

VOICES



TODAY'S *debate*

How much green beer do you plan to drink today for St. Patrick's Day?

REBECCA STAUFFER
24, Bartender
Manhattan
It's my first St. Patrick's Day in New York, so probably at least four.



JUSTIN PETRONE
26, Journalist
Queens
Probably none. I'll be drinking beer, but it takes too much effort to make it green.



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MY *view*

ELLIOTT KALAN
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HAS SCIENCE HAD ITS DAY IN THE SUN?

For a few centuries now, science has grown in popularity, overtaking formerly hot trends like alchemy, magic and fear of the unknown. Our modern world is now science-obsessed. Not since the Greek empire, when Archimedes' discovery of water displacement inspired three hit pop songs, has science been more talked about. But has science run its course? The airwaves are filled with stories of religious faith resurging against science. By my count, a full 80 percent of Americans believe in God, whereas just 20 years ago, when science was relatively new, I don't think anybody did. In addition, 67 percent of Americans would offer God a place to crash on their couch if he did exist and needed some time to get his head together. This clearly says to me that the days of faith are back, and the days of science are ending.

The reason, I believe, is humanity's love of size, which can be traced back to our early days as small, ape-like hominids surrounded by larger, scarier animals like lions, elephants and very tall trees. We learned that to be bigger was to be stronger, and strove to create giant things like the pyramids, the Great Wall of China and the 1988 Tom Hanks hit "Big," which introduced piano playing on a never before achieved scale. Our awe of gigantic things continues today in our noble endeavor to push the human body to greater and greater limits of obesity.

But whereas people love massive things, science has become obsessed with making

stuff smaller. Cameras and cell phones are shrinking rapidly. Physicists are splitting the atom — already very small — into tinier pieces. Modern real estate has managed to invent a two-bedroom apartment too small to hold a single bed. These are novel achievements. But are they big? No. Science, once the creator of Hoover Dams and computers the size of entire buildings, has gone astray. God, on the other hand, continues to make planets just as big as before. In fact, when you think about it, God's basically just the biggest person there is. No wonder he's coming back into prominence as the science fad fades from mainstream society.

When I say "fades," though, I really should say "vanishes." Prayer is gaining distance on electricity, and I wouldn't be surprised if science, a mainstay of Tiger Beat Magazine's "Hot" list, moves to the "Not" category in 10 years. Within our lifetime, people will go back to a pre-industrial feudal society, and I imagine our children will even stop the quasi-science of farming in favor of hunting and gathering. Very likely, our great-grandchildren will return to a natural life ruled by animism, the belief that there is a soul or spirit in all things. With the mistake of science behind them, they can return to the important mission of achieving bigness and evolve into giants or possibly even dinosaurs. Scientists, of course, will tell you this is all impossible, absurd, ridiculous, mind-blowingly stupid. But they're probably just trying to sell you a smaller iPod.

→ **ELLIOTT KALAN** is a co-founder of the comedy group the Hypocrites and an associate producer on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart." He hosts a monthly staged talk show, "The New Kalan Show."

Blogarithms

A weekly look at the best and brightest blogs in NYC

Lowdown on the live scene

INTERVIEW The anonymous music blogger Brooklyn Vegan (www.brooklynvegan.com) is older than the Arctic Monkeys and younger than the Rolling Stones. And that's all you need to know. Here, he runs through the best gigs and venues in New York City.

Is New York a good place for live music?

New York may be the greatest place on earth for live music. Then again, I've never lived farther than an hour from Manhattan. You've got rock, jazz, classical, world, techno, hip-hop, etc. Every night there are countless shows to choose from, including the biggest names in music. When bands from other countries make their U.S. debut, it's almost always in New York. It's almost become the norm even that touring bands play more than one night here. Everyone else gets one night of Sufjan Stevens. We get five nights in a row followed by five more non-tour shows in less than a year. It helps that he lives here, which brings me to another point: A lot of great musicians live here.

Which is the band to see in 2006?

That depends on your point of view, but Arctic Monkeys seem like the obvious answer. There are also up-and-comers like Swedish singer-songwriter Jose Gonzalez, Tapes 'n' Tapes, and



Voxtro, the completely underrated Cloud Cult, and Slayer. Wolf Parade is playing two sold-out shows at Webster Hall. Sunset Rubdown is Wolf Parade vocalist Spencer Krug's other band, and they're playing one show at the much smaller Mercury Lounge that's still not sold out. The Gorillaz shows at Apollo Theatre should be good. See me next week for a completely different answer.

What are the best venues

in New York?

Some of my mid-large size favorites are Bowery Ballroom in Manhattan and Warsaw in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Warsaw is especially cool because it's a Polish National Home by day. They even serve pierogies and other Polish fare at the shows. Knitting Factory is always good, and for small, random and intimate shows, try Barbes in Park Slope, Sidewalk Café in the East Village and Rockwood Music Hall on

Next week

• There's a new blog on the Wall Street block and it means business.

the Lower East Side. The subway is good, too.

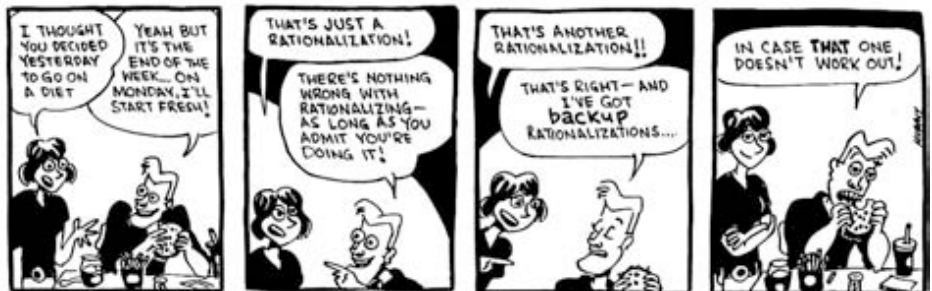
► Say I want to take in some live music this weekend. Where should I look and who should I look out for? This weekend is funny because every band in the universe (and this blogger) will be in Austin at SXSW, the South by Southwest Music and Media Conference. But there's still lots of good stuff going on because this is NYC. Indie favorite Silver Jews are touring for the first time. They'll play two shows at Webster Hall. Rilo Kiley front woman Jenny Lewis has two shows at Irving Plaza. The Pogues are playing some extremely rare shows at Nokia Theatre. StereoLab, Archer Prewitt and Sam Prekop are playing Town Hall. Lots of foreign bands are in the United States right now for SXSW and lots of them stop by NYC to play a show or two before they head home. Look for those shows next week, especially at Mercury Lounge. Most of all, just go explore — there's so much to find.

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