

Opinion

## Cults, racism and man-children: Big Brother's far from bland

Tim Brunero

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Every year we hear the same complaint about Big Brother - that it's a festival of blandness, a circus of the mundane, a Bogans' Olympics.

Well, not this year. Already we've seen a parade of juicy topics thrown up by the show.

**Exhibit A:** A tattooed bloke called Saxon who believes in UFOs, and thinks the government set up Martin Bryant. He likes myths, conspiracy theories and make-believe. Like that the Cronulla riots were a legitimate response to 'Lebanese gangs running Sydney beaches' - whatever that means. But he's not a racist. Oh no, that's not racism, that's just his belief, man, and, like believing in UFOs, however kooky, it's his right to be deluded. Oh, did I mention he considered getting a swastika tattooed on his left pec? But, he's not a

racist any more, oh no, he's changed, man. He got one of those much more subtle Southern Cross tattoos instead. Of course the irony that while he wants to meet people from other planets, he's reluctant to meet people from other countries hasn't been missed.

**Exhibit B:** A cult survivor called David. You see David looks like your average well-muscled fireman. But at the age of 32 he's only been living in the real world for 13 years. He had to start from scratch after escaping an extreme religious sect at 19. Before then he'd never seen a movie, kissed a girl, listened to the radio or eaten at a restaurant. The group was called the Exclusive Brethren and they have some kooky folks. They live apart from the rest of us in their own isolated communities. And get this: they don't vote in elections because it interferes with God's right to ordain who rules - but they do fund the Liberal Party. You tell me the logic there and I'll buy you lunch. Speaking of lunch - Exclusive Brethren can't even share a meal with people outside their sect. David will never be able to break bread with his family ever again. And there are 15,000 in Australia. Bet you didn't know about these guys... but you know Big Brother is boring.

**Exhibit C:** After that comes squeaky-voiced Travis. Now Travis is a piece of work. His high-pitched pipes, and effeminate behaviour led many housemates to initially conclude he was gay. Now most have accepted he's not. In fact having watched his child-like behaviour it's easier to conclude he's asexual. This is a guy who wears pyjamas to bed, is a virgin, has his lunch made by his Mum and is about as worldly as Bindi Irwin. Anyway, I digress. When the subject of homosexuality came up the other day Travis came out with the extraordinary statement that people can "decide to be gay". Whether this belief comes straight from the lips of the devout Christian's pastor or if it's some kind of psychological cover for his own sexuality who knows. But it's going to be fun to find out.

So there you have it. It's all there - from UFO-believers to cult-survivors, from people who think you can choose to be gay, to those who believe Martin Bryant was set up by the government. Big Brother might be a lot of things, but this year it's far from boring.

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## COMMENTS

Friday, 16 May 2008

“ Oh really. I bet a little more boring as previous seasons of the American, Brazilian and Russian Big Brother, from YouTube. One fight required Ninja (security guard) intervention. The girl who was evicted as a result didn't even start the brawl, but she was at least central to her maile attractors. We may need a bit of biffa, a little more than the gentle sparring between Travis and the "Nobster". But yes Big Brother pulled all stops to bring in housemates with diverse backgrounds. ”

Posted by: Thomas Suters, Sydney

Reply

Friday, 16 May 2008

“ Tim, Big Brother ain't rating. No matter how much you are paid to build it up. It simply isn't rating. "Spicks & Specks" continually outrates Big Brother! ”

Posted by: Gary Benson, Blacktown

Reply

Friday, 16 May 2008

“ I'll pay the elephant gag.... ”

Posted by: Tim Brunero, Sydney

Friday, 16 May 2008