

You're driving me crazy

Driving back and forth to Dal everyday can be quite the experience. Those of you who drive probably know what I mean. It baffles me intensely how people do not think when they drive.

The most pathetic thing that I have ever witnessed motorists do is to realize that their rear view mirror is not functioning properly because it is giving them a clear view of their own face! Embarrassed, they change it real fast and look at me behind them to see if I have noticed.

One question that I would like to ask is: Why don't most drivers use turn signals to indicate when they are turning?

Is there some Turning Signal Conspiracy Club that you can join just to irritate the hell out of the rest of us who (silly us) think turn signals actually make sense? Or are the drivers who refuse to use turn signals so egocentric that they believe they do not have to indicate when they are turning?

Whatever the reason, it is irritating as hell (not to mention insanely dangerous). Especially in the winter! Hello, people! Do you think most of us are telepathic and somehow know when another driver intends to turn? No.

Considering that getting a driver's licence is like getting a surprise toy out of a cereal box does not explain why it is so hard for people to use turn signals. Car manufacturers conveniently located the turn signal close to the steering wheel so that it would be easy to use.

Mostly everyone knows how to turn on the radio and play around with it while you drive. This to me seems like a harder task to accomplish. You actually have to think what tape you want to listen to, which side of the tape, what radio station to choose, etc. You even have to let go of the steering wheel to do this which is a feat you don't have to try when using turn signals. It's funny that in driver's ed, we don't get taught how to use the radio but everyone knows how, while most drivers forget to use the

turn signal which would end up being a red X on the driver's exam sheet. Maybe the people who don't bother signalling when turning are playing too much with their radios or are on the phone too often!

When to use turn signals is not that hard of a concept to grasp. Or is it? I think those of us who indicate when we turn figure that

you should use the turn signals when you want to turn. Fancy that. Also use turn signals when wanting to pull out of a street onto another or even when parking on the street for a second. There are many uses for that little blinking light.

For those of you who bother to use the rear view mirror; firstly, congratulations! But, don't get

fooled when there are no cars driving behind you and think that it is unnecessary to indicate that you are turning. There are cars coming in the opposite direction, in case you have not noticed them, and they also look out for turn signals. The courteous pedestrians also make use of them if you have not realized that either.

Plainly, using turn signal is important, not to mention easy. And if you don't care because you rationalize that if someone rams you from behind it will be their fault, well, I just hope that that happens to you one day and then we will see who is laughing. Hopefully then my ride home will be that much more enjoyable.

MARIANNA GAJEWSKA

Say goodbye to old smokey

Just as smokers were grudgingly getting used to their new home in the Green Room, the anti-smoking lobby hammered another nail into the coffin.

This week is the Lung Association of Canada's "Non-Smoking Week." So I called them up to find out what sort of activities they had planned. As a smoker, I couldn't help lighting up before I dialed. Throughout the conversation, I exhaled loudly into the receiver. The woman didn't seem to notice at first, but when I kept it up, she said, "Are you...smoking?" I said no, it was my asthma. Lying to the Lung Association is a nice perk that comes with this job.

When I took this assignment, I got a press release and a funny little brown ribbon. They are giving away these ribbons so you can pin it on your lapel. When I asked the woman why they picked such a heinous shade of brown, she said it represents the tobacco leaf and the colour of an unhealthy lung. What? Shouldn't nonsmokers show off their lungs with a healthy pink tone? The press release also had some points that I wanted to clarify. The Lung Association wants us to wear the ribbon, "To show that too many people have died and the killing must stop."

So who is doing the killing? The Lung Association would like us to believe it is the tobacco industry. When asked about this,

the woman said that the tobacco industry is the only business that provides a product that is known to kill. Now that is wrong. What about gun manufacturers? Is their product any safer? The release also states, "Show your determination that the tobacco industry must be stopped from recruiting children into a life-long addiction." The woman told me that 7% of preteens are smoking these days. How the industry is recruiting them is beyond me. To find out, I called Benson & Hedges.

