


NEIL YOUNG
FORK IN THE ROAD
 HIS LATEST ALBUM FEATURES 10 NEW SONGS





AVAILABLE NOW
[CLICK HERE](#) TO EXPERIENCE THE ALBUM
 NEILYOUNG.COM


- HOME
- POLITICS
- MEDIA
- BUSINESS
- ENTERTAINMENT
- LIVING
- STYLE
- GREEN
- WORLD
- CHICAGO
- COMEDY 23/6
- VIDEO
- BLOGGER INDEX
- ARCHIVE
- Twitter: Follow Us
- Get Email Alerts
- Make HuffPost Your HomePage



Stevie Nicks Rails Against Technology: It's "Ruined Our Children"

More in Entertainment: Rowling Quits Charity... Britney's Smoky Concert... Springsteen divorce case...



Gay Porn Idol Dead At 62



Michael Giltz

Freelance writer and raconteur

Posted April 8, 2009 | 02:49 PM (EST)

- BIO
- Get Email Alerts Bloggers' Index
- Become a Fan

DVDs: Just A Tiny Bit Of Comfort, 007



Read More: [Animatyon](#), [Anthony Hopkins](#), [Bolt](#), [Daniel Craig](#), [Dvds](#), [James Bond](#), [Movies](#), [Quantum Of Solace](#), [Twilight](#), [Wong Kar Wai](#), [Entertainment News](#)

Buzz up! Be the First to Submit This Story to Digg

Get Breaking News Alerts

never spam

Share Print Comments

The last few weekends, I've been watching as a 12 year old boy works his way through my James Bond DVDs, something every young kid should do on spring break when they're growing up. So I feel as ready as ever to tackle the newest Bond, *Quantum of Solace* (\$39.99 on BluRay and \$34.98 for regular DVD; MGM).

I think Daniel Craig is an excellent Bond, but felt *Casino Royale* was a bit overpraised. In contrast, I think *Quantum* is a bit under-praised. Both are very sleek, fun action films that stay true to Bond

while obviously hewing more to the gritty, brutal character of the books than most of the series. The BluRay looks absolutely smashing and -- interestingly -- I found the action scenes easier to follow on TV than I did in the theater. Maybe it's just a second viewing, but the cutting seemed more organic and flowing than it did on the big screen. Is it the detail of the BluRay and the up-close nature of home viewing that in a way focuses your attention on each detail more directly? The Bond girl (Olga Kurylenko) is a major deficit, the weakest link of the movie. Given the movie's dramatic heft, she's actually asked to act and show emotion, something Kurylenko fails at miserably.

The cheekily named Strawberry Fields (Gemma Arterton) is infinitely more appealing and interesting and unfortunately is onscreen all too little. If only their roles were reversed. The ultimate result is that Bond has far more chemistry with M (Judi Dench) than any other character in the film. Their every scene together crackles. As was the original plan with the intended sequel to *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, *Quantum* picks up right where *Casino Royale* left off, with Bond seeking vengeance for the death of his lover. It's a solid, solid entertainment and they're very close to getting every element right and delivering a Bond for the ages.

In contrast, I watched *Never Say Never Again* (\$34.98 on BluRay but onsale at Amazon for

Popular Stories on HuffPost

- David Weiner** [Passover Facts: 6 Things You Didn't Know About Passover](#)
For most Americans, Passover is that time once a year when...
- Liam Neeson** [And Sons In London \(PHOTOS\)](#)
Liam Neeson is in London, just two weeks after burying wife Natasha Richardson following her freak...
- Republican Caller** [Tells Limbaugh: "You're A Brainwashed Nazi" \(AUDIO\)](#)
Media Monitor Cathy Talbot tipped us off to an on-air...
- Alec Baldwin** [Why We Need the New York Times](#)
For many years, I was a devoted reader of the New York Times. An unusually devoted...
- Gioia Diliberto** [Why Designers Are Dissing Michelle](#)
When Oscar de la Renta

\$14.98; Fox), which is just out. It's the first title in that format I've seen that doesn't look smashing. I don't know whether it's the source print or laziness, but this is a grainy, unremarkable DVD, appropriate for a very unremarkable Bond film. Yes, it's nice to see Sean Connery back as 007, but the tone is very jokey, a la *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* and this is the most dated Bond of all.

