

## NEWS

## Canadian Casualties Mount in Afghanistan

Ray Keating  
Editor in Chief

As the Department of National Defense expanded its role in Afghanistan this past week, Canadians at home were faced with the grim reminder of the danger our men and women of the Armed forces face when deployed overseas.

We saw an increase in casualties almost as soon as Canadian Brigadier-General David Fraser took command of the Canadian-led Multi National Brigade for Regional Command South in Afghanistan. On Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, a Canadian Light

Armoured Vehicle (LAV) suffered a rollover accident which resulted in two deaths and five injuries. The following day, a suicide bomber attacked a Canadian convoy, killing himself, but failing in his attempt to wound or kill Canadians. On Saturday, Lieutenant (now Captain) Trevor Greene was gravely wounded by an axe-wielding villager as he met with village elders.

Speculation of military experts, such as retired General Lewis



Pallbearers prepare to carry the remains of Corporal Paul James Davis during a ramp ceremony held at Kandahar Airfield.

Photo by Sgt Roxanne Clowe,  
Canadian Forces Combat  
Camera

MacKenzie, has been that the mission in Afghanistan would be among the costliest missions in terms of casualties we have undertaken in recent memory.

"You don't know if somebody coming up to you on the street wants an autograph, something to eat, or to kill you," said MacKenzie. When questioned some time ago about what our soldiers would face in Afghanistan, Canada's Chief of Defense Staff, General Rick Hillier said we should expect casualties, adding

"These are detestable murderers and scumbags. I'll tell you that right up front."

Since beginning operations in 2002, 11 Canadians have died in Afghanistan. Four soldiers were killed by friendly fire, two by anti-tank mines, one at the hand of a suicide bomber, three in road accidents, and a senior Canadian diplomat was killed in a suicide bomb attack.

## Go With Your Gut

Man-Sum Yau  
Production Editor

As the school year is drawing to an end, many of us have been doing a great deal of thinking and decision making. Contrary to what some of us have been advised to do, the results of a new study carried out at the University of Amsterdam suggest that the best thing to do when facing a tough decision may be to stop thinking about it.

"It is much better to follow your gut," advised Ap Dijksterhuis, the psychology professor and leader of the research project reported in the magazine *Science*. He and his colleagues hypothesized that conscious thought helped in making simple decisions while more complex ones should be left to unconscious thought. To test this "deliberation-without-attention" hypothesis, they conducted four experiments on consumer choice both in the laboratory and in real shopping situations.

In one experiment, students were asked to pick a car out of a choice of four based on a given number of features such as mileage and legroom. One group of students was given a list with a few features. A second group was given a list of twelve. Some students had time to think while others were asked to solve anagrams to distract them from thinking about their decisions. Students who had to make simple decisions did better with conscious thought while those that had to make the more complex decisions did better without.

Another experiment that they conducted showed the same results: people who bought simple appliances

or clothes were happier if they put conscious thought into their decisions. On the other hand, those who bought furniture were happier if they had not. The researchers concluded from the results that the unconscious mind may be much better at balancing both the pros and cons to reach sound conclusions than the conscious mind.

This finding raises a few interesting questions. First, what is a sound or a good decision? In the experiment done on department-store shoppers, the quality of the decisions was based on customer satisfaction or happiness while in the experiment done on students and cars, it was not. Also, what is a simple or tough decision? The researchers considered furniture shopping more complicated than kitchen appliance or clothing shopping, but people have varying levels of knowledge and skills for making choices on different products. This point leads to yet another question: how applicable are these results to more life-changing decisions such as choosing a graduate school?

The results of this study are nevertheless still interesting. They provide a little insight into the workings of our mind and perhaps a little motivation if you have been getting bogged down by decision making. Go with your gut, and good luck.

For more information, visit:

[www.sciencemag.org](http://www.sciencemag.org)

[www.healthscout.com](http://www.healthscout.com)

[www.nature.com](http://www.nature.com)

## Volunteers Needed for International L.M. Montgomery Conference

The L.M. Montgomery Institute is looking for volunteers to assist with its upcoming international conference, "Storm and Dissonance: L.M. Montgomery and Conflict", set to run from June 21 to June 25, 2006. If you are interested in helping out with this conference, please contact the LMML.

## Robertson Library Offering a New Service to the Campus Community

As of March 6, 2006, the Robertson Library will begin sending out courtesy notices to students, staff, and faculty giving them a "heads-up" on material they have signed out — and which has a due date of three days hence.

The new "Heads-Up Notice!!" will help in preventing or reducing overdue fines for the entire campus community. We are very pleased that we can now offer this convenience.

The "Heads-Up Notice!!" will be delivered in the same way as the Library's overdue notices — via UPEI user account e-mail.

## April 2006 Final Examination Schedule

The April 2006 Final Examination schedule is now on the web. The URL for the Exam site is <http://upepei.ca/~cls/dropbox/ExamDates.html>.

## Did you know...

the definition of a failed semester is: any full or part-time student fails a semester when he or she fails more than one course in one semester or does not pass at least one half of the courses taken within a semester with a mark of at least 60% or better. Any student who fails one semester will be placed on academic probation for a one calendar year period. In addition, restrictions on maximum course loads may be adjusted, and enrollment in an academic support program may be required. Any student who fails two semesters in one academic year will be dismissed. For further details on academic probation and dismissal, consult page 72 of your university calendar. This is brought to you by the UPEI Student Services.

## SU Election Speeches

The general meeting for the SU and speeches for the election will be on Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 in the W.A. Murphy Student Centre Courtyard.