

# Entertainment Outlook

## Sorting out the happiness factor

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It's nice to live in a happy country. That's why it was so heartening to hear about a just-released survey which shows that 42 per cent of Canadians con-

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**Weir's View**  
 By Ian Weir  
 Thomson News Service

sider themselves to be very happy. Granted, this also means that 58 per cent of Canadians range from moderately happy to miserable. Still, this is only to be expected, considering the large segments of Canadian society which are automatically disqualified from happiness — like Toronto Maple Leafs' fans, Tory backbenchers and employees of the CBC.

Toss in the four remaining John Turner loyalists, and this adds up to an awful lot of people on whom the sun has not shone for years.

But the most intriguing part of the survey was its startling revelation that the highest concentration of Canadian misery is in — of all places — Montreal.

Apparently, Montrealers smoke more than other Canadians, have fewer friends and are generally less happy. In fact, the happiness ratio is a full five per cent lower than the national average — only 37 per cent of Montrealers consider themselves very happy.

Now, frankly, I'm a little suspicious of any study which links smoking and having few friends to general unhappiness. There are, after all, at least a few happy smokers — and a much larger number of people who don't like any of their friends.

Still, statistics are statistics. Which raises the question: why on earth are Montrealers the unhappiest Canadians?

After all, Montreal — as a city — has all kinds of things going for it. It's vibrant, it's cosmopolitan, and it isn't Toronto.

Even as a unilingual anglophone, I've found it very easy to be happy when I visit Montreal. Just commit to memory the two absolutely indispensable French phrases — "un biere, s'il vous plait," and "une autre, s'il vous plait" — and you're off to the races.

Evidently, there's some sort of deep-rooted sociological factor at work. It's possible, perhaps, that Montrealers' capacity for happiness has been spoiled by too much success — the annual assumption, for instance, that the Canadians will win yet another Stanley Cup.

Perhaps fans of the Leafs and Canucks are actually happier in the long run because they have learned to find joy in much smaller triumphs — like, say, the news that the team bus has made it all the way to the rink without running into a telephone pole.

Even so, there are many other Canadian cities which seem much more

naturally suited to human misery than Montreal.

For starters, there's Ottawa, which offers a monumental impediment to happiness. If you live in Ottawa, you are either someone who is employed by the federal government, or someone who has just been laid off by the federal government — which is only marginally better.

I lived in Ottawa for almost a year. Inhabitants of normal cities cheer themselves up by promising themselves a trip to Hawaii, or the Bahamas. Ottawans dream of spending Sunday evening in Hull. I'm not sure what else needs to be said.

Calgary is another city that lends itself quite well to human misery, being (as it is) a kind of unemployed version of Houston. And we haven't even touched on Gander, Whitehorse and Prince George.

Then, there are all the cities that offer happiness to some, but not to others.

Cities like Winnipeg, for instance, are perfect for people who have a high threshold for certain climatic conditions — i.e., people who think Scott was a sissy for taking a sleeping bag to the South Pole. For others, true happiness in Winnipeg is possible only during the brief lull between the thawing of the last snows and the onset of the first frost. Or, to be precise, on July 12.

Or take Toronto. Toronto is designed for people who can afford \$2,000-a-month apartments and who thrive on concrete. In other words, you can be quite happy in Toronto if your father owns a distillery, and if your idea of communing with nature is standing on the shores of Lake Ontario counting dead fish.

And yet it turns out that Montreal is the epicentre of Canadian unhappiness. Gosh. Being unhappy in a great place like Montreal seems... well, it seems almost wicked, somehow.

And we all know what happens to wicked people, don't we?

Yes. God sends them to Sudbury.

## Alumni barbecue

Sheridan College Alumni Office (Oakville Campus) is hosting the College's second annual alumni barbecue on Tuesday, June 21, 1988.

The barbecue will be held in the lower patio level of the Oakville Campus cafeteria, from 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Entertainment includes comic juggler Johnny Toronto. Friends and spouses of alumni are welcome to attend.

Call 845-9430, ext. 169 or 849-2824 by Monday, June 14, 1988 for reservations.

**Face in the Crowd**

Take a close look, you may be a winner. If the face indicated by the arrow is yours, you're the lucky winner of a pair of Georgetown Cinemas courtesy passes. Call us at 877-2201 or 877-8822 or drop in at The Herald, 45 Guelph St., Georgetown, Ont. to claim your prize. If you're not a winner this week, keep on looking. Next week it may be your turn.

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