Typically, the secret agent lives in an unchanging universe of beautiful women, lavish resorts, expensive cars and dry martinis. But in *Never Say Never Again*, the real world intrudes to an unpleasant degree. Poor Kim Basinger is seen doing aerobics and kicking up her heels at every opportunity. Worse, when Bond is following her in a casino, she leaves the main area and walks into a video parlor and Bond has to stand next to a bleeping and blurping video game while trying to look suave. It's cheesy and awful and pained in a way even the late Roger Moore entries never were. There's tongue in cheek and then there's tongue on the ground in embarrassment. Stick to Daniel Craig.

ANDY RICHTER HAS IT ALL -- The best news recently for the over-crowded late-night talk show world is that Andy Richter is rejoining Conan O'Brien when Conan takes over *The Tonight Show* this summer. Both have done well on their own but their chemistry together is undeniable. Conan, of course, chugged along in late night. Richter has appeared in many films and sitcoms, but his best work was on two shows he starred in: *Andy Barker PI* (which he says will be coming out on DVD shortly) and *Andy Richter Controls The Universe: The Complete Series* (\$39.98; Paramount). This workplace comedy had a great cast (including Jonathan Slavin as a nebbishy buddy and James Patrick Stuart as a Ken doll-handsome guy for whom everything came easy), a playful sensibility (episodes about Andy dating a racist girl who was hot, etc) and fantasy sequences that were genuinely clever and fun. This set contains all 19 shows -- including the last five episodes, which never aired. They prove the show was just really hitting its stride. Very cult-worthy.

TELL NO ONE? NO ONE LISTENED -- A genuine word of mouth hit that played and played and played in theaters for much of 2008, *Tell No One* (\$27.98; Music Box Films) is a twisty crime drama about a man accused of murdering his wife and several others who goes on the lam when he receives an email message that seems to show her still alive. Great fun for about two-thirds of the way, the film goes off the rails when it takes about eight twists too many and then stops for ten minutes to explain the convoluted plot. But no else seemed to mind and it is craftily well played by a fine cast, including Kristin Scott Thomas who had a great year with this and *I Loved You So Long*.

A BOLT FROM THE BLUE -- It's been a good year -- heck, it's been a good decade -- for animated films. Three of my favorite films of the year were "cartoons:" *Wall-E*, *Kung Fu Panda* and *Azur & Asmar: The Prince's Quest*. And *Bolt* (\$32.99 special edition DVD and \$39.99 on BluRay; Disney), which I missed in the theaters, comes pretty darn close. It's a very meta story for a flick nominally aimed at kids. Bolt (John Travolta) is a dog who believes he has tremendous abilities and a supersonic bark, all used to protect Penny (Miley Cyrus). In fact, he's an actor on a hit TV show where the crew works with elaborate care to make Bolt think he's really in the midst of world-shaking danger in order to elicit a great performance. Then Bolt escapes. The usual hi-jinks and confusions ensue (helped by Susie Essman of *Curb Your Enthusiasm* as a smart-ass alley cat and Mark Walton as Bolt's biggest fan). Clever, engaging and -- just like *Kung Fu Panda* -- this film has some of the best action scenes of the year. If only live action movies like *Indiana Jones* seemed less like cartoons and imitated the well-thought out mayhem of cartoons like *Bolt*. It's the best non-Pixar Disney cartoon in years. All versions look very good but the BluRay is only \$4 more than the 2 disc DVD and it contains a regular DVD, the BluRay plus a digital copy, which gives families all sorts of flexibility. I can't say this enough: I wish they'd eliminate single DVD and two disc DVDs and just release everything in a package like this that includes all three formats. Just the cost-savings of not having to carry three different versions should allow them to shave off a buck right away. And who would complain? No one.

SHHHHHH! GUY MADDIN IS A GENIUS -- Easily one of the most distinctive and remarkable talents of the past two decades is the criminally little known Guy Maddin, a man obsessed with silent movies, early talkies, black and white images, twisted early memories and much more. He's made a string of utterly original films, ranging from operatic shorts that use Russian silent cinema as a touchstone to pseudo-documentaries about his own childhood. You simply can't go wrong with this guy if you're any sort of film buff. *The Guy Maddin Collection* (\$34.99; Zeitgeist) contains two films -- *Twilight of the Ice Nymphs* and *Archangel* -- and that

lambasted Michelle Obama last week in Women's Wear Daily...

