

SHARPEN YOUR  
SKILLS!



WORK ON CAMPUS  
as a Peer Educator

@ CAPS in 2007/2008

- ✓ hone skills in demand by employers
- ✓ be part of an energetic and dedicated team of fellow student workers
- ✓ be at the leading edge of the labour market
- ✓ earn while you learn (\$12.00/hr)
- ✓ help your peers

check out the detailed job description  
on the CAPS website  
[www.ualberta.ca/caps](http://www.ualberta.ca/caps)

contact Keith if you have any questions  
[keith.haimila@ualberta.ca](mailto:keith.haimila@ualberta.ca)  
ph: 492-4219

application deadline: March 23, 2007



## STUDENTS' COUNCIL & GFC NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN

Nomination packages are now available for Students' Council and General Faculties Council. Students' Council is the highest governing body of the Students' Union, and General Faculties Council is the highest governing academic body of the University.

### THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS ARE AVAILABLE:

**Agriculture, Forestry,  
and Home Economics**  
2 SU Seats  
2 GFC Seats

**Arts**  
8 SU Seats  
8 GFC Seats

**Business**  
3 SU Seats  
3 GFC Seats

**Education**  
4 SU Seats  
4 GFC Seats

**Engineering**  
5 SU Seats  
4 GFC Seats

**Law**  
1 SU Seat  
1 GFC Seat

**Medicine and Dentistry**  
1 SU Seat  
2 GFC Seats

**Native Studies**  
1 SU Seat  
1 GFC Seat

**Nursing**  
2 SU Seats  
2 GFC Seats

**Open Studies**  
2 SU Seat

**Physical Education  
and Recreation**  
1 SU Seat  
1 GFC Seat

**Pharmacy**  
1 SU Seat  
1 GFC Seat

**Faculte St. Jean**  
1 SU Seat  
1 GFC Seat

**Science**  
9 SU Seats  
8 GFC Seats

To download a Nomination Package or find out more about these positions, please visit the Elections Website or the Chief Returning Officer (Room 3 – 02K SUB)

THE NOMINATION DEADLINE IS TUESDAY, MARCH 13 @ 17:00



# Conservapedia a source you can trust—Conservapedia



SCOTT  
LILWALL

I'm pretty much sick of this whole reality jazz. Every time I open up a newspaper or pass by a full-length mirror, it seems I'm struck by stark, depressing reality. Fortunately, I'm going to change that. I'm going to get my own encyclopedia.

Years ago, this might have been counterintuitive. After all, traditional encyclopedias are little more than big, musty books full of facts—collections of reality, if you will. Therefore, they're not very conducive to escapism.

Of course, the now-infamous Wikipedia (from the Greek *paid-ia*, meaning "education," and the Hawaiian *Wiki*, meaning "edited by 14-year-olds") has changed things.

While it unfortunately still has a tentative grip on reality, Wikipedia had shown me that I have the power to prioritize actuality: for instance, a quick word-count survey shows me that the 2004 box-office bomb *Van Helsing* (3624 words) is over twice as important as, say, penicillin (1695).

However, despite validating my belief that the collected works of David Cronenberg have contributed to human progress far more than the Industrial Revolution, Wikipedia still has one glaring flaw: I might come across opinions on it that don't mesh perfectly with my own.

Enter Conservapedia. Started as a history project by advanced high-school students in New Jersey and

designed to counter the "liberal bias" found on Wikipedia, Conservapedia bills itself as a Christian- and America-friendly alternative.

At the moment, Conservapedia covers approximately 4000 topics. The most popular page, however, is the laundry list of rival Wikipedia's glaring flaws. Unlike its liberal cousin, Conservapedia isn't afraid to use BC and AD to mark dates, instead of the Common Era (CE) and Before Common Era (BCE) favoured by pagans and anthropologists.

**Unlike anarchic  
Wikipedia, which will  
let any yahoo smear its  
pages with innuendo,  
gossip or varied view-  
points, Conservapedia  
is ruled by a set six of  
their own clearly laid  
out Commandments.**

And Conservapedia certainly isn't going to let anyone understate Christianity's massive contribution to the Renaissance (after all, where would Galileo have been without the Catholic Church?).

Unlike anarchic Wikipedia, which will let any yahoo smear its pages with innuendo, gossip or varied viewpoints, Conservapedia is ruled by a set six of their own clearly laid out Commandments. These outline not only the site's single bannable offence ("repeatedly chang[ing] words from American spelling to another spelling"), but it also state the site's most

important rule: "Everything you post must be true and verifiable."

