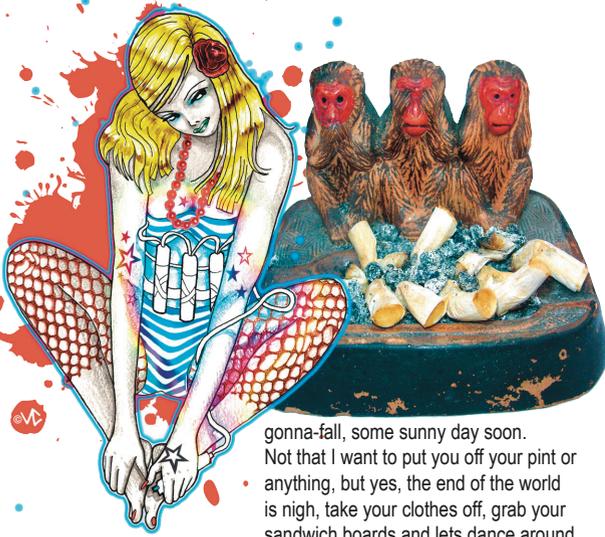


"If you live in Hull, you have little chance of a 747 flying through Greggs window and blowing the breakfast roll out of your sweaty mitts"



# Mouth of the Humber

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Illustration by Paul Newbott

**There** exists fragments of a book, from times past, called 'An account of the Names, Crimes and Punishments of such Persons as have been Prosecuted by ye Society for Reformation of Manners in Kingston upon Hull, together with ye Names of ye Persons which gave ye Informations, and to Whom.' Amongst the majority of crimes listed, most of which are for swearing, there are 39 prosecutions for the keeping of disorderly houses, 46 for drunkenness, and several for 'whoring'. I guess it's true what they say, the more things change, the more they stay the same!

The human beast likes to shag, fight, drink, gamble, smoke and whore and so we created moral codes, religions, bibles and myths, in order to try and teach future generations the error of our un-godly ways. People listen occasionally, some religions and ideas can command great power and influence for centuries, but eventually the numbers will always dwindle because a man can only be given the choice between a book of Hymns and a barely-legal sex-orgy so many times.

We live in a world of unimaginable decadence and any accounts of ancient civilisations' downfalls, with tell you that once things get like that, we have lost control of the situation, and a hard-rains-

gonna-fall, some sunny day soon. Not that I want to put you off your pint or anything, but yes, the end of the world is nigh, take your clothes off, grab your sandwich boards and lets dance around like drunken prophets of doom in Victoria Square.

We could try to break the mutual masturbation world record, that some Americans recently set, wank in the face of death, as it were, although when everyone's laid to waste by a biblical wave of apocalyptic hellfire, I'm not sure the Guinness book will count for much. Still, it's one record attempt you would have fun failing.

Other than Rum, Sodomy and Lash, the other human pastime that we seem to enjoy is good old fashioned WAR. The really nasty kind when we decapitate young children with bayonets and desecrate the bones of our enemies' forefathers.

As a species, we have really perfected the art of killing each other and it doesn't matter if we are dropping sophisticated nuclear rockets onto a small middle-eastern principality or cracking our neighbours head open with a piece of flint rock, the end product is the same; to extinguish the life of another person for one stupid, silly reason or another.

Most of us see the cruelty of war on our TV screens, some dwell, some flick over to the Simpsons, but it's always some battle that is raging far away and since the 1940's, this country has no idea of what it's like to live under the real threat and fear that any minute of the day, your life could be taken away.

Ok. So we have had terrorist attacks, the

IRA, the extremist Muslims but that kind of thing only ever happens in London, and at a push Manchester or Birmingham, so if you live in Hull, you have little chance of a 747 flying through Greggs window and blowing the breakfast roll out of your sweaty mitts. In a roundabout way I'm quite ashamed that Hull isn't on the list of potential targets. I think it would be a good promotional gimmick for the City Council. "Come to Hull, number 4 town on the Al-Qaeda Hit list". I'd much prefer that to, "Come to Hull, It's not worth bombing."

That's why this city is so chocker-full of liberal Politians. They know that no self-respecting suicide bomber is going to detonate himself on the Orchard Park bus, so they feel safe and secure. I mean let's be honest, any person of colour with a bulging back pack who gets on the last bus home from the Rampant Horse is going to be stripped, beaten and robbed before the next stop comes and tomorrow night, in the pub, some tear-drop-tattooed gentlemen will be selling 3 pirate DVD's, a pound of semtex, and the idiots guide to Terrorism. 15 Quid for the lot.

It's important to retain a sense of humour about these things, I think, because if you dwell on the problems, horrors and hardships that some people on this spinning rock are experiencing, then it will start to eat you up inside, and no person should be asked to carry that weight on their shoulders, because at the end of the day, most of us can barely look after ourselves. So yes, the world is a shitty place sometimes, and maybe it always has been and always will be, but if you are surrounded by people you love and people who love you, if you can look into the bright shining eyes of your beautiful newborn baby and forget mans inhumanity to man, then maybe that is the best we can hope for and all of the pain, misery and suffering of others counts for very little.

*I don't believe that for a moment, but it's a nice thought to be going on with.*