Stacy Peralta The Movie They Didn't Want You to See

It seemed so obvious to me, a slam-dunk, a downright compelling true life...

Kal Penn Leaving "House" For White House (HOUSE SPOILER ALERT)

***WARNING: This article contains spoilers for Monday night's episode...

Nicolas Cage Sells Castle Because Of "Difficult Economic Situation" (PHOTOS)

Nicolas Cage is selling his Bavarian castle, Schloss Neidstein,...

Baracknophobia: Hannity, Bachmann, And Beck Terrified Of Obama (VIDEO)

Jon Stewart took on people "speaking crazy to power last...

Obama's Iraq Visit: Makes Surprise Trip To Baghdad On Way Home (VIDEO, SLIDESHOW)

CLICK HERE FOR UPDATES BAGHDAD - Flying unannounced...

Sexiest Vegetarians Named By PETA (PHOTOS, POLL)

PETA has announced the winners of its "Sexiest Vegetarian Next Door" contest, in...

Men's Underwear Sales, Greenspan's Economic Metric, Reveal Crisis

With reporting by Arthur Delaney As chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan...

Olbermann Pays Tribute To His Departed Mother Marie (VIDEO)

Keith Olbermann's mother, Marie, passed away, and he offered a tender tribute to...

Christopher Hitchens Debates Kenneth Blackwell About Religious Influence In America (VIDEO)

Christopher Hitchens was a guest on...

Mika Brzezinski's Shoes: The "Morning Joe" Co-Host Reveals What She's Wearing Under The Desk (SLIDESHOW, VIDEO)

brilliant short, *The Heart Of The World*.) His most recent film *My Winnipeg* (2008) reenacts supposed scenes from his childhood like a fever dream. *Dracula: Pages From A Virgin's Diary* (\$29.99; Zeitgeist) takes the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's production of the classic horror novel down the rabbit hole. I haven't mentioned several gems but perhaps the best introduction is *Careful* (\$29.99; Zeitgeist) a "remastered and repressed" new edition of this movie about a village in the mountains in the 1800s. Everyone -- men, women, children and even creatures -- have to be utterly quiet for fear of starting an avalanche. With this absurd premise, Maddin revels in silent film techniques, beautiful tinting and sexual frenzy barely tamped down by society. It's devilishly clever and absorbing and comes with loads of extras like a new commentary by Maddin, a 1997 documentary about his career narrated by Tom Waits, a short film and more. Essential viewing.

SLUMMING IT -- *Slumdog Millionaire* (\$29.98; Fox) the movie is almost as much of a fairy tale as the story about the people who made it. Its Dickensian tale of a boy from the slums who ends up on national TV playing for a fortune on a game show -- but in fact just trying to contact the girl he loves -- is energetically told with a terrific cast and high energy from director Danny Boyle. Boyle has had his ups and downs commercially and creatively but surely no one expected this unlikely story to be the biggest hit of his career. But in fact, as friends of mine pointed out, the film follows the Boyle formula to a t: people (not often the most admirable) endure high drama on the way to being deluged with piles of money. It happened in *Shallow Grave* and *Trainspotting* and *Millions* and perhaps others of his movies I'm not even aware of. *Slumdog* is a good movie, though the bad brother of our hero is almost cartoonishly bad and his fate is too heavy handed by half. But the cinematography and score and editing combine to keep it rushing along. Anil Kapoor -- so good as the game show host -- will be in the cast of *24* next season. So the good news for this Oscar winner keeps coming.

