

Couric's challenge meets the press. McKenzie, Page AL3

ARTS & LIFE

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NUPTIALS



CENTRE STAGE

These one-time theatre ushers were happy to outsource the task for their big day.
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BOOKS

WESTWARD HO!

First Toby Young failed in New York. Now L.A. is having its way with him.
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STATS

entertainment

CANADA'S TOP TEN DVDS

1. *Plink* (PG)
 2. *High School Musical* (G)
 3. *Blue Collar Comedy Tour: One for the Road* (R)
 4. *Basic Instinct 2*, Unrated (NR)
 5. *Eight Below* (G)
 6. *Neil Young, Heart of Gold* (G)
 7. *Madonna, I'm Going to Tell You a Secret* (G)
 8. *Underworld 2: Evolution* (R)
 9. *The Matador* (R)
 10. *The Hills Have Eyes*, Unrated (R)
- Number in brackets is last week's ranking. NR denotes new release.

The PARLANCE of our Times

"I can remember the first time I called her a whore. We just laughed for half an hour. Because she's anything but... She said something the other day like, 'Dad, how much should I charge?'"

Chevy Chase tells Details magazine about his 17-year-old daughter's special sense of humor.



Stopping just short of an aerial attack, protesting pigeons landed in Queen's Park in Toronto to picket the attention received by fancy, zoo-inhabiting animals.

Tired of being second-class citizens in the animal kingdom, a collective of 'ordinary animals' — pigeons, squirrels and the like — are fighting back against extraordinary beasts and the humans who love them

Grey power

BY SAMANTHA GRICE

It's the ostriches that really annoy Jealous Pigeon. He refers to them as "knotchies." "They are birds, but they don't fly. They have ridiculously small beaks," J. Pigeon explained last week in an e-mail interview with the *National Post*. "I mean, yes, they can run really fast, like 70 km/h or something, but does that make them extraordinary? Does it?"

The flightless bird received the brunt of J. Pigeon's contempt at a Queen's Park rally held the weekend before last. Hundreds of Toronto-based Jealous Pigeons flew in for the event, bringing with them protest signs bearing such bitter slogans as, "Zebras are just messed up horses," and "Down with owls." It was the first of several rallies to be held this summer to bring attention to Jealous Ordinary Animals Against The Toronto Zoo's Extraordinary Animals, otherwise known as JOAATZEA.

According to Jealous Squirrel (also

speaking via e-mail), the group was started by Jacob, a visionary pigeon. "As the story goes, he was in High Park when a group of humans walked by raving about the zoo's extraordinary animals," he recalls. "Jacob, incensed with jealousy, took flight and pooped three times on the humans." Squirrel adds: "Every time I tell that story I get chills."

Unsuspecting zoo-loving humans can expect more of this sort of carpet bombing as the JOAATZEA is planning Jealousy-fueled pooping and nut-throwing attacks throughout the summer. Their ultimate goal is equal admiration for ordinary animals.

J. Pigeon says the Queen's Park rally was a huge success. "Sure, a few of my pigeon comrades got stepped on. And yes, our two-inch-by-two-inch protest signs were small, but I really believe that a lot of humans and animals heard our ones."

He won't reveal much else about the group's plans except to say they are "very organized." The *Post* learned the group enlisted ad agency Lowe Roche to help with the campaign and three spooky TV spots began airing a couple

of weeks ago. In one, a bewildered family's cat is relentlessly showered in pigeon poo, while in another a cross walking in the park receives a meticulously aimed nut to the forehead. Jealous Pigeon has also created a MySpace page to promote the group's efforts.

It looks like it's going to be an uphill battle. Even Geoffrey Roche, chief creative officer at Lowe Roche concedes the agency decided to help the campaign out of pity more than anything. "And it's not like they are going to become that much more interesting by doing this," he says. "They're ordinary animals. Unfortunately, that's their plight in life. They're just not interesting. It's like talking to someone at a party and saying, 'Wow, did I ever just waste my time.' This is like an entire ballroom filled with those kinds of people. It's no wonder they're jealous." Wisely, Roche has traded in his convertible for the protection of a Hummer.

Joining the pigeons in their fight against the zoo and all its lion-loving visitors are the often overlooked squirrels, goldfish, worms and house cats.

Says one worm, "I'm not jealous. It's just, for me, when I'm slithering beside one of the zoo's boa constrictors, it's like I'm slithering beside the prettiest girl in school. I mean, boa constrictors have it all: looks, length and the ability to constrict. I don't even have eyes." A disgruntled cat complained that, after a recent trip to the zoo, his owners haven't stopped raving about the tarantula. "Excuse me, it's a spider," he hissed. "Big whoop. I see them every day. Seriously, talk to me when you can see in the dark, Mr. Eight Legs."

Until now, Toronto Zoo general manager and CEO Calvin White has been tight-lipped about the campaign. In a recent news clip, he was seen running from a news reporter at an impressive pace while shouting, "No comment!" When pressed by the *Post*, White gave this diplomatic comment: "Hey, we love all animals," he said. "Just one question: How did they make those little signs?"

■ If you want to lend your support to the JOAATZEA cause go to jealousanimals.com.

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