



Nothing defines a mountain man like good ol' cranial shag

BY KEVIN BROOKER

CHICK REPELLENT. Monasheep. Mullet 180. Amish bling-bling.

Whatever you call it, jaw moss is to hillbillies what streams are to mountains: a sometimes seasonal discharge in which testosterone meets keratin protein meets frost. With better insulation than an otter pelt, is it any wonder cranial shag never goes out of style at this altitude?

The study of beards (that's pogonology to you, Professor Smooth) also tells us it's an ancient tradition. When they dug the Iceman out of that glacier in Austria, you just know what look he was rockin': a good old Neanderthal banjo strap.

Indie pop stars may have temporarily appropriated it, but unless they move permanently above 1,000 metres and bond with both truck and chainsaw, the next supermodel on the docket is sure to cast a veto. How ZZ Top and Motorhead's Lemmy get away with it, however, remains a mystery to science.

So go ahead. Unite the cheerful bonhomie of Karl Marx with the calculated insouciance of the Unabomber. There's so much delicious mystery in reckoning whether a dude is a sage or a hobo. Plus, it's great padding when you fall face-first.

Meanwhile, pity the alopeciac, most females, and the rest of us who are suckers for Gillette ads. We may live here, but can we ever really belong?

A well-coiffed and pleased-to-be-drinking French guide, La Grave, France. Photo: Ptor Spriceniaks