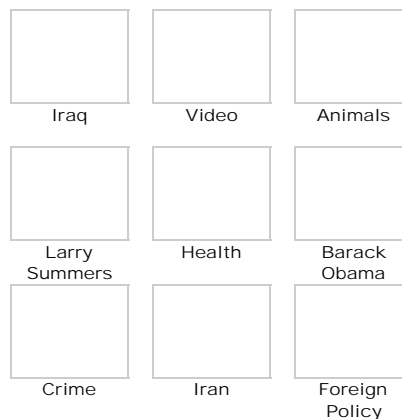
CRITERION COLLECTION -- Any movie released by Criterion is worth owning: even if you're not familiar with the film or it's not a favorite, they're sure to include so many valuable extras that you'll get your money's worth and appreciate the film's significance as time passes on. When it comes to Truffaut vs. Godard, I'm definitely in the Truffaut camp. Long after Godard had given up delivering anything but the most self-absorbed, tiresome movies, Truffaut was celebrating the power of telling stories with the late period effort *The Last Metro* (\$39.95 for regular OR BluRay; Criterion), which tells of a French theater troupe trying to mount a show while France is occupied by the Nazis. Catherine Deneuve stars with Gerard Depardieu. I haven't seen the BluRay but the regular DVD looks marvelous and comes with extras like two audio commentaries (one with Depardieu), old TV interviews, new video interviews with cast and crew, an interview with cinematographer Nestor Almendros and a short film made in 1958 by Truffaut and Godard before Godard became insufferable. *Il Generale Della Rovere* (\$29.95; Criterion) is a Roberto Rossellini film starring director Vittorio De Sica (I'm always surprised when he acts but De Sica acted in hundreds of movies). De Sica -- in another WWII set film -- plays a con man forced by the Nazis to impersonate a general and get info from Italian prisoners. For the first time, the bum feels a twinge of conscience. Extras include interviews and a visual essay. Finally, Andrzej Wajda is having a success with his new movie *Katyn*, which is also set in World War II. Criterion is releasing *Danton* (\$39.95; Criterion), a two disc set about a previous upheaval, the French Revolution, starring Depardieu. Extras include interviews with Wajda and others as well as a 42 minute making-of documentary. All the movies look terrific and it's great to see Criterion charging the same price for BluRay as it does for regular DVDs.

A-WOP-BOP-A-LOO-LOP-A-LOP-BAM-BOO -- Little Richard had something to prove at the *Toronto Peace Festival in 1969* (\$14.98; Shout). His last Top 40 hit was more than a decade earlier and he would never have another. But Richard was always convinced of his own fabulousness and knew the world should be convinced of it too. And he ripped the crowd into a frenzy during his half hour set, thanks to timeless classics like "Lucille" and "Long Tall Sally" -- not to mention a shirt adorned with tiny mirrors and a towering wig. DA Pennebaker captures the moment well, though the sound leaves something to be desired and at 30 minutes this is awfully short. Why not give us three hours of the day-long festival, of which this could be a highlight? On its own, it's just not enough. Fans of Rory Gallagher will be more satisfied by *Rory Gallagher Live In Cork* (\$14.98; Eagle Vision). Even though it captures Gallagher at the tail end of his career when ill health was plaguing him, at least it's 80 minutes long and has a sense of occasion thanks to the setting of his home town.

DOCUMENTARIES -- *The Matador* (\$24.98; City Lights) is definitely not for your PETA friends as it shows the brutal world of bullfighting as David Fandila pushes himself to become the top-ranked matador in the world. *Killer At Large* (\$19.95; Disinformation) is an all-encompassing look at why obesity is rampant in this country, with a 45 minute educational version, deleted scenes and more. Academy Award nominee *The Restless Conscience* (\$39.95; Docurama) looks at the

*Update: Scroll down...

HUFFPOST'S BIG NEWS PAGES



[MORE BIG NEWS PAGES](#)

Books by this author

This Blogger's Books from [amazon.com](#).

A cabin of one's own: New England's MacDowell Colony celebrates 100 years of artistic utopia. And the gay and lesbian artists who prospered there celebrate ... (The national gay & lesbian newsmagazine)
by Michael Giltz

Affairs to remember: Farley Granger bedded Ava Gardner, Shelley Winters, and Leonard Bernstein. In his autobiography, Include Me Out, Hitchcock's muse ... (The national gay & lesbian newsmagazine)
by Michael Giltz

Germans who resisted Naziism from Hitler's rise to power through the 20+ attempts to assassinate the Fuhrer. *The Great Depression* (\$12.95; History) is an all-too-timely (but budget priced!) four part look at the last time America was pounded by bad economic news. Finally, *Light At The Edge Of The World* (\$19.98; Smithsonian) is a three hour Smithsonian special that looks at four vanishing cultures in Peru, Polynesia, Himalayas and the Arctic.

ALSO OUT NOW:

Twilight (\$34.99 on BluRay and \$32.99 for regular DVD; Summit), the so-so movie adaptation of the wildly selling books about vampires in high school that didn't satisfy fans of the book (though they saw the film three or four times just to make sure it wasn't that good) or those of us who found the book poorly written but thought it might make good source material for a fun movie. Still, Robert Pattinson does look awfully pale and dreamy in BluRay.

