

In defense of Galpagos

Good day, I am writing this in response to what acting Editor-in-Chief, Miss Cindy Brown had to say in her editorial in *The Brunswickan* on February 16th of this year.

I must state first that I am an avid animal lover (although I do not presently belong to any organization). However, I also see myself as a humanist too - compassionate and understanding to those not as fortunate as many of us are in this day and age. Nevertheless, I found it very disturbing to read to Miss Brown's opinion on a person's efforts on behalf of the animals in the Galapagos Islands.

Again, I wish to make point that while Miss Brown offered valid arguments towards annunciation of human suffering, it is not my contention that one should be held over the other. Rather, I would like to point out a few things I believe the acting Editor-in-chief may have overlooked in her discussion.

The implementation of structured avenues designed to protect wildlife seems only to occur so when a particular point becomes breached. In other words, we (and I use this term only in reference to animal lovers, because there are many on the front lines of animal protection who would give more valued insight) see public interest only in those animals who become endangered - and by then it's often too late. As such, the only ounce of prevention or lobbying comes from the very ones you condemned misguidedly "noble."

I am committed to concerns over the ironic and utterly ignorant actions of those (this includes corporations, government, etc.) who blunder away at our ecosystem until weak links are all that remain. I say ironic because this same carelessness of thought for what has and always will be 'our' food chain - in which we are a part, yet somehow believe we are above - will cycle in time to where what we see now as human suffering will be small in comparison.

The transition between the links of one species to the next is a frail and often ignored aspect of life as we know it. The warming climate has in the past decade added to the growing list of concerns for wildlife activists. Migration patterns are being altered, waters are becoming too warm for certain fish species, and the unfolding drama is tragic.

Government and corporations do not put value on animal life. Human beings far too often view wildlife as a nuisance and an obstacle in the path of the bottom line. Greed sets the trend - man would rather dominate or obliterate rather than co-exist with his 'natural' surroundings. You believe there are more pressing issues - I doubt that.

There are only two true beings in life: children and animals. Man manipulates and shames, all for the sake of himself. Animals may be brutal - but they're honest. They have a natural order and if given natural surroundings, respect that order. It has been we as humans who have poisoned the order of life - our quest to dominate and succeed forsaking all others has caused the majority to lose their insight and compassion. We have lost our respect, our "nobility."

It is my opinion that you, Miss Brown, answered my own question as to why people don't see animals and their growing extinction in whole as a concern. You, in fact, stated "Perhaps we're isolationists and are not concerned with anyone except those who are exactly like us."

In summation, I would like to reiterate my earlier point that I do not hold animal suffering over those poor people in the world today in the unfortunate positions they are. It is persons like them who highlight the human spirit and kindle emotions of valour and self-perception. However, resiliency is a general human characteristic, and we are by nature social beings bonded through hard times and evident in perseverance. But when an animal species falls to under 200 in the entire world - bonding is impossible and resiliency is futile.

It is up to the people who care to increase sizes of lobby groups, because only then - as with any lobbyist organization working to influence policy and agenda - will they begin to politically sway a government alienated from what amounts to short-term needs and long-term consequences to nature as a whole.

We may very well be able to 'live' (and I stress live only in terms of survival) in a world without the beautiful creatures of nature...although I hesitate to think about how nature can continue to exist as a status quo without its inhabitants to help shape it. Consequently, I will regret the day if we reach a time when our children will not be able to experience life in the purest sense...the way God and nature intended it.

*Sincerely,
Richard Martin

(Note to the Editor: Miss Brown, it is my wish to express to you that this piece in no way was meant as personal attack against you. The mere fact that you raise the issue of human suffering validates any question as to your compassion. The world needs more people like you who voice their concerns.)

More on gender

Letter to the Editor:

I could not resist the urge to respond to Cindy Brown's editorial in which she discussed her newfound insight into the discrimination females face in Canada. I would suggest to anyone curious about such issues to take Sociology of Gender Relations, a wonderful course which will show you that feminism is unsensational common sense.

