

Hunting day needs to be shot down

I OFTEN FIND MYSELF WANDERING HOME LATE at night multiple times a week. While the eerie quiet of campus after midnight is rather soothing, I've recently discovered a sinister scourge that plagues our fine university.

I counted 17 of them just last Wednesday during my stroll home, and with each one, I quickened my steps. Rabbits: eating our grass, procreating at a rapid pace, loitering in our green spaces, looking cute, and generally causing no problem whatsoever other than being there.

As I finally reached the safety of my home, I slammed and locked the door, poured myself a stiff whiskey to try to ease the anxiety shakes caused by all those bunnies, and was relieved as I glanced down at the newspaper to discover that the Alberta government has named 22 September "Provincial Hunting Day."

The declaration is in response to a significant drop in hunters in our province, a reality that's being caused by "television, computers, and shopping malls," according to a news release from Sustainable Resource Development Minister Ted "The Man" Morton.

"We hope that Provincial Hunting Day will give young Albertans the opportunity to experience the outdoors and build greater respect for wildlife," Morton said.

I'm not necessarily against hunting for any ethical reasons, but defending the activity under the ethos of a "respect for wildlife" is dubious at best. In fact, shooting an animal in the heart and then posing over its lifeless body with a mile-wide grin seems to be about as far away from respecting wildlife as you can get. It's akin to stacking up naked POWs at Abu Ghraib and snapping a few shots for your MySpace page.

The idea of "natural conservation," which has also been long-associated with hunting, is another questionable mantra to apply to the shooting of animals, for similar reasons. Hunting is often lauded as important in controlling animal populations, but that seems like a slight exaggeration. The reason we see more and more wild animals heading into urban areas is because humans are constantly encroaching on their habitats. Leaving enough space to sustain animal populations seems more fitting than expediting nature's course with bullets.

Lastly, there are no legitimate sporting roots for hunting. A sport is defined as "an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment." I'll give hunting the physical exertion and skill part—and even the entertainment facet if you enjoy seeing things die—but moose won't return a volley of shots, deer can't draw a bowstring, and bears (though godless killing machines) don't stand much chance against a .300-caliber rifle with a scope.

Hunting rose out of necessity for food. When humans were able to domesticate animals, the original need for hunting died out; we just found it rather enjoyable to continue to taking the lives of animals, as it was considered barbaric to take the lives of one another outside of the realm of war.

Instead, with the numbers of hunters beginning to dwindle, maybe it's time to let the activity die a slow agonizing death—like an elk shot in its hind quarters. There's a reason young people are turning to television, computers, and malls rather than hunting: most people don't actually find killing things an enjoyable pastime—at least, not in real life.

An awareness campaign on how great it is to kill things is a waste of taxpayers' money. You're not going to convince what's now a more socially aware and urban-based class of young people that hunting is an essential part of life. Perhaps a more realistic approach to pro-hunting campaigns needs to be taken: ads filled with bleeding animals, Dick Cheney shooting old men in the face, and images of animals being skinned for superfluous products and trophies will probably move just as many extra hunting licenses as Provincial Hunting Day will.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go shoot some rabbits for the hell of it.

RYAN HEISE
Deputy News Editor



CONAL PIERSE

LETTERS

Crude comics a let-down

As a long time reader of your publication, it's with a heavy heart that I write this letter regarding the *Gateway's* comics section (re: "Mich Mich," 13 September). As a frequent reader, I'm not one to complain about artwork or levels of humour, as I can appreciate that a student newspaper is where fledgling comic artists cut their teeth.

But seriously, *Gateway*: a poop joke? The *Mich Mich* that ran in the 13 September issue made me question some of your editorial decision making. The *Gateway* should be demanding nothing short of the best from their contributors, not trotting out the same old, tired tripe from Shaun Lyons week after week.

Yes, shit is brown and would stain a toilet seat. Har, har, har. Is this really the type of humour you're striving towards?

I understand that you may not have an excess of artists willing to draw a weekly strip, but that shouldn't be the justification for running a piece of seriously sub-par work. I would much rather see a new comic struggle than watch a strip like *Mich Mich* fail to strive for anything past the lowest common denominator.

I'm by no means suggesting you censor your contributors *Gateway*, just please exercise a little quality control.

GORD SUMMER
Science IV

Gateway editorial fails to see both sides of the issue

I'm shocked at the complete lack of objectivity in Conal Pierse's editorial about Elections Canada's decision to allow veiled women to cover their faces when presenting photo ID at the polling station (re: "Harper's actions just veiled racism," 13 September).

Mr Pierse fails to point out that Muslim women who wear veils didn't even want it in the first place. Groups representing Muslim women have said that they have no problem showing their faces for identification purposes.

Many Muslim women have expressed their frustration that they weren't consulted on this issue and that this decision was made by people who apparently know little about the veil.

In addition, Mr Pierse fails to indicate that the leaders of all the major federal parties—including Stéphane Dion and Jack Layton—have publicly disagreed with Elections Canada by stating that they believe that Muslim women should show their faces when voting.

Instead, Mr Pierse has singled out the Prime Minister in order to trot out the old, worn-out attack that the Conservatives are "scary." I think most people see through these pathetic attempts at painting the Conservatives as something they're not and are pretty tired of this fear-mongering.

This slanted piece of work isn't what I would expect from a newspaper like the *Gateway* that aspires to be credible. You would do better to provide more balanced

editorials, rather than malicious ones like Mr Pierse's.

RENZE NAUTA
Economics V

Globe cooling in places

While much has been made in the media about the extent of the summer melting in the Arctic, very little has been made of the record amount of sea ice forming in the Antarctic this year. Indeed, this is probably the first you've heard of this.

Very quietly, the ice extent in the Southern Hemisphere (Antarctica) has reached its highest level since records began in 1979. According to NASA GISS data, the Antarctic has cooled by 1F since 1957. This highlights an interesting dichotomy in the way global warming-related topics are reported by the media, and presented by the "consensus."

Take for example, the Larsen Ice Sheet breakup in 2002, and the winter of 2004. The Larsen Ice sheet breaking up in 2002 received a lot of media attention (hint: it was in *An Inconvenient Truth*). What wasn't reported is that the breakup wasn't caused by global warming—it was caused by a spike in solar activity.

Indeed, two years after the solar peak subsided, the winter of 2004 was the coldest in the entire 50-year record of South Pole temperatures. That's right, *coldest*.

And since 2002, the Larsen Ice sheet has refrozen and even grown. This past year has seen cold and snow records set in Australia, South America, and Africa—facts that

received very little play in the news.

Now, before I get a bunch of angry replies calling me a global warming denier, let me say that I *do* believe in climate change. The planet's climate is a system of immensity and complexity beyond our easy understanding, but to suppose that it's static is to ignore all evidence.

What I do question, however, is how the proponents of man-made global warming (and the skeptics to a lesser extent) selectively pick only certain evidence, ignore whole swathes of conflicting data, crush dissent, claim consensus, and don't even enter into a real debate. If the science is clear, try and explain away the Antarctic data.

ALEX GORDON
Materials Engineering IV

Girls not angry for once

Where the hell are all the feminists? There are two things I've seen in a couple weeks that've made me wonder why I don't hear screaming feminists anymore.

First, Britney performed at the VMAs. Sure, her performance may have sucked ass, but that's not what got the media's attention. Apparently, she's fat and embarrassingly out of shape. If they think Britney is fat, I'd hate to see what they call "regular" women. No wonder she went crazy.

Secondly, every day I take the LRT, I see degrading ads for Slice TV. Particularly, one showing the woman saying, "If I wanted to be smarter, I'd watch a book." What the hell?

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