

OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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You've just gotta like a greenhouse

The snow is melting, the snow is melting! Owing something to the Wicked Witch of the West's swansong, something to a modern and more upbeat version of Chicken Little, and nothing to ski resort operators, this cry has been taken up by more and more happy throngs.

It echoes across prairie, rattles among high rise office towers and can be heard over the incessant whine of television. Melting snow, running in rivulets to creeks and thence, to rivers, lakes and eventually the sea is a pleasant way to celebrate the renewal of the summer season.

Of course all this water will only be dumped on us again in eight months as we again nestle down for a our four months of hell 1992-93.

We can't complain about this past winter. It has been mild with few days of battling the elements, due, most probably to the greenhouse effect where pollution traps heat in the upper atmosphere warming the whole planet.

Canadians are usually the first to beat the environmental drum to warn of lake pollution, acid rain, gum wrappers on the highways, and stuff like that. However, Canadians are the big winners in this global warming thing.

We don't need all the arable land we've got, and increased temperatures are likely to only increase the amount of Canadian farmland and/or raise its production. In addition we get milder winters which means fewer automobile accidents, more leisure time because we're not cooped up at home, more hours worked and educated and better roads because salt isn't needed as much to keep them clear.

I'm sure there are thousands of other spin off effects from a couple of extra degrees. I suspect that even the constantly vigilant ecological community can see these basic benefits. Why else would they be so silent about the threat of global warming?

The artistic community often jumps on these bandwagons. It has been predicted that a few degree jump in average temperature would melt significant portions of the polar ice caps, raising the level of the oceans.

Cities on those oceans could be threatened. Cities like, say, the mecca of all artists, New York, NYC is too self-absorbed to notice and nobody seems very interested in telling them. Strange to see New York threatened to be washed beneath the waves like a modern day Atlantis and nobody really complaining too much?

In fact, the politicians are silent on the issue as well. Perhaps the fact that Washington is close to the sea, has given those who might spread the warning reason to pause.

Maybe Chicken Little, who was after all more than a little chicken, was right after a fashion. The melting snow merely suggests that the end of the world as we know it, is nigh. For Canadians this is good.

Just when Canada appears to be having some difficulty remaining a country all our artists will scurry off to Yonkers-by-the-sea for roles in very off-Broadway productions and our politicians will be forced to fill the diplomatic vacuum left in the new United States' capital Chevy Chase, Maryland.

REAUME
WITH
A VIEW
with BRAD REAUME



The age of the men's movement

The 1970s and 1980s brought many special hospital units and outpatient therapy groups for women, but virtually no corresponding programs for men. Yet, men's needs are surely as different from women's as women have claimed theirs are from men.

The time for men(ism) has come. The 1990s will usher in new treatment programs concerned with the special problems of men in their roles as father, husband, friend and worker.

The traditional view in therapy is to see problems rooted in the individual, the marriage or the family. Feminist therapy, however, has changed that — it introduced the notion that they are not just individuals, but different genders, and gender is a crucial concept in the understanding and treatment of human problems. Our culture must stop teaching little boys to ignore their inwards while teaching little girls to do the inner work for two.

While women have benefitted from many new treatment programs, men have traditionally not participated in therapy. After all, a "real man" doesn't show his feelings, knows how to handle pressure and stress, is the provider for his family, and he solves his own problems.

While society has oppressed women, it has at the same time confined men to rigid, restrictive roles. Men today simply cannot fulfill those traditional roles and expectations. It is difficult to be "the" provider while housing is out of reach for most young couples; men have to accept women in the role of provider without feeling like a failure. Men have to help bring up the kids, reduce stress, express their anger in nonviolent and constructive ways, and ask for help when they have a problem.

Unless men learn to change their expectations, and get help with their problems, they will explode. Men have dramatically higher rates of heart attacks. Type A personalities, successful suicides, drug addiction, alcoholism, high blood pressure, and a shorter life expectancy.



PSYCHOLOGY
IN THE '90S

with DR. ARNOLD RINCOVER

It will take time. People don't change over night. But cases like John (below) show that men's groups meet a special need and they can be effective.

John, with only a high school education, had a high paying job handling dangerous chemicals. He was deeply concerned the job was hazardous to his health. If he complained, however, he would be labelled as weak, a wimp, by his co-workers and supervisor, so he buried his feelings. He couldn't quit his job — with his education he didn't have a prayer of finding a job paying nearly as much. He couldn't handle the idea of asking his wife to work, as it would be shirking his role as provider.

He felt trapped. The stress was driving him crazy and ruining his life. Suicide seemed like the only solution.

His wife picked up on his suicidal ideas, but she didn't see it as a selfless act. She did not understand the man felt he was "sacrificing my life for my family . . ." so they could at least have the insurance money."

John joined a men's therapy group. At last he let it all out. To his surprise (and delight), he was not only accepted, but he found all of the other men had problems.

He felt better just talking about it; he made new friends, who he saw regularly outside of the therapy group; and he got lots of ideas about how to handle his problem. Most of all, he learned it is OK to talk about your feelings, ask for help, share the load, and still be a real man.

Adopt an 'I-don't-care' attitude about animal hair

Ever notice how you just can't seem to win the battle against animal hair? It's a subject that has long fascinated me, even though I was forced to surrender to it years ago, or go crazy.

There seems to be some kind of Murphy's Law that light-coloured animal hair is attracted to dark-coloured fabric, and vice versa.

Granted, you could get a non-shedding variety of dog but that's a somewhat non-sporting attitude. And that's still not an absolute guarantee against hair on your clothing because, brothers and sisters, there's hair everywhere.

Let's start from scratch. Say you have one cat (is that a bad play on words or what?), grey in colour, or medium length hair. Now that grey hair will delicately adorn furniture, clothing and draperies with a soft misty effect. A black and white cat is no better. You'll end



PETS
AND YOU

with ANNE NORMAN

up with black hairs on your white suit, white hairs on your black coat, and both colours will show up beautifully against your patterned living room furniture.

Dog hair, often a stiffer texture than cat hair, is equally tenacious in its grip of fabric. Sometimes dog hair will take an oblique approach, and lodge itself at an angle in your clothing, making removal by brush extremely difficult, if not impossible. Challenging, you might say.

Upholstered car seats are another whole and distinct area of interest. Does animal hair stick to these seats as though glued? You better believe it does. Even your highest-powered vacuum cleaner will have its work cut out for it here, particularly if you take your dog for a lot of car rides.

Even if you never have pets travel in your vehicle, you will transfer their hair from your clothing to the car seats with amazing speed.

Cats shed almost constantly but at least you have the consolation that they're fairly small animals. Some dogs have seasonal "moult", shedding copiously in spring and fall. Other dogs, and the German Shepherd springs instantly to mind, shed heavily year round as well as seasonally. It's enough to make you pull your own hair out in frustration.

Can anything be done? Well, yes, there are a

few ways to make the problem of animal hair a smaller one.

1) Grooming — Brush that dog or cat daily. Okay, try for weekly; every little bit helps.

2) Vacuuming — Invest in a really good machine, one capable of sucking up small vehicles in its path. This should remove more than half the hair in your house. Take care not to vacuum clothing; that favourite sweater may disappear up the hose.

3) If you wear glasses, remove them when you're around the house. What you can't see can't worry you.

4) Accept it and laugh. Life's too short to agonize over piddly little things like dog and cat hair.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to take my dog to the vet for his shots. Then I have to clean out my car.