



Karen the editor suggested I write about the 80s for this issue to tie in with her Human League interview but for a minute or ten I was unable to recall any part of the decade. Then I realised why. For most of the 80s I was living in either Israel or South Africa - two countries pretty far off the New Romantic map. Pink Floyd and Neil Young were still considered the tops in Israel and as for South Africa well, Elton John and Rod Stewart played Sun City and Apartheid kept Live Aid off the TV screens. I think that says it all.

However, I was around for 1980 as I was still at school in Colne. It was the year of my O-Levels and I should have been knuckling down but instead I was sneaking off to Pips nightclub in Manchester at the weekends and hanging around in the Bowie Room. Pips was the place to go if you were a Bowie/Roxy fan and David and I were inseparable at the time. Just as 'The Waltons' and 'Little House on the Prairie' had tackled every difficult issue of my early childhood, David Bowie was there to soothe the traumas of my early teens. 'Life on Mars' and 'Starman' played on a loop tape inside my head while I struggled through my O-Levels. And no wonder I struggled if I was spending all my time in nightclubs. What were my parents thinking of? How could they possibly fall for the 'I'm staying at Suzanne's to revise' line?

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Everyone at school knew about my Bowie clubbing shenanigans and I carved a bit of a reputation for



myself without the aid of Facebook or pictures taken on a mobile phone to prove I was there. Then along came the New Romantics and well, ruined it all really. When Geraldine McCarthy

eyeliner and thinking they had something in common with me and my Bowie friends. We were elitist. Or thought we were.

No doubt someone will now produce a photo of me in a frilly shirt taken at a Gary Numan concert and I will be made a mockery of but I wish to state here and now that I never liked Gary Numan and was only

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stopped me at school and said; "Did you see Spandau on Top of the Pops last night?" I was mortified. How dare she

there because my boyfriend bought me a ticket. I cringed when I watched Gaz driving his silly car about on stage, honest. If he'd been laughing it would have been fine but taking himself seriously was just not right.

Basically, that's what was wrong with most of the 80s groups; they all took themselves a bit too seriously. Don't get me wrong, we often sing along to Human League/Adam and the Ants in the car with the kids but this is 30 years down the line and we think we're being kitsch and ironic while belting out those tunes. I'd still stop short at Spandau Ballet's 'Gold' though.

So there you have it. The 80s view from someone who was missing for most of it. Sorry Phil but to steal one of your lines, 'This is Gill talking, I want to tell you what I found to be true. Ooh-ooh-ooh.' Bless 'em, frilly shirts, silly hair and all.



presume that I would appreciate the pontifications of Tony Hadley and his band of merry twins? I didn't want to see the boys at school wearing

Catch up with Gill's blog at www.gillwatson.co.uk