

# Blood and Thunder

## Half Truths?

Dear Mr. Editor

My first reaction when I thought of writing this letter was that the general students reaction would be: "It's just another tree chopper shooting his mouth off." However, I soon realized that certain points of Mr. Griffith's article need to be addressed.

I must praise Mr. Griffith's article. Rarely do I see such a biased and poorly researched piece of work. When the author uses such words as "...wondering if some axe wielding psychotic is at large" and titles his work "Blood Sport" in bright red letters, to me it seems that he is trying to incite horror within us all. And the picture of the dead deer on the tailgate of a truck, magnificent. Perhaps you should have added a picture of the "blood thirsty drunken loots" in their "funny little fluorescent touques." Really Mr. Griffiths, you should have tried to present your arguments in a more mature and constructive manner.

A responsible reporter would have asked Mr. Cummings to elaborate on the so called "criminal studies" that have linked violent criminal offenders to animal abusers. This statement reminds me of former U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese's statement that pornography leads to sexual abuse. I mean not to offend anybody on the subject of sexual abuse, which I find most disgusting, but to show that both these statements are based on poorly researched studies. To present the unfounded as fact is most serious indeed.

Mr. Cummings goes on to state that we probably need no population control of deer in the province. However, he fails to state that without population control (ie. hunting) the deer population will increase drastically and then drop dramatically as all available food is consumed by the large herd. This drop in population would not be the humane solution Mr. Cummings' wants because all these deer would starve to death, certainly an inhumane way to die.

This population increase and decrease is based on scientific fact Mr. Bunning. But you're a professor of Biology, so you obviously know this basic ecological fact.

As far as the situation of seal culling, it is not the seals effects on the quantity of the cod stocks, but the quality. The seal's increase in population has meant that more ringworm has been ingested by the cod stocks through the seal's feces. This has caused the ringworm to be present in such amounts in the cod flesh that the quality of the cod has decreased noticeably. So not only have we killed a million dollar industry of seal harvesting in an already economically depressed region of Canada, we have also indirectly affected an important Maritime industry.

So Mr. Cummings and Mr Griffiths have failed to present an accurate argument. Through the withholding of facts and the false assumptions presented in the article, these gentlemen have not spoken the truth. They lead us to believe that their answers are factual and accurate. I, however, believe that they are trying to raise support for their cause through half truths. Shame on you both. And I pose this question to everybody. Why have these gentlemen lied to us?

Doug Salt  
For. IV

## Use, But Never Abuse

Dear Editor:

I must commend Steve Griffiths for the thought-provoking feature article "Killing for Fun" (Jan. 20). He reminded us that in 1988 dominion over wildlife was again exercised in large part by killing it, mostly in the name of sport.

Dr. Bruce Cummings, interviewed in the article and alarmed by the wanton slaughter of animals, has tried to draw attention to the blatant abuse of animal rights that takes place every fall, especially in New Brunswick. His argument for increased legislation to protect animals is based on his sensitivity, love and respect for nature, all heightened no doubt by his scholarly research in biology.

That many do not share his sensitivity and concern is not surprising. After all, the common belief that we are to dominate the earth, even if exercised in terms of a frontier mentality, implies that the fate of animals lies in the hands of man, to do with as he pleases. Dr. Cummings suggests that perhaps Judeo-Christianity bears some responsibility in this matter. Paraphrasing Scriptures, he states that "God gave man domination over all other animals", and this "Judeo-Christian mentality has (had) a profound influence here".

On this point, he is quite correct. It is merely part and parcel of the many things the Judeo-Christian "mentality" had influenced (even blessed) over time, including the Crusades, slavery, suppression of women, etc. That does not mean, however, that the Judeo-Christian faith or Scriptures advocate such. There is an important distinction to be made here. Dr. Cummings, with all of his sensitivities, is somewhat insensitive at this point. The Scriptures very clearly condemn wanton destruction and waste, whether that be of humans, animals or the environment. Any who argue to the contrary really have not read them.

When God gave man dominion, a specific responsibility was attached. The word "dominion", in the Genesis story, does not imply that we may do "whatever we damn well please". "To dominate" is to be understood, rather, in terms of "stewardship", and people are to be stewards or caretakers of this earth and all that is in and around it. We are to take care of what we have, that is part of imaging God. When we neglect this responsibility we serve only our own greed, lust for power and evil purposes, that constitutes something less than human. For that reason, we may use, but never abuse, waste, destroy, or pollute.

Dr. Cummings' case would be strengthened if he made a distinction between what the Judeo-Christian faith itself advocates and what many in its name (falsely) argue. It would also further increase his sensitivity, love and respect for nature. But mostly, it would indicate to him that his position is not merely a personal opinion.

