

Are furs really worth the price?

November. Time to make up mailing lists. Time to knit a sweater. Time to scrutinize the Sears Christmas catalogue. Time to count your savings — can you really afford to buy her that fur coat this year?

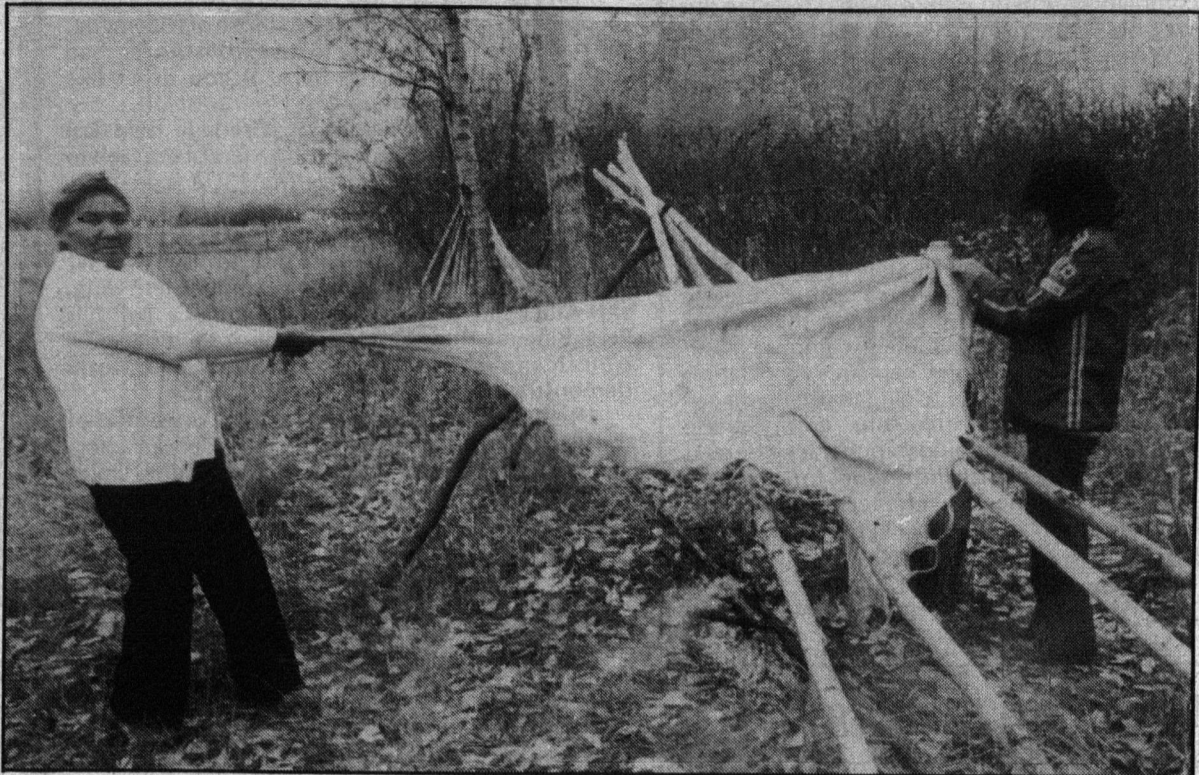
Furs have always been a Christmas favourite, but during the past several years, we've been hearing of the cruelty innocent animals suffer on the way to becoming a coat or a stole. Conservationists would have us believe that hunters are blood-hungry, gun-happy egotists and that fur dealers are unscrupulous capitalists willing to exploit cute little critters for big money. Hunters, on the other hand, believe they are doing conservationists a favour by restricting the growth of certain animal populations, and

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that a few "slop" hunters are responsible for the monstrosities conservationists charge they practice. Fur dealers stress that many fur-bearing species are farmed, not wild, and, that they are fulfilling someone's Suburban Dream.

So what can the average guy make of this pile of accusations and boasts?

A recent study by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service show that generally, the public is confused. From a regionally representative sample of 3000, 80 per cent of Americans opposed trophy hunting, 60 per cent opposed sport and recreational hunting, although 64 per cent of those surveyed tolerated sport hunting if the whole carcass was used.



Native women in Northern Alberta stretching moose hide in preparation for making moccasins and mukluks.

Trophy hunters are, of course, that group of conceited ladder-climbers whose only goals in life are to be the best, have the most, and worship the biggest. For them, anything that moves in the wild is fair game (just ask Don Getty).

In Alberta, there are 8000 registered hunters. 5000 are hobby hunters, who are allowed to hunt on private property as long as the owner permits them to. The rest have permits to hunt wildlife on their own property.

Fred Neuman of Alberta Fish and Wildlife estimates that only 5 to 10 per cent of all hunters actually live off the animals that they hunt. This includes treaty Indians, who are permitted to hunt virtually anything anytime on their own reserves, on crown land, or on private land (again with

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the permission of the property owner). The only conditions that apply are that hunting must not be done in national parks and should not exceed subsistence level: carcasses and parts of carcasses cannot be sold. Fred Kreiser, also of Fish and Wildlife, says that although nearly impossible to confirm, he doesn't believe that fur trafficking is a problem among Indians because "preparing furs for market is too much work." Hunting may also be the sole source of income for families in remote areas of the province.

Many people will tolerate hunting if the government supervises it as part of a plan to control certain animal populations. For example, bighorn sheep in parts of the States have been protected for the past 100 years, but high



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Wednesday 30th of November
7:00 PM (19:00)
Education North 2-125

**WRITING COMPETENCE
TEST DATES**

Thursday, November 24 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday, November 26 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Tuesday, November 29 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

- All first-year students without transfer credit who have not taken the test **must** write on one of these dates. **No other testing dates will be available.**
- To sign up for a test, contact TESTING AND REMEDIATION, 441 ATHABASCA HALL.

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