \$25. So what does this mean? Rock'n'roll isn't about money, it's about the music; it's about getting up and playing, rocking the crowd. A song with a message is still crap, regardless of how important the message is, if it's a shit song. And Fugazi are just the greatest band on Planet Rock.

"We'll draw a blueprint, it must be easy, it's just a matter of knowing when to say no or yes..."

**[7]   Feel to Believe :: Beth Orton   (4:04)**

(Orton; from *Central Reservation*, 1999)

Beth Orton is the other new entry, as I only started buying up her stuff in the last couple of years. “Feel to Believe” is one of those songs that she may have well sat down and said, “I’m going to write a song that will make Russell’s Top 10”. Let’s tick off the ingredients: powerful grrl singer, check; angsty lyrics, check; acoustic guitar ballad, check. It’s all there. I plead guilty to being able to be manipulated through music: this song makes me stop and listen every time I hear it.

“I can’t waste another second, living in hell like it’s some kind of heaven...”

**[6]   There is a Light that Never Goes Out :: The Smiths   (4:02)**

(Morrissey/Marr; from *The Queen Is Dead*, 1986)

While we could argue for days on the best Smiths’ song, be it one I’ve listed or anyone of their other great tracks, at the end of the day this is the one that is my favourite. It first grabbed me because I found it weird that the title didn’t really get a mention in the song, it was simply repeated lots at the end. Then the rest of the lyrics got me, the fear of rejection, the idea of wanting to be anywhere but home. Especially that last one, it’s been a strong theme through a fair bit of my life. It is simply a great song in my book. And fuck it, this is my book.

“And in the darkened underpass I though Oh God my chance has come at last...”

**[5]   Eternally Yours :: Laughing Clowns   (5:12)**

(Kuepper; from *When Giants Walked the Earth*, 1983)

I’m just too darn impressionable. In early 1991 I did two things: I busked badly and I protested against the war with Iraq. (I bummed around Fremantle the day my TEE results came in the mail, and got home to find a dozen people had called me: I don’t think I’ve been so popular since.) One afternoon on my way home I struck up a conversation with a couple of grrls who were also busking, in the railway station overpass. They were playing the saxophone. That night on *Rage* I was introduced to this song, “Eternally Yours”, with one of the finest sax solos, played by Louise Elliott, that you’re ever likely to find. See how easy this mental association stuff works?

“You’ve seen the knife, you’ve felt the pain...”

**[4]   Grey Cells Green :: Ned’s Atomic Dustbin   (3:44)**

(Ned’s Atomic Dustbin; from *Godfodder*, 1991)

Track 4. I have knack of forgetting names of people and songs, so some songs become “the really long Sisters of Mercy one” or “that Pearl Jam one on *Ten* that says fuck in the first line”. This song has, for many years, been called Track 4 because it’s the fourth song on the *Godfodder* CD. So when it came time to number this list, there was really only one place for it. Like “In Between Days”, Track 4 will ensure Al and I throw ourselves madly around the dance floor for the duration; if you played them back to back we’d be forced to thrash around for 6 minutes and 40 seconds. I dunno about Al, but that could kill me.

“You’re telling me it’s in the trees, it’s not it’s inside me...”

[3] **Unfinished Sympathy :: Massive Attack** (5:08)

(Marshall/Vowles/Del Naja/Sharp/Nelson; from *Blue Lines*, 1991)

It's that magical year again. *Blue Lines* was an amazing album, and "Unfinished Sympathy" easily the stand out track. Sharon Nelson makes a hauntingly beautiful plea. Just as impressive is the film clip: a single shot tracking backwards as Sharon Nelson keeps walking down a street towards the camera. There's no editing, it's all one take. Right at the end the camera tracks back across a side street: Sharon turns and walks off camera.

"How can you have a day without a night..."

[2] **Unsatisfied :: The Replacements** (4:01)

(Westerberg; from *Let It Be*, 1984)

Soul Asylum, Prince, Husker Du and these guys: Minneapolis has, if nothing else, produced some amazing musicians. And if I had to choose one song to represent the entire genre of young angst, it would be this song. From the first breathless grunt to the final moan of "I'm so unsatisfied", this song is nothing but raw, stripped back emotion. It ain't pretty, it doesn't have clever lyrics, it just has meaning and feeling. The album it comes from, *Let It Be*, gets my vote for the best independent release of the 80s. And, thanks to songs like this one, the 80s weren't all bad.

