

Last Gasp

“Torture numbers, and they’ll confess to anything.” — Gregg Easterbrook

- Rank of doctors in a Canada–US poll of sexiest occupations: 9
- Rank of nurses: 7
- Rank of “event planners:” 6
- Percentage of Canadians who say they like holiday office parties: 55
- Proportion of British women, according to a magazine survey, who admit to “getting off with someone you don’t fancy” at an office party: 3 in 10
- Percentage of those who say they “deeply regret it:” 80
- No. of pages in Dutch psychologist Wolter Seuntjens’ study, *On Yawning, Or the Hidden Sexuality of the Human Yawn*: 46
- No. of productive hours sleep-deprived workers cost the Canadian economy annually: 48 000 000
- Amount of time the average commuter in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal spends driving to work each year, expressed in workweeks: 6
- Rank of “gouging” among reasons Canadians think gasoline prices are so high: 1
- Est. record 2005 profits of world’s 5 biggest investor-owned oil companies: \$107 billion
- Number of American soldiers killed in Iraq as of Oct. 26, 2005: 2000
- No. of excess civilian deaths in Iraq since the 2003 American-led invasion, according to *The Lancet*: more than 100 000
- No. of human deaths from bird flu worldwide to end of October 2005: 62
- No. of expected deaths in Africa from AIDS by 2025: 80 000 000
- Percentage of George Bush supporters who do not believe in evolution: 67
- Percentage of Canadians who carry a photo of their pet in their wallets: 37
- Percentage of Canadians who donate blood: 3.7
- Percentage of Canadians who have smoked marijuana: 44.5
- IQ points temporarily lost by those smoking marijuana: 4
- IQ points temporarily lost by “infomaniacs” — those who are distracted by regular use of text messaging and emails: 10
- Percentage of Americans filing for personal bankruptcy who cite out-of-pocket medical expenses as the principle reason: 54.5
- Percentage of Americans bankrupted by medical expenses who had health insurance: 75
- No. of days New York City could be powered by the half trillion calories of energy consumed by Americans at Christmas dinner: 5
- Canadian eggnog consumption in 2004, in litres: 9 178 000
- No. of extra heart-related deaths in Canada during the holiday period, Dec. 25–Jan. 7: 160
- Legally permissible trans fat content of foods in Denmark, as a percentage of total fats: 2
- Trans fat content of an average Canadian mother’s breastmilk, as a percentage of total fats: 7
- No. of grams of fat in US chain Hardee’s new 1420-calorie Monster Thickburger: 107
- Percentage of Canadians who say they are looking for lower-fat food choices: 76
- Percentage decline in vitamin C, protein and minerals in an average tomato between 1950 and 1999: 40
- Damages awarded a Windsor, Ont., hair stylist who suffered “recognizable psychological injury” after discovering a dead fly in a bottle of water: \$340 000
- No. of Indian reserves in Ontario under boil-water advisories: 38
- No. of different parasites to which reindeer are prone: 17
- The average number of American children who visited Santa Claus, per mall, in 2001: 10 119
- Average amount Canadian men spend on holiday gifts for their spouses: \$216
- Average amount Canadian women spend on their spouses: \$158
- Percentage of Ontarians who’d skip the holiday visit home and take an exotic vacation if it didn’t hurt anyone’s feelings: 50

A list of sources is available at www.cmaj.ca/cgi/content/full/173/12/1576/DC1.

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