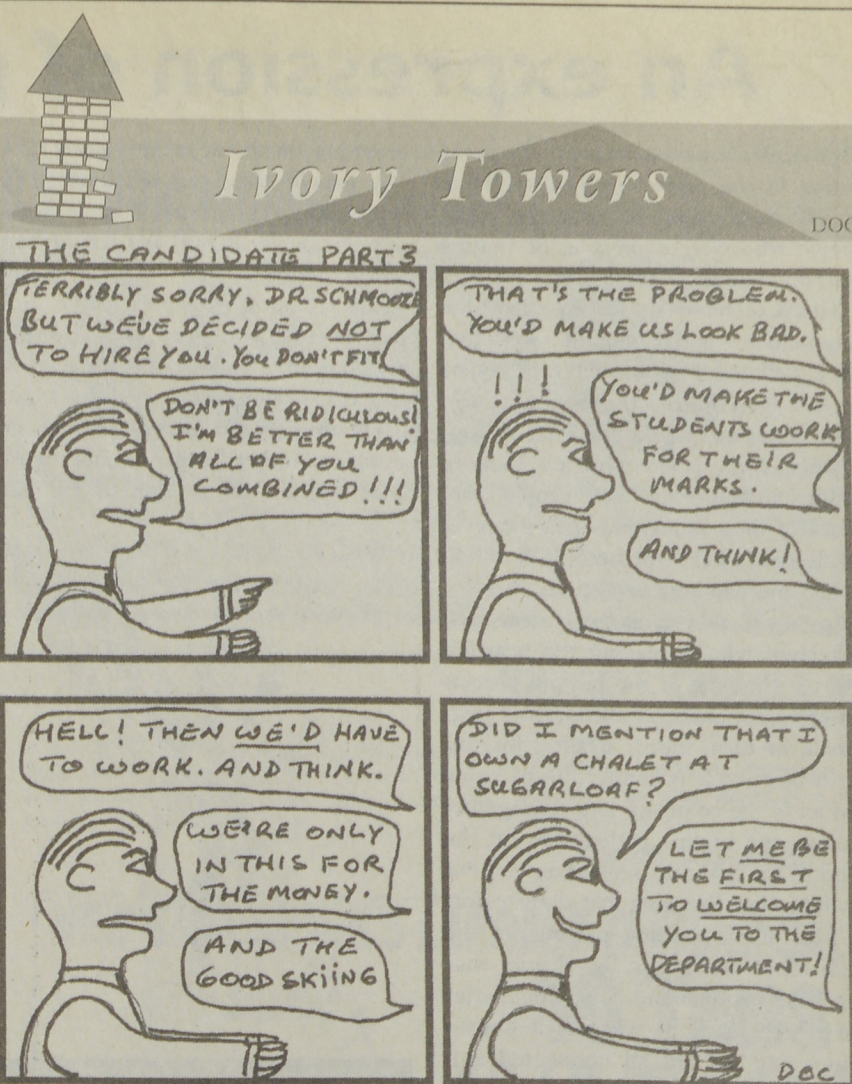
As a woman who does not feel the need to insist she is not a feminist, I feel the need to defend myself and my kind. I have never burned my bra, however, if I had, why does that make me a freak?

I believe in the equality of women, not the superiority of women. There is a difference between feminism and sexism: feminist women (and men, because they do exist), believe all humans benefit when we accept and respect one another, without belittling any sex, race, etc. Sexist women believe one gender is better than, more important than, or more deserving than, the other. Such a simple difference so many refuse to understand.

A great myth of contemporary Canada is gender equality. Yes, women are equal, but no, they are not treated equally. I could go on forever detailing examples, but I'll make my point short and sweet: A study gave the same essay to two different groups. Group A was given "Jane McDonald's" essay, Group B "John McDonald's." Repetitions of this study consistently find Group B rates the essay better than Group A does.

Finally, I would like to encourage people to examine their beliefs with the thought that reality is a social construction in their mind. Your culture tells you what is true - but is it necessarily so? Take Psychology of Women, and you will realize the 'differences' between the genders, even in areas we insist they exist (like sex drive), are actually quite negligible and highly influenced by our culture, rather than our genes.

* Carrie E. Woodworth



We have tried to make MacLaggan Hall a scent-free building as we have students, staff and faculty who are allergic to the perfumes used in shampoos, hand creams, hairsprays and colognes. One student in class today was so congested she had to sit by an open window - hardly ideal in February.

Given this is not rare environmental health problem, I asked the class for strategies to address the issue at UNB. The following are their suggestions:

1. Make all UNB buildings scent-free.
 2. Ask all professors to include on their course syllabus the regulation re: using scent-free products when coming to class/lab.
 3. Ask *The Brunswickan* to do an article about this health hazard.
 4. Label buildings so guests to the facilities will be aware of the regulation.
- The students and I would appreciate your help in moving this health issue forward.

Cheers

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UNB Faculty of Nursing
Phone 453-7621

Cheryl Gibson RN PhD
Professor and Dean
UNB Faculty of Nursing
Phone 458-7623

THURSDAY SERVICES IN LENT IN EDWIN JACOB CHAPEL

Again this year, the people who gather in our beautiful UNB chapel for Holy Communion each Thursday at 12:30 PM invite you to join us for special services to mark the holy season of Lent. All services will end before 1 PM to allow as many university members as possible to attend.

Special addresses will again mark these services. This year, we are delighted to welcome four guest speakers, who will deliver homilies on the "comfortable words" from scripture which are part of the service of Holy Communion each week.

The schedule is as follows:

March 1 - Imposition of Ashes - homilist The Rev. Wilfred Langmaid, Anglican Chaplain

March 15 - guest homilist The Rt. Rev. William Hockin, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Fredericton

March 22 - guest homilist The Rev. Joanne Barr, our new part-time Protestant Ecumenical Chaplain

March 29 - guest homilist The Very Rev. Keith Joyce, Dean of the Anglican Diocese of Fredericton

April 5 - guest homilist The Rev. Ross Hebb, Rector of the Anglican Parish of St. Peter's, Springhill

April 12 - Maundy Thursday observances - homilist The Rev. Wilfred Langmaid, Anglican Chaplain

Feel free to contact me if you want any more details, and be assured of my prayers as your term gets busier. My ministry here is full-time, and I am in the campus ministry office in Room 10 of the Alumni memorial building every weekday.

In Christ's Love, By God's Grace,

Wilfred+ (The Rev.) Wilfred Langmaid, UNB / STU Anglican Chaplain
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http://www.unb.ca/UNB/units/Student_Services/ministry.html

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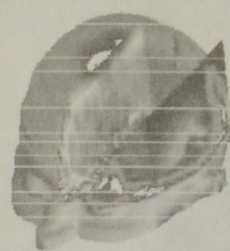
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