

OUTTA MY WAY!!

Inconsiderate drivers create difficulties for motorists

BY STEPHEN WELLS
The Battalion

See Dick and Jane. See Dick and Jane drive down the lane. See inconsiderate Aggie try to make a left turn from the right lane across three busy lanes of traffic because they decide they might want to eat a sandwich instead of a pizza. See Dick lean on the horn and, for further elaboration, display a gesture of hostility.

Dick expressing road rage has become a commonplace occurrence in every country industrialized enough to have inconsiderate drivers inconveniencing others.

Students at Texas A&M, inexperienced as drivers and cursed with a confusing system of disappearing lanes and random curbs, are prime candidates.

Road rage is a recent term used to describe the feeling of anger all motorists have occasionally felt since the first time another driver tailgated them with their high beams turned on.

Sgt. Ernie Montoya, head of the College Station Crime Prevention Unit, said the words "road rage" describe a collective exasperation felt by motorists during rush hour.

"Road rage is a term people are becoming more conscious of these days, and I first heard it only a year ago," Montoya said. "It's kind of a buzzword for the feeling of being stuck in traffic and the frustration you feel for not being able to get out of traffic."

Students may not be as objective as the dictionary when defining road rage. Mat Merter, a sophomore physics major, said the definition of road rage is a subjective one.

"I don't know why I get so mad when I'm out on the road; I just get that way," Merter said. "When someone drives slower than you, they're an idiot. When someone drives faster than you, they're crazy."

Students who must commute to get to school face early morning traffic both on and off campus.

Carmen Morgan, a junior business admin-

istration major, said getting to campus is half the challenge of surviving a day at school.

"The streets are bad enough around campus and on the way to campus," Morgan said. "But when you actually get on to campus I think people lose their mind. I hate it when other drivers do 30 miles an hour through a parking lot and barely miss you, and when you add bicycles and people walking who don't even look for you, it can get you stressed really fast."

The easy alternative to going into a spittle-emitting, semi-homicidal rant is simply to avoid the areas where traffic is likely to be heaviest. College Station residents can sidestep the clogged traffic artery, Texas Avenue, a number of ways.

"On Texas Avenue there are at least two streets running parallel to it at all time," Montoya said. "There's Cavitt Avenue, which is a much smaller road and probably has fewer cars on it at any time of the day. On the other side of University is College Avenue, which is a good alternative until it runs into the Texas A&M campus. For some people, 29th Street is a good option, depending on where they're going."

Inventive road warriors are finding some unique ways to get back at others in traffic.

"I get road rage so bad I put a PA in my car to yell at people who cut me off when I'm driving," Merter said. "I just connected it to my CD player and ran a cable up under my hood. I thought it would be cool to have to just mess around with my friends, but it comes in handy when I need to gripe at somebody on the road."

One responsible way to vent about inconsiderate drivers is to call the police department and tell them about the offending road hog.

"We get descriptions all the time of people who are driving irresponsibly," Montoya said. "People will call us and say 'he cut me off,' or 'he's cutting through traffic.' I would encourage people to call in and report things like that. Get the license plate number." To report a poor driver, call the College Station Police Department at 361-3888.

Those who are easily provoked should be aware of the possible consequences of their actions before attempting revenge on a fellow commuter.

"Just be conscious that you've got a lot to lose if you lose your temper on the road," Montoya said. "You risk getting into a wreck and damaging your car or getting a traffic citation. Don't get mad at the other guy. If he wants the road that bad, give it to him."

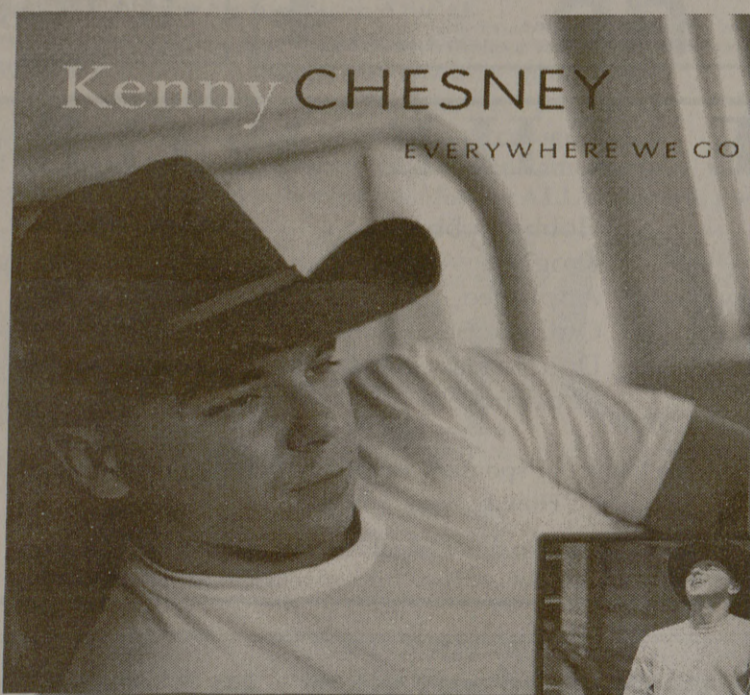


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SUBTLE HAZING:

SUBTLE HAZING is the most difficult to detect because these actions are often accepted standards of conduct. They result in behaviors that ridicule or humiliate the individual. Subtle hazing includes but is not limited to:

- ♦ Requiring the carrying of items such as rocks, helmets, and paddles
- ♦ Demanding personal servitude that is demeaning
- ♦ Requiring new or younger members to use separate entrances
- ♦ Intentionally creating a mess for selected members to clean
- ♦ Requiring degrading, uncomfortable, ridiculous, or embarrassing dress
- ♦ Assigning pranks such as stealing and vandalism

JUST BECAUSE AN ACTIVITY DOES NOT SEEM WRONG DOES NOT MAKE IT RIGHT.

Before you or your organization decides upon an activity that affects another student ask yourself, "Does this activity promote human worth and value and the educational experience?" If the answer is "NO,"

DON'T RISK IT.

To report hazing, contact one of the following offices:

The Department of Student Life
Student Conflict Resolution Services:
Call 847-7272 to report any incidents of hazing.

The Office of the Commandant:
Call 458-1341 to report hazing involving members of the Corps of Cadets.

The Department of Student Activities:
Call 845-1133 to report hazing involving members of a recognized student organization.

University Police Department:
Call 845-2345 to report any incidents of hazing.

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