

From Behind Our White Picket Fence Week 143  
By Freddy and Eddy (www.freddyandeddy.com)

## Sex and the “Psychological” Recession, Pt. 2

*I'm the worst of all. I'm one of these people who goes, oh, I'm an entertainer, it's in my blood. Yeah, it's in my blood 'cuz a real job's too hard. I'd have loved to have been a doctor - too hard, didn't want to put the work in. Loved to have been a war hero – too scared. And now I have someone bollixed if my cappuccino's too cold or they look at me the wrong way. You know what a friend of mine once said, they said I'd never be happy because I'd never be famous enough... ~ Andy Millman, from Extras.*

If you haven't seen “Extras,” we highly recommend renting the entire series and making a weekend of it. We're huge fans of the original “The Office” series produced in the UK (with all due respect to Steve Carell, his Michael Scott is no David Brent) and Ricky Gervais' follow-up series is a brilliant take on the entertainment industry, packed full of humor, heart, and more than a bit of truth. It's also peppered with appearances by well-known actors and celebrities who mock their personas with gleeful wickedness (especially Orlando Bloom as a self-absorbed, Johnny Depp obsessed egomaniac and “Harry Potter” star Danielle Radcliff as an out of control, sex-crazed mama's boy). Most notable, however, is the relationship between main characters Andy Millman and Maggie Jacobs (played by Gervais and Ashley Jensen, respectively). Without a hint of sexual tension or innuendo, you probably won't find a more realistic portrayal of male/female friendship in television history and the payoff in the series concluding Christmas episode will have you weeping with joy.



But we digress. Our reason for mentioning “Extras” in the first place is that in one episode a theory was posited that we've long held that celebrity sex “scandals” are nothing more than well-timed press releases – conspiracies, as it were – designed to elevate the profiles of fading B-listers. Who really gave a hoot about Pamela Anderson and Tommy Lee, for example, before we were treated to home video footage of his foot long and her neatly trimmed privates being pummeled by it? Who ever heard of Kim Kardashian, and for that matter Ray J (Brandy's younger brother?), before their little dalliance hit the internet last year? When Britney Spears' profile began slipping in the tabloids – BAM – shocking photos of her snatch were magically captured as she exited Paris Hilton's car (and who can forget Paris' own little release in 2005?). Even Rob Lowe, the dubious originator of the sex tape phenomenon, was at a career “Lowe” when his

contribution hit the news and these private moments reaching public consumption now include reality television loser Dustin Diamond (Screech, from “Saved by the Bell”), Colin Farrell, Simon Rex, Kelsey Grammar, Jimi Hendrix, and even VERNE TROYER.

Can Tom and Katie be waiting in the wings to put to rest the rumors regarding Tom’s sexual preferences?

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Picking up from last week, we wanted to continue to explore the so-called “psychological recession,” a phrase coined by John McCain’s *former* economic advisor Phil Gramm, regarding the slowing the economy and how it has affected our own bottom line. With close friends in Temecula and Hesperia being directly challenged by the multitude of foreclosures pushing their own property values downward (and making refinancing their current loans virtually impossible), we braced for a summer that, if slower than last year’s, would literally close our doors and put us out of business. We cut back to one part time employee, eliminated expensive summer camps from our son’s itinerary (\$465.00 for one week of basketball at LMU was one among many casualties), and are forgoing the long vacation for a fourth consecutive year, all to prevent economic disaster. Even our trip to Burning Man is being cut to the bone, with our cheap RV being loaded with as many riders as possible to save on the gas expense the only way to make it happen.

The result?

Business has been shockingly good and it looks as though we’ll emerge from the summer slowdown in relatively good shape heading into the busy fall season. Yelp.com, an online Yellow Pages of sorts, has been reaching a decidedly younger crowd and getting them into our store, while enough good word of mouth seems to have spread to keep a reliable procession of visitors and income stream flowing through our doors. Online orders have been stable and we are up about 35% over this same period from a year ago. We’re not getting rich, certainly, but our anxiety levels have dropped considerably and the economy’s overall dampening has seemed to work inversely on our bottom line. Whew.

As for our sex lives, well, that’s another story entirely...

PS. We’d like to thank everyone who attended our In the Flesh reading with Nina Hartley last week, as well as ad-whore Paul Sanchez and his lovely wife for enduring that Johnny Cash tribute band with us Saturday night. Thank goodness for strong Mojitos!

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