After being on hold for a long time, I finally got to talk to a man in Toronto. This man had never heard of *the Gazette* and was quite sceptical. You see, when someone calls a tobacco executive and mentions the Lung Association, the line mysteriously disconnects. To put him at ease, I told him that I was on his side. With this out of the

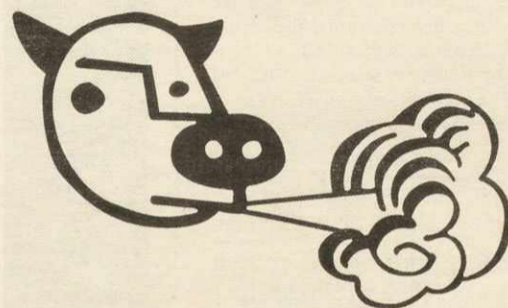
way, I read him the press release. Through fits of laughter, the man told me how the tobacco industry can't be held accountable for chil-

it violates the rights of the industry. So far, no ads have been run in the Canadian media. How could the blame be squarely laid on the industry's shoulders?

This is a topic that could be argued forever. There are two sides with their own interests taking centre stage. Like any good corporation, the tobacco industry is trying to make money. They have certain guidelines to follow, and they do it willingly. On the other hand, the Lung Association seems to devote most of their time portraying the industry as a bunch of mad capitalists who are trying to turn us all into addicts. And addiction is what it is all about. The smoker is just as addicted to cigarettes as the Lung Association is addicted to telling us how to live. What all this comes down to is that smokers will still smoke, and the righteous will still tell us not to. Let the debate continue, but it is getting tiresome.

If you are wondering how you can get your very own brown ribbon, call 1-800-465-LUNG. If you find it clashes with your clothes, they also work really well as a holder for a Bic lighter.

JOHN CULLEN



"Smoking is an adult pleasure."

— a Benson and Hedges executive

...cont'd from previous page: "Play"

Play

life come up and smack me right in the face. One of my best friends decided that he had had enough of life, and so, ended it with a nice salad of booze and pills. It was all high drama, really. He made sure that he had seen or spoken to everyone important in his life in the days prior to the actual deed. He cleared up all his financial business, and had everything ready for those who would have the chore of dealing with all the stuff that comes with a death. On the afternoon that he did kill himself, he cleaned his apartment and did all his laundry. He picked out his cutest leather outfit and got down to business.

Apparently, it took him less than an hour to do it, and it was quite a clean affair. When he was found, he look really quite fabulous, the best he looked in a long time.

Why did he decide to kill himself? Well, he had been HIV posi-

tive for the past eight years or so, and, he had been lucky enough to be very healthy for the greater part of it. In fact, he was in great health when he killed himself. But, I guess the knowledge of what was ahead was an awful burden, and I don't blame him for not wanting to go through it.

If you don't know what it's like to suffer a death by AIDS-related causes, you should find out about it. It's not pretty. If you're unlucky enough to live through the many bouts with pneumonia, you can look forward to cancer, blindness, starvation, dementia, and a whole host of other nasties that don't even bear mentioning. It's painful, it's degrading, it's dehumanizing. And, no one deserves to suffer through the process.

But, that's life. It is real life. It's painful and awful and real. To paraphrase the great Whoopi Goldberg — when you hold your lab notes and your Thursday nights at the 'wood up against the realities of life and death, you know the real meaning of trivial pursuit.

JOSEF TRATNIK

WINTER TRAINING SCHOOL

The Dalhousie Gazette is hosting its first annual
on Saturday, January 27 and Sunday, January 28

Want to learn more about journalism?

Learn the tricks of the trade from:

- Jacques Poitras, Saint John Telegraph-Journal
- Kyle Shaw of the Coast
- David Whynacht of the Daily News
- Cameron MacKeen of the Chronicle-Herald

and more! **Call Jen at 494-3507 to register!**

Journalism

the Gazette