"Everything you dream of is right in front of you, liberty is a lie..."



[1] **Country Feedback :: R.E.M.** (4:07)

(Buck/Berry/Mills/Stipe; from *Out of Time*, 1991)

R.E.M. like this song, their fans like this song, and I like this song, what more do you need to know? It's more of that wailing angst stuff, this time from those 4 lads from Athens, Georgia who aren't generally known for this kind of music. It's essentially a poetic monologue over wailing feedback, building up to a crescendo while Michael Stipe pleads, "I need this". Enough already, I need sleep, so I'll shut up. Play the record.

"This flower's scorched this film is on..."

## I get by with a little help from...

I'd like to thank all the artists and bands whose songs appear in this list for the times they have given me, and all the artists and bands that have also given me so much joy that I would have loved to include.

I'd like to dedicate this to all the friends who have let me share their lives these past 31 years, including, in no particular order: Sean Williams, Jonathan Strahan, Kate Armitage, Kate Eltham, Chris Lawson, Bill Congreve, Al Chan, Penny Walker, Tania Griffiths, Michele Stambulich, Michelle Morrissey, Lyall Griffiths, Melissa Donald, Phil Ward, Jody Gresele, Kate Gallagher, Emily Paulsen, Karen McKenna, Dave Cake, Paul Harper, Lisa Cooper, Nicole Morris, Sarah Mennie, Shay Telfer, Anna Hepworth, Michelle Cook, Sheldon Gill, Cam Leese, Sarah Fitzhardinge, Karen Logan, Lisa Oliver, Lisa Green, Tiki Swain, Peter Lyons, Geoff Rowe, Tracey Vincent, Robert Tait, Lee Battersby, Lyn Triffitt, Grant Bridge, Ambre Morris, Andrew McColl, Debbie Wilson, Philip Goad, David Yeates, Robin Pen, Julia Gosling, Sue Ann Barber, Rob Hood, Cat Sparks, Zara Baxter, Sylvia Ritson, Tim McDougall, Alison Barton, Simon Oxwell, Grant Watson, Kylie Ding, Csuki, Martin Livings, Nick Evans, Stefen Brazil, Janet Arndt, Marianne Jablon, any Mt Lawley Mafia I haven't individually named, Simon Brown and Stephen Dedman. Apologies, and thanks, to everyone I've forgotten.

A big thanks also to The Firm night club, sorely missed indeed. Sorely missed also are the JJJ DJs that kept me informed and listening, and thanks to Richard Kingsmill who is the only one who still does. Thanks also to *Rage* and *Countdown*, who have kept me company for so long.

Again, special thanks to the amazing Liz Grzyb, for putting up with me during the creation of this book.

Thank you all for putting music into my life.

(This is *still* all your fault.)

*Russell B. Farr*  
*Narrogin, 29 January 2004*

DO NOT GO GENTLY...

Jeff Buckley  
Kurt Cobain  
Steve Connolly  
Ian Curtis  
Michael Hutchence  
Kirsty MacColl  
David McComb  
Dee Dee Ramone  
Joey Ramone  
Bob Stinson  
Joe Strummer  
Ricky Wilson



**[HTTP://MEMBERS.IINET.NET.AU/~RUSTLE/BLOGGER.HTML](http://members.iinet.net.au/~rustle/blogger.html)**

Russell B. Farr is Narrogin's answer to a lot of questions that no one asks, but let's face it, Narrogin's most frequently asked question is, "How the fuck do I get out of this place?"

*Russell's Hottest 131* is the unawaited sequel to 1998's *Russell's Hottest 101*. Open this book and read his opinions on

Hunters & Collectors "Throw Your Arms Around Me": *And exactly which 4 places did he mean?*

Pop Will Eat Itself: *These guys wipe the floor with those other technorock bands that proliferated in the early 90s...*

My Friend the Chocolate Cake: *David Bridie is a staunch Melbourne supporter, so we've seen eye-to-eye about football exactly once.*

Carter the Unstoppable Sex Machine: *How can anyone not love a band whose members are named Jim Bob and Fruit Bat?*

Madonna: *She's still sexy as hell and I'm not surprised Britney snogged her.*

Smashing Pumpkins "Disarm": *Maybe it's because it lacks the self-indulgent wank that Mellon-Collie had.*

**Read on if you dare (or have nothing better to do).**

**t i c o n d e r e g a p a l e e z a**