Schoolhouse Rock Earth (\$19.99; Disney) -- all these years after the original shorts, the creative team comes back together to make 11 videos on global warming and darned if they don't pick up right where they left off and deliver the goods, from "Save The Ocean" to "Windy and the Windmills."

Shakespeare's An Age Of Kings (\$49.98; BBC Video) -- It's unthinkable that something this ambitious and high brow -- eight Shakespeare history plays told in 15 hours of TV with more than 600 speaking parts -- would be attempted by anyone other than the BBC. The cast is starry indeed, ranging from Judi Dench and Sean Connery to Julian Glover and Eileen Atkins. It was a smashing success in 1960 and while much discussed has been rarely seen since then, until this fine five disc set. Great fun for theater and Shakespeare buffs.

The Odd Couple/To Catch A Thief (\$24.99 each; Paramount) -- Two great teams. Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau were so perfect it's all the more remarkable that the TV series could almost supplant our memory of the movie. And Cary Grant and Grace Kelly just had that spark essential for a great romantic thriller about a retired jewel thief, who may not be so retired after all. Nicely packaged but these movies keep getting reissued. If you own them already, don't bother trading up. If you don't own them, what are you waiting for?

Praying With Lior (\$24.95; First Run) -- Somehow, this documentary about a young man with Downs Syndrome preparing for his Bar Mitzvah manages to mostly avoid sentimentality even though its premise -- Lior, despite or perhaps because of his challenge is closer to God than most -- is close to fetishizing Downs. Also just out from First Run is *The Kite* (\$24.95; First Run), the story of an arranged marriage that hits a snag when the 16 year old bride to be is held up at a checkpoint between Lebanon and Israel. And *Opera Jawa* (\$24.95; First Run) is a visually inventive tale of a husband who must face down the butcher who has seduced his wife.

Sesame Street's Follow That Bird (\$19.98; Warner Bros.) -- This is no *Muppet Movie*, just a very thin feature about the dangers of adoption. Not really, of course, but Big Bird gets adopted and then runs back home to Sesame Street. A very few modest laughs from Oscar the Grouch and Sandra Bernhard as a surly waitress are the most anyone other than the very, very young will enjoy.

The Venture Bros. 3rd Season (\$44.98; Warner Bros) -- This silly spoof of 60s animated action shows like *Jonny Quest* is spot on in both the heroes, the depiction of hapless kids and the evil villains. A little goes a long way when it comes to spoofs, but individual episodes are consistently funny and the terrific score by JG Thirwell is rightly celebrated with a bonus CD. The BluRay looks good, but costing \$15 more than the regular DVD version at \$30 makes it hard to justify unless you're a fanatic.

The same goes for *Watchmen: Tales Of The Black Freighter* (\$35.99 on BluRay and \$27.95 on regular DVD; Warner Premiere), a straight to DVD animated depiction of episodes from *Watchmen* that didn't make it into the film. The animation is ok, about equivalent to a decent TV cartoon. You get good extras and a sneak peek at an animated spin on *Green Lantern*, but this is strictly for uber fans and at 38 minutes, hardly worth plopping down for the BluRay.

Ricky Gervais: Out Of England - The Stand-Up Special (\$19.98; HBO) - Ricky Gervais is not perfect, thank goodness. Obviously his second show *Extras* wasn't as good as *The Office*. But no show would be and *Extras* was in fact quite funny on its own terms. So he did seem a bit infallible. But while he's been a big success doing stand-up (which is still highly regarded in the UK), his first special feels a bit forced. So, funny at moments (especially that goofy cover costume) but not SO funny that we will all feel inferior forever.

Fans of stand-up might also enjoy Jim Gaffigan's *King Baby* (\$16.99; Paramount), which contains an extended version of his Comedy Central concert, 3 episodes of *Pale Force* and 4 episodes of the Internet show *Our Massive Planet*.

Fallen Angels/Happy Together (\$29.95 each; Kino) -- director Wong Kar Wai is in a modest rut, but fans can revel in all of his movies being released in careful new editions. These lovely looking Kino titles include the gay drama *Happy Together* and the delirious romance *Fallen Angels* about a contract killer and the woman who hires him. You can't talk about contemporary cinema without knowing Wong Kar Wai.

