

Coast to Coast

Beer can yokes can choke sea creatures

by Maureen T. Evans

GUELPH (ISIS)— Would you deliberately dump 8,000 pounds of latex into the ocean? How about going out and strangling seals and birds to death in a painfully slow manner? Distasteful as this sounds, this is exactly what is happening when a million balloons are released in a seemingly innocent celebration and when the plastic yokes that hold your six-pack together are being thrown into the ocean.

Zoe Lucas gave a disturbing address to members of the University of Guelph community recently in the Ontario Veterinary College about plastic pollution in the marine environment. Lucas spends more than half the year on Sable Island, a small strip of land with limited access off the coast of Nova Scotia.

Citing the plastic yokes and the discarded rope and netting used by fishermen, Lucas outlined the catastrophic effects that occur when such items are thoughtlessly thrown into the sea. It is common for her to see diving birds lying dead on the beach, having strangled themselves when they became entangled in the yokes. Seals that swim into knotted rope are usually still alive but in great pain.

Illustrated by a compelling and graphic slide show, Lucas's talk focused in consistently on the damage done to the seal population, which she is able to view first hand as the seals use the island for their breeding ground.

Seals have the rope or netting snarled around their necks which binds tightly. They die because of the infection caused by the deep wounds inflicted by the rope, of starvation or of strangulation.

Lucas also mentioned leather-back turtles, who survive primarily on a diet of jelly fish, stating that they mistake huge clumps of plastic for the jellyfish which they consume and subsequently die of, as they cannot eject the plastic once it is digested.

Lucas stated that 63.8 percent of the litter she collected on the

island was plastic. She attributes a large problem of marine pollution to the governments of various countries. In fact she says, "International Law essentially allows for dumping of garbage outside a country's 12 mile limit." Nonbiodegradable plastic was also a concern to her as were the activities of the off-shore industries which are contributing greatly to the pollution in the ocean.

Saying that, "the situation on Canadian coasts is not as bad as other," Lucas imparts, "if we act now we can nip it in the bud."

"Barbarians" burn election

by Maureen T. Evans and Gregory C. Smith

Guelph (ISIS)— "The media is doing to politics what the barbarians did to Rome," said noted Canadian journalist Robert Fulford.

Speaking at the University of Guelph recently, Fulford discussed the relationship between the media and politics, and what he referred to as the "trivialization of politics".

"Politics has descended to meanness, jingoism, and literal flag-waving," he said. "I have watched this trivialization with awe, discomfort, foreboding, and shame."

Current journalistic standards are helping to make politics more like entertainment, claimed Fulford.

"TV has turned politics into a likeability contest. Personality has been the focus," he said, claiming that the issues in the recent elections were degraded to "photo opportunities and sound bites to be repeated and remembered."

"Electoral politics in all democratic countries has taken its shape from TV and the trivialization that goes with it," Fulford said. Politicians have been conditioned by the media to act in thirty second snippets in order to

U of T cuts sports short

by Marco Cavazzoni

Toronto (ISIS)—Swimming, field hockey, and women's basketball teams at the University of Toronto may be banned from provincial competition as early as next year, due to a recent Ontario University Athletic Association decision.

A motion passed in November

accommodate the modern journalist's need for instant, news-worthy items.

Public opinion polls offer the public one way to manipulate rather than be manipulated, he continued, suggesting that people surveyed may 'kid' about their party preference and personal opinion.

The one thing that should be remembered during an election campaign, said Fulford, is that "whatever candidates promise to do before they are elected, they will do the opposite once in office."

Fulford offered some advice to campus newspapers. He felt that they should be comprehensible and accessible to a variety of readers. He also stressed the need for student-run papers to provide room for experimentation.

would prevent schools belonging to the OUAA from receiving High Performance Initiative (HPI) grants from the Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union. Toronto, which is a UOAA member, currently receives HPI funding for its field hockey, swimming, and women's basketball teams.

This ruling will eliminate these programs from province-wide competition. The remainder of the athletic program might also be banned, depending on the interpretation of the decision.

The ruling was intended to benefit universities with smaller athletic programs, said Dave Copp, athletic director and the University of Guelph.

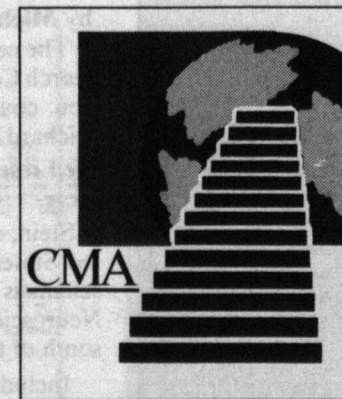
Grants often go to schools with larger programs, he explained, so the decision was an attempt by the OUAA to "implement a leveled playing field for everyone and maintain control over our league."

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