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and more!

Why are we still talking about **RAPE?**

It's time to get angry



Bye bye, Hotmail...

...we won't forget you!
As our email first love
flies off into the sunset
(er, shifts to Outlook),
Sloane Crosley marks
the end of an era

So, is it appropriate to wax poetic about the internet? It's made of pixels and codes, not sentiment. Its very purpose is to exist in the moment; to change without warning so that we shouldn't be upset to wake up one day to new colours and layouts on our favourite sites. Yet, when it happens, it can be a jarring experience. Some people (I'm not naming names, but there's one example directly above this paragraph) live almost as much online as in their physical spaces. Imagine if you went out for groceries, came back and someone had moved your furniture around and repainted your walls. All Facebook has to do is alter a font and a riot of upset springs forth across the globe. Now, to be completed this summer, the Hotmail of our youth has been re-routed through Outlook. *Outlook.* So efficient. So well spaced. So... default-ly blue. It's the tech equivalent of our childhood bedrooms being gutted and turned into offices.

Yes, I realise there is some silliness (some might argue a lot) to mourning Hotmail at all. Mostly because change is good. But Hotmail is one of the few spaces on the internet that hasn't changed much over the years. It's continued to indulge our nostalgia, looking like the Fisher Price version of email with its bright colours and unapologetic use of bold fonts. For the generation that now actively uses Facebook, Twitter,



“ Hotmail hasn't changed much over the years, looking like a Fisher Price version of email ”

Instagram and whatever-platform-will-make-this-sentence-seem-dated-a-year-from-now, Hotmail was the site of countless formative experiences. It was the passive monitor of our emotional growth and hosted the best and worst of our self-expression.

Before Hotmail became a bit of a joke, a euphemism for the unhip or the underemployed, it was a social safe haven with endless storage space. A high-tech novelty, like a first car.

Towards the end of college, prior to realising I'd have the same Hotmail account for a decade, I printed out a few romantically fraught emails, and still keep them in a box of Important Letters, with the handwritten ones.

I unfold those emails and see two people almost as entranced with the email format as with each other. This was a world before ▶

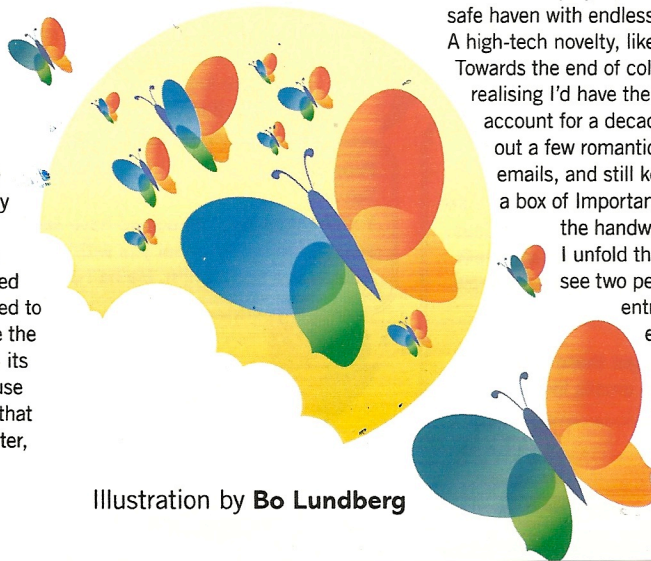


Illustration by **Bo Lundberg**

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emojis. I remember feeling pleased with myself for sending one gentleman a rose by doing this: ----{@

Of course, the printing was unnecessary. The record of our lives still exists, even as Hotmail morphs into Outlook. Just 'sort by date', skip to the last page and you'll find old cover letters for first jobs, rows with flatmates, seemingly innocuous emails from strangers that would come to represent First Contact with a lover or best friend. But the fact remains: it's the end of an era.

From a totally unromantic perspective, Hotmail has been a means of backing up

files, sending precious documents to this tried-and-true place away from the keyboard I'm fond of dousing in coffee or tea. It's also been my 'in case of emergency' account, the address I offer up to more frequently used email accounts should I ever get locked out of them and need to confirm my identity. While I was busy learning to post photos, create mini videos and Tweet, good old Hotmail became the most real space on the internet. That account is a virtual slideshow of who I am, complete with bouquets of ----{@. Thank God I'm the only one with the password.

The secrets of your sent folder

Oh Hotmail, the joy it brought us – gap-year updates, dating stories, all with a hot pink background and a smiley. Here are some gems that were lurking in your archives

Sent: Sat, 7 Mar 1998 15:22
Subject: New place for dinner
From: Susan

To: Lindsay
 ANOTHER long night of celibacy...
 SIGH. Honestly, this is the worst fling ever. But I had this really good Pizza Express the other day. Xxx

From: Lindsay

To: Susan
 How can a fling be so difficult? Did you wear hot pants? I had an AMAZING salad there the other day. It's really good there isn't it. Let's go sometime xxx

Sent: Mon, 05 Jan 1998 12:15
Subject: Hi

What are we going to do when you are here this weekend? Email your ideas in at this address: harrietbaguette@hotmail.com. I sound like a TV show. Bye xxxxx

PS How do you get those cool backgrounds on emails like the stars?

Sent: Fri, 11 Apr 2003 14:18
Subject: I miss you!
From: Julia

To: Amy
 It's so sunny here today. Crazy sunny. Obviously I'm still in my thick 3000 denier winter tights. Nothing else to report. Halls are very quiet. I watered the plant yesterday. A very small ginger man in a stripy top chased me down the street today, yelling, 'I love the way you look so tall!'
 Me: 'Well I am tall.'
 Him: 'Yes, and I had to tell you.'
 Me: 'OK. Well that's great.'
 Him: 'You look tall.'
 Me: 'OK. Bye!'

From: Amy

To: Julia
 You are very tall. You should have said, yes, all the better to eat you with! That would have scared him. Ha ha :-)

The funny email handles that, um, weren't

Hilarious – until you had to contact anyone other than your best friend

“becauseiamworthit”

The L'Oréal ads had just come out and I thought it was really cool. Disclaimer: I was in Year 7.

“blondeontop”

This was my friend's, who had dyed blonde hair. We were only discussing the other day how rude this was – we were 15!

“shagathon”

I didn't think it would ever stop being funny. It did.

“BJHelen” This belonged to a friend who came from Beijing. I didn't have the heart to say anything.

“niknakpaddywack”
 Until I got fed up with people starting their emails with 'Give a dog a bone.' It got old quickly.

“annalpipe”
 This was my friend Anna Louise Pipe's. Only embarrassing when she realised quite what it said.

“windowlickingbabe”
 There wasn't even any alcohol involved in coming up with this.

“Becky-the-drama-queen”
 The worst part was trying to spell it to people: 'Hyphen, hyphen, hyphen...'

“justintrousersnake2”
 Erm, really professional.

“Popstar2Be11”
 Not sure Simon Cowell would agree. ☹

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