Taggart Set 1 -- (\$49.99; Acorn) is an odd name for the 19th season of the longest running crime drama in the world, which began in 1983. But fans of the show's ever changing cast should enjoy the season that aired in the UK in 2002. *Law & Order*, which began in 1990, has to wait for this show to die and then run another seven years just to tie it.

The Robe (\$34.98 on BluRay; Fox) -- the religious epic -- a close cousin to the more action-oriented sword and sandal epic -- was a strange trend in cinema. Ponderous movies performed by actors who felt obliged to stare off meaningfully into the distance...and yet audiences ate them up. Heck, Richard Burton even got an Oscar nomination for this typical if slightly above average entry. No expense was spared (you don't want to nickle and dime Jesus, do you?) and the lavishness shows on this fine Blu Ray edition complete with an appreciation by Martin Scorsese, audio commentary, making-of features, a newsreel and more.

The Silence Of The Lambs (\$34.99; MGM) -- Still one of the scariest, most compelling crime dramas ever made. Jodie Foster is just as mesmerizing as Oscar winner Anthony Hopkins in this cat and mouse game between an FBI agent and a serial killer. Ignore all the trashy sequels, the increasingly ludicrous books and the many spoofs of Hannibal Lecter. This is a great film and looks just stunning on this BluRay edition packed with extras.

More in Entertainment...

Cat Cora's Partner Gives Birth To Her...

Jack Wrangler, Gay Porn Idol, Dead At...

Billy Bob Thornton Gives Bizarre Interview On...

Lindsay Lohan In "Absolute Hell," Broke And...

digg™ HuffPost Stories Surging Right Now

Obama Global Warming Plan Involves Cooling Air

Roger Ebert Thanks Bill O'Reilly For Putting Chicago Sun-Times In His Hall Of Shame

How Much Does Smoking Cost Society?

Neal Rodriguez: 10 of the Hottest Girls @Twitter

Sponsored Links

My Wrinkles Vanished

Read How a mom combined 2 products and finally got rid of her wrinkles
KathysWrinkles.com

"My Teeth Are so White"

Read the trick, discovered by a mom, to turn yellow teeth white.
CathysTeeth.com

The Most \$100K+ Jobs

Search 72,384 Jobs that pay over \$100,000 at TheLadders.com.

[Buy a link here](#)

Comments

3

Pending Comments

0

[FAQ: Comments & Moderation](#)

[FAQ: HuffPost Accounts](#)

Post a Comment

Want to reply to a comment? Hint: Click "Reply" at the bottom of the comment; after being approved your comment will appear directly underneath the comment you replied to

View Comments: Newest First Expand All

NEW LiberalBuzz See Profile I'm a Fan of LiberalBuzz permalink

I swear Michael if it wasn't for you I'd have no idea of all the releases out there.

Thank you.

Reply Favorite Flag as abusive Posted 06:43 PM on 04/08/2009

Bryan Young - Huffpost Blogger I'm a Fan of Bryan Young permalink



Thanks for the mention of Killer at Large...

If you want to see it, let me know...

See Bryan Young's Profile

Reply Favorite Flag as abusive Posted 12:20 AM on 04/05/2009

raystringer See Profile I'm a Fan of raystringer permalink

Nice article. I bought Quantum of Solace and Casino Royale, and used the \$5 off coupon that came with Quantum of Solace to get Gold Finger for \$10 all on BluRay. I also bought Bolt, Slumdog Millionaire, and Twilight and was pleasantly surprised by these BluRays too.

Reply Favorite Flag as abusive Posted 07:00 PM on 04/04/2009

You must be logged in to reply to this comment. Log in or

Ads by Google

Decorative Window Films
Choose From Our Huge Selection. Easily Install Yourself. Order Now!
www.DecorativeFilm.com



Google Custom Search SEARCH

- HOME POLITICS MEDIA BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT LIVING GREEN STYLE WORLD CHICAGO COMEDY FUNDRACE

Advertise | Login | Make HuffPost your Home Page | RSS | Jobs | FAQ: Comments & Moderation | FAQ: Huffpost Accounts | Contact Us
Copyright © 2009 HuffingtonPost.com, Inc. | Archive | User Agreement | Privacy | Comment Policy | About Us | Powered by Movable Type