The NASTY THRILL of ‘GOSSIP GIRL’

PHISH RETURN

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE BAILOUT

By Matt Taibbi
40 | Jay Keasling
A bioengineer who thinks bacteria can solve America's energy troubles

WHAT HE'S CHANGING: Can bacteria solve America's energy troubles? A few years ago, Keasling figured out how to insert genes from a wormwood plant into the DNA of a yeast cell, thus turning the microbe into a cheap factory for artemisinin, a key anti-malarial compound. Now head of the Joint BioEnergy Institute in California, Keasling and a team of 150 scientists are engineering bacteria to convert cornstalks and wheat chaff into synthetic hydrocarbon fuels that can power planes, trains and automobiles.

KEY QUOTE: "We don’t have to accept what nature has given us."

41 | Michael Moore
With Bush gone, one-man lefty agitprop machine takes on Wall Street

WHAT HE’S CHANGING: He gave the left their balls back. Moore’s killer Bush-era run of documentaries — Bowling for Columbine, Fahrenheit 9/11, Sicko — sparked a deep, righteously angry part of progressive brains, making it impossible to sit back and drink another latte.

NEXT MOVE: Think you’re pissed about the banking crisis now? Wait until you see his upcoming Wall Street movie.

BAD CALL: His support for Nader in 2000.

KEY QUOTE: "Thank you, Republican Party. You helped us elect one of the most liberal senators to the presidency. We couldn’t have done it without you."

42 | Brian Eno
For decades, the producer for bands who want to change their sound

WHAT HE’S CHANGING: Eno finds rock music utterly boring — which is why he’s able to help that genre’s biggest artists reinvent their sound and make their freshest music. From Talking Heads to U2, he has blunted the line between art for art’s sake and pop hitmaking — and last year, he even produced a Coldplay album that (mostly) silenced the haters.

WANNA-BE: Bloom, his music-making iPhone app, lets everyone be Eno for a day.

FRIENDS SAY: "Brian is such a stimulating intellect," says U2 bassist Adam Clayton. "He’s always bringing in strange things and strange sounds and different energy."

43 | Lisa Randall
Theoretical physicist takes gravity to the next dimension

WHAT SHE’S CHANGING: Randall may have solved one of the most imposing puzzles in physics: why the Earth’s gravity appears to be so weak compared with other elementary forces like electromagnetism. Her theory is that gravity may be concentrated in a hidden dimension beyond our normal three — in a warped, parallel universe with totally different chemistry.

NEXT MOVE: Seeking evidence via Europe’s Large Hadron Collider, which will create subatomic particles that potentially have momentum in extra dimensions when it starts up again in September.

44 | Alex Rigopulos & Eran Egozy
Video-game duo set their sights on music’s Holy Grail: The Beatles

WHAT THEY'RE CHANGING: The record biz. By inventing Guitar Hero and Rock Band, these MIT college buddies made a new way to consume music.

FRIENDS SAY: "I'm loving Rock Band," Nirvana’s Krist Novoselic blogged. "Instead of file-sharing, people are actually buying music again! HA!!!"

NEXT FIGHT: Their Beatles game, due later this year, may be Harmonix's biggest yet.

CHANCE OF SUCCESS: 90 percent. Harmonix and the Fab Four have perfect track records.

45 | Jessy Tolkien
The new leader of the grass-roots movement combating climate change

WHAT SHE'S CHANGING: How to fight global warming. The 27-year-old executive director of Energy Action, a coalition of mostly campus-based environmental groups, Tolkien gets a lot of respect these days. In March, 12,000 people blasted into Washington, D.C., for PowerShift 2009, sponsored by Energy Action, which called it "the largest training and lobby day for climate change solutions in the history of the United States."

KEY QUOTE: "We have new leadership, but we expect them to implement that leadership. We expect and demand that climate legislation gets passed in 2009."

46 | Trent Reznor
The industrial-rock godfather becomes the world’s scariest digital nerd

WHAT HE'S CHANGING: While other stars cover in the face of the Internet, the Nine Inch Nails leader has been more creative than anyone in embracing the post-CD era — he releases new music with the speed and ease of a blog post.

BIG MOVE: Parted ways with his longtime label, Interscope, in 2007 — and began a rapid-fire series of new releases, including an entire NIN album, The Slip, for free.

NEXT UP: He hints that Nine Inch Nails’ upcoming tour with Jane’s Addiction (whose new album he is producing) may mark the end of NIN — and presumably the beginning of a new musical phase.