

Are you a good driver? Take an offensive driving course

The officer peered down at me.

"Boy, do you know how fast you were going?" he asked.

"About 40 miles per hour, I guess." "Well, I clocked you at 42. Do you know what the speed limit is on this stretch of road?'

"I thought it was 55."

"Not the maximum limit, the minimum." "Uh, I don't know."

"For your information, the minimum on this road is 45 mph, and you were going at best 42. I'm afraid I'm going to have to write you a ticket for impeding and attempting to obstruct traffic."

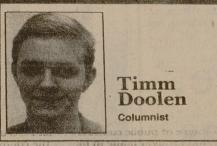
I scanned the empty road. Why would he give me a ticket? I remembered that it was the 30th of the month. He had to fill his quota, I guessed. Wait a minute, did he say impeding?

"What do you mean I was impeding?" I asked.

You were going below the minimum speed limit," he explained. "In this county that's a moving violation."

"How much is the fine?" I asked.

For only three miles under just the



were going 42 on a 55 mph highway. You can't get any more defensive than that. You need to take an offensive driving course. They'll teach you how to be more aggressive on the road. They'll tell you how to take chances and offend other drivers. Anyway, here's your ticket."

Thanks and have a nice day," I said as he walked back to his car.

It sounded like it would be a boring experience, but I didn't need my insurance rates going down, putting me in a higher tax bracket. Getting a ticket for driving too slow was also a blow to my manhood; I didn't want to be considered an "impediment" for the rest of my life.

Weeks later I entered the offensive driv-

zed that most were there on an impeding charge. But a few of them were there for other charges like signaling for a lane change when no other cars were around, unnecessarily waving for cars to go in front of them at a jammed intersection, stopping at a stale yellow light, pulling over to the right to let people pass, and other various courteous or safe driving techniques.

The instructor of the class handed out a booklet, "How To Bend the Rules of the Road," which was our text.

I glanced at some of the headings and sub-headings. "Ten Ways To Legally Run a Stop Sign," "Nothing Makes Them Madder Than Tailgating," and "Blind Them – Use the High Beam" looked interesting.

So did "Conveying Emotions Without Speaking: The Art of Rude Gesturing," "Why Restrict Yourself to Half the Road?" Use the Left Lane," and "Effective Use of the Horn To Annoy People.

No sooner had I started reading about the advantages of keeping my mind focused on the stereo during heavy traffic when the instructor started lecturing to us.

"Let's start by talking for a few minutes about pulling out in front of people. Now, of having an accident while doing so. the best way to maximize the amount of frustration you can instill in another driver is to wait until the car is approximately two seconds or four car lengths from you when you pull out. The amount of time varies with car speed, of course." He pointed to the chart.

Mail Call

Don't forget vet school

EDITOR:

This is an open letter to president Mobley and the Board of Regents. Although I am not a member of the veterinary school, I am very concerned as to why its accreditation has been downgraded

I hear the main reason is for lack of funding. This is very puzzling since A&M appears to be growing faster than most major universities It seems the Regents are appropriating new money left and right (new

buildings, garages, centers) on top of raising fees.

The vet school is a cornerstone of this University and does not deserve u be forgotten. Hopefully, through responsible spending and leadership, the veterinary school will be restored to its full status.

Jeff Boylan '90

Simply shocking

EDITOR:

I can't believe that you let Scott McCullar's cartoon run on April 3. With all the attention that racism at A&M has been given recently, it is shocking that someone would have the audacity to try to use a racial joke in the school newspaper

In fact, this is the second time this has been done by Mr. McCullar. This insensitivity is proof of the one thing that so many are denying lately: Racism is indeed alive and well at Texas A&M.

Kevin Worley '91

Let's fix parking problem

EDITOR:

As a student in the Commons who has to park in the Fish Lot on occasion I agree with Becky Weisenfels that our parking situation needs a lot of help. However, as a student senator who is currently studying the parking and

busing situation or other campuses, I feel that we are not ones to complain. At Ohio State for example, over 22,000 students bought parking permits for just over 4,000 spaces.

At UCLA, the parking lots are a 15 to 20 minute bus ride away. Or, if you love walking to your car in subzero weather, go to the University of Minnesota. Their parking lots for residents are in the ozone layer.

However, if you don't give a damn about other schools and care to something about A&M's parking and bus situation, come to our committee meetings. They are open to students and we would like your input. We usually meet in Room 208D of the Pavilion at 5 pm on Mondays.

As a final thought, a good shuttle bus service, which ours is not, could make up for a bad parking situation.

Brian Kingston '91

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other car has brakes and the driver knows Train," weighed the advantages of s how to use them.

I couldn't handle the boredom, so I put my head on my desk and soon fell asleep.

I woke up to the instructor's voice. "A good rule to remember for stoplights is "green — go, yellow — go, and red —cau-tion." With yield signs, well, they're put up more for decoration than anything else, so yer go ahead and ignore them.

"OK, let's watch a film."