John Valk  
UNB Campus Ministry

## Animal Suffering

This is in response to Steve Griffiths article "Blood Sport, Killing for Fun". I have read some of Bruce

Cummings' articles before, and I must say that I disagree with most of what he says. The only aspect that I do agree with, as would most other ethical hunters, is with regard to animal suffering. All hunters hope for a quick and humane death for the animal they pursue, thus causing as little suffering as possible. This is much less cruel than mother nature.

An article in the March 1989 edition of Deer and Deer Hunting entitled "Woodland Tragedies" by Rob Wegner gives a very good insight into the tragedies faced by deer in their everyday lives. This includes such things as being speared with sticks, branches and trees and later dying from infection, to being killed by bobcats, coyotes, disease or free roaming dogs or by getting various body parts stuck in trees and crevices etc, thus suffering a slow agonizing death. Yes, this is what really happens in the wild, most deer die a tragic death. Very few deer actually die of old age. Mother nature is cruel, not kind.

Man on the other hand, also belongs in Mother nature's plan. We have the ability to maintain deer numbers while at the same time making excellent use of a renewable resource and alleviating much suffering due to tragic deaths associated with an over population situation.

These are the facts. Deer hunting and hunters cannot be explained with words such as "blood-lusting maniacs", "psychopaths", "Extermination of Jews", "Nazi doctors practicing Euthanasia", or "archaic barbaric practice". I enjoy the woods, that is why I am presently enrolled in

my fourth year of forestry here at U.N.B. I have taken wildlife and wildlife management courses and all of them have stressed the need of hunting to keep populations healthy and in balance.

I can understand Dr. Bruce Cummings concern for animal suffering, but being a biology professor he must also understand basic population dynamics and the implications of an over-population. From the article in the Brunswickan last week, I feel that he has either forgotten these or maybe he never did understand them.

The hunters of this country have helped all species by way of better management and habitat improvements through such organizations as Ducks Unlimited. Hunters pay for conservation through license sales and donations to the many wildlife funds. May I ask Dr. Bruce Cummings where his money goes - towards his own courses or towards actual wildlife conservation.

Scott Wamica  
Forestry IV

## Campus Entertainment

As a student at UNB for the past five years, I have noticed some definite changes around the university. When I first started here in 1984-85 there was rarely a live entertainment event to be seen. The last year when Jane Arnold became Student Union President, one of her election promises was to bring back live entertainment, and that she did. UNB Campus Entertainment was born. Last year the students of this campus received a gift, with that committee which they were to ungrateful to realize.

This feeling has shone through again this year. With such poor

attendance at events that Campus Entertainment has been shut down. This was the only possible alternative because the students were unwilling to support this organization. And the only aspect of Campus Entertainment they were willing to support was the movie series which was free. Maybe FREE is the key word, I know I would be influenced by that word also. But, when Campus Entertainment brings in such top notch entertainment, and guest lectures and the turnout is so poor, it makes it very hard to explain to the in-coming lectures and bands why the students are so unwilling to support them.

This unwillingness to support these in-coming acts reflects badly upon our, and I do mean OUR university community. UNB once had a good reputation for supporting live events and guest lectures, and now we don't. Campus Entertainment was created to enrich the lives of university students socially to give them something to do on our campus, but that is something that won't have to be worried about again this year; too bad!

You as the reader may feel I'm unqualified to speak as I am doing. Not so, for the past two years I have been involved with Campus Entertainment, behind the scenes, and up front. Plus I have been involved in four Winter Carnivals; and the turn outs that have been present this year are awful, and I feel ashamed at times to admit I am part of this university community; but enough of that.

Let's end on a lighter note of success that have happened this year - Varsity Mania, Movie Series, FM Rugby Pub, and finally last Friday's Winter Carnival Pub. I'd personally like to thank everyone who came, and to the rest of you; you missed one hell of a party-to bad it was the last!

Jackie Veinott

UNB  
& STU  
Creative  
Arts  
PRESENTS  
UNB Resident Musicians  
playing Bloch, Kodaly, and Mendelssohn

Sunday January 29, 1989  
Memorial Hall UNB - 8:00 pm  
Tickets may be purchased at: UNB Art Center

Adults \$6.00  
Students \$2.00  
Phone 453-4623

## Ballet Jazz De Montreal

Friday February 3, 1989  
The Playhouse - 8:00 pm  
Tickets may be purchased at: The Playhouse  
UNB Art Center

Adults \$20.00  
Seniors \$16.00  
Students \$5.00