So when Conservapedia says that faith is unique to Christianity, you know it's true. When Conservapedia says the argument for the past existence of unicorns is "unimpeachable" because they're mentioned in the Bible "nine times," you can take that shit to the bank. And when Conservapedia says that, based on surveys on fundamentalist websites and a 15-year-old *Newsweek* poll that found most Americans don't believe in evolution, you know you don't have to verify it anywhere else—because representative samples, just like dinosaur bones, are just manufactured by God to test our faith.

By tossing out nuisances like critical thought and divergent opinions, Conservapedia has liberated my mind. I now know that I can form my own online resource devoid of information that I take issue with. I shall call it ... Scottipedia, and it will neatly organize all of my reality-incompatible knowledge into convenient categories: Wishful Thinking ("that cute brunette in my Psych 495 class finds me terribly dashing"), Grandiose Illusions ("if really pressed, I could probably put one past Miikka Kiprusoff in a shootout") and Paranoid Delusions ("everyone else on the planet can read minds except me, and they know this and deliberately keep it a secret from me"). That way, just like the visitors of Conservapedia, I can keep myself insulated from contrary evidence, scientific study and that damnable, ever-vexing reality.

Of course, some might counter that my approach is the very definition of willful ignorance and lazy thinking. But that's not what Scottipedia says.

## Sexuality at stake in 'secular' Québec



PATRICK  
ROSS

When he called a provincial election for 26 March, 2007, Québec Premier Jean Charest announced the campaign would largely be about unity. However, his principal opponent, Parti Québécois leader André Boisclair, has quickly found out that something he never expected would become an issue as well: his sexuality.

The province of Québec, along with the rest of Canada, was taken by aback when Louis Champagne, a Saguenay-based shock-jock, criticized Boisclair over his homosexuality. Among other things, Champagne questioned whether factory voters would vote for a "tapette"—Québécois vernacular for a homosexual man.

"When you show up with a homosexual, aren't you going to be asked the question, 'Listen, the PQ, isn't that a party of fags?'" Champagne mused. For his own part, Boisclair was outraged. "Homophobia exists," he admitted, "but I feel these words are very insulting for the people of Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean."

Perhaps Boisclair shouldn't be quite so surprised. In November, Boisclair

provoked controversy when he appeared in a *Brokeback Mountain*-esque comedy sketch featuring caricatures of US President George Bush and Prime Minister Stephen Harper. In a scene portraying Bush and Harper in a compromising position, Boisclair declares, "Québec will never get into that." While it certainly must not have been his intention to make an issue of his sexual orientation, it's plausible, and even likely, that this appearance served to render his sexuality an issue.

Though perhaps initially shocking, Champagne's comments merely underscored a key factor in any Québec provincial election: the very deep differences between rural and urban Québec. These differences are crucial when determining whether *la belle province* will be governed by the Liberals or the PQ.

It's apparently become all too easy for some to forget that the Parti Québécois, drawing its ideological (and, possibly, conceptual) lineage from the secretive *Ordre de Jacques Cartier*, finds its roots in *ultramontaine* Québec. While the Quiet Revolution the 1960s is widely considered to have secularized Québec, it's often forgotten that outside of the Montréal-Québec City urban belt, *Duplessisme*—the belief, rooted in *ultramontaine* Catholicism, in domination of the state by the church, and as practiced by Maurice Duplessis—is still alive and well. Champagne's outburst is only the recent demonstration of this.

In the end, Boisclair's Achilles heel is

the paradox that is the Parti Québécois itself. While promoting itself as a left-wing party, the PQ's principal cause has always been Québécois nationalism—this is hardly front-page news. Historically, Québécois nationalism has been closely linked to Roman Catholicism, and the sovereigntist and religious vote in rural Québec have remained largely inseparable. Still, the need to appeal to urban Québécois requires the party to appeal to largely secular voters. The PQ has, in effect, survived on the twin façades of urban secularism and rural religiosity.

Considering that Boisclair's own riding, Pointe-Aux-Tremble, is located well within the province's urban belt, his appeal in rural regions is very much in question. His status as a homosexual party leader only serves to exacerbate his electoral difficulties.

Sadly, none of this is Boisclair's fault. Yet in this provincial election, Boisclair's sexuality has become a defining issue—at least in the region in which his party draws significant portions of its support. Religiously based revulsion over Boisclair's sexuality could possibly even be credited for the increasing support for Mario Dumont's *Action Démocratique du Québec*, which according to polls is on the verge of displacing the Parti Québécois as the official opposition in the province.

Unfortunately, many recent events have led outside observers to question whether or not rural Québec is in fact a rational place at all.