He cranked up the projector so the class could watch "Eating and Putting on Makeup While Driving." The second half of the film showed the women of the audience the proper techniques for putting on makeup on the way to work and the nasty consequences time against other factors, like safety. The course ran its length and I pass

with a suitable-for-framing certificate prove it. After the graduation ceremo where we each went up to receive our cer cate, I hung around to talk to the instruct for awhile. It turned out that he was a b

When I went out to my car, I noticed there were four obviously recent accident the parking lot, all involving students of class. That instructor must be a proud ma I thought.

Driving away from the mayhem, I realized I'd learned a few things from the course spite the boredom: I shouldn't be in while driving because the road is at myo

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rate of \$30. Or you can pay \$20 to take an offensive driving course, and then you won't be publicly embarrassed by having this on your record.'

"Offensive? Don't you mean defensive driving?'

"Defensive driving? My god, kid, you

ng classroom and noticed that the overwhelming majority of the class consisted of senior citizens, with just a few obvious firsttime drivers. I sat in the back next to another 'younger" guy so we could laugh at the instructor and make fun of the older people's comments.

After talking to a few of the people, I real- you're pulling out, just remember - the

"Now don't worry about getting hit. While

face had been permanently scarred with a line of lipstick running from her mouth to her ear. It wasn't a pretty sight. Another woman was forced to slam on her brakes just a little. while applying makeup, and swallowed a tube of lipstick.

The next film, "Yes You Can Beat That talion.

The movie showed us a woman whose mand and nobody else's; also, the rule the road are just guidelines, not to be take seriously; and most important, I can ma that yellow light in front of me if I speed

> Timm Doolen is a sophomore com science major and a columnist for The Ba

Reagan's missing the gunfight at the O.K. Corral

The late Judge John King, a tough South Side Chicago Irishman, had a simple way of measuring a person's loyalty and character.

Of some people, he'd approvingly say: "If you have to walk down to the O.K. Corral, he'll go with you.'

Or with a sneer, he'd say of someone else: "If you have to walk down to the O.K. Corral, don't wait for that guy. He'll hide in the outhouse."

He was referring, of course, to the legendary gunfight in Tombstone, Ariz., when Wyatt Earp, with his two brothers and Doc Holliday at his side, walked down to the O.K. Corral to take on the bad guys.

It was his way of saying whether a person was, to use a Chicago phrase, a stand-up guy.'

I thought about Judge King's old-

Mike Royko Columnist

about the latest developments in the Oliver North trial.

And I was surprised and saddened to see that Ronald Reagan, the Old Cowboy, is still not inclined to walk down to the O.K. Corral with Ollie North.

North's lawyer has subpoenaed Reagan as a defense witness.

That makes sense. They'd like to put Reagan on the stand and get him to concede that he knnew a lot more about the Iran-contra affair than he's admitted to.

fashioned standard while reading would make North appear less of a would be understandable if North the first American ever fired and im-

loose cannon, breaking laws and said: "I thought they held parades thumbing his nose at Congress when he saw fit, and more of a loval, obedient Marine, fulfilling the wishes of his commander in chief

Obviously, Reagan doesn't want to testify about what he knew or didn't know, since the Justice Department has been fighting to keep him off the witness stand.

This has to be a great disappoint-ment to North. Although Reagan fired him when the scandal began unfolding, Reagan made a point of describing North as a "hero.

It has to be gratifying to be called "hero" by the president of the United States.

On the other hand, it must have been confusing to North to be fired If North's lawyer could do that, it and called a hero at the same time. It

for heroes. How come I get a pink slip instead of a ticker tape shower?"

By calling North a "hero," Reagan persuaded a large segment of the population, who had never before heard of the Marine colonel, that he really was a hero. And that helped North win most popularity polls during and after his testimony at the congressional hearings.

But now the "hero," is up to his ears in trouble, standing trial for shredding government documents, providing illegal aid to the contras and other alleged mischief while working in the White House.

If he's convicted on even some of the charges, he could wind up in a federal prison.

prisoned for acts of heroism. If it happens, I can imagine other military men saying: "What, you want to give me a medal? Please, I beg you, don't. I have a wife and kids to think of.

So if there was ever a time when North needed a stand-up guy at his side, it's now. After all, if Reagan thought North was a "hero," that must mean he approved of what North had been doing to further Reagan's goals. And if he considered North a hero, he must have been aware of what North was up to. Or else he wouldn't have called him a hero, would he?

Of course not. I can't believe that Ronald Reagan would tell the Amer-ican people that someone was a hero if he didn't know for sure that he That would probably make him was. Maybe he would have done that when he was a sports announcer, but

surely not as president

priate time for Reagan to say: "0 I'm not going to let you take the long walk down to the O.K. Cor all by yourself. I'm going to be in

there with you, partner.' That's not too much to ask. After all, Doc Holliday did it for W Earp, and Holliday was nothing a dentist who gave up pulling to for the life of a card shark and g fighter. I think we have the righ expect more of a president than boozing ex-dentist.

Of course, there might be a good reason why Reagan doesn't want walk down to the O.K. Corral with Ollie, the "hero."

Maybe Reagan didn't see th movie.

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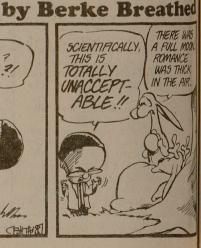
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