

COMMENTS & LETTERS

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My problem with ill-informed cyclists

MY AWESOME COLUMN

by Michele Legendre
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I'm sure this has happened to you before. You're driving along minding your own business and you notice the crosswalk lights are flashing.

You come to a stop only to see that a buffoon on his bicycle is cycling through the crosswalk. This is, of course, a scenario that occurs much too often, or you have teenagers on their BMXs riding on the sidewalk and cutting me off as I enter a parking lot. Pardon me, but since when do you believe that your bicycle entitles you to be a motorist and a pedestrian at your convenience?

Sure, bicycles are great, convenient, a great form of exercise, and keeps mother nature happy with no emissions - but it is a roadside vehicle with rules and regulations attached to abide to. In reality, though, drivers and cyclists do have to cooperate together in order to avoid pesky situations like a cyclist with an iPod running through a cross walk while the red hand is flashing and I'm about to make a left hand turn before the light turns yellow.

You know what kids? Your bike, under the New Brunswick Motor Vehicle Act, is just like a vehicle itself; in acts 176-181, it clearly states that even if you are on a bicycle, you have the same rights and rules as someone operating a vehicle.

176: Every person riding a bicycle

upon a roadway has all of the rights and is subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle by this Act, except those provisions which by their very nature can have no application.

179(1:) Every person operating a bicycle upon a roadway shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable, exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction.

To me, running through a crosswalk or cutting me off in the middle of the street with your bicycle is the equivalent to me deciding I want to endanger the lives of pedestrians and other motorists by not abiding to the laws and doing whatever the hell I please with a 2000 Toyota Echo.

By law, you can not cut off motorists in traffic, go through a crosswalk while still riding your bicycle, or drive in the middle of the street, because you cannot hear the oncoming ambulance (turn off your iPod for bike rides).

So really, while you're telling me off and cursing at me that I nearly ran you over, when I'm doing a left hand turn and you decided to bike through the crosswalk into oncoming traffic, don't expect me to be sympathetic if you get hit.

Certainly, some should say I must have some remorse for someone on a bike because they have no protection (not even a helmet at times); well, it would be nice if you weren't such a freeloader, thinking you can get away with everything.

Perhaps it would be a good idea for you to take the time to make our re-



For the pesky cyclists who use crosswalks, please dismount from your 'vehicle' before doing so - for all our sake.

lationship a little easier for everyone and practice the rules and regulations of proper bicycle usage instead of becoming such a hazard to everyone else. These laws are intended to protect cyclists, not to piss you off - and certainly

these laws could be of good usage to avoid those 'close calls' with vehicles. For future reference, if you want to use the crosswalk, dismount from your bicycle and walk across as a pedestrian - legally, of course.

How much coverage is too much?

MUGWUMP

by Tony von Richter
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Most people think it would be great to be a celebrity. You'd be known around the world, you'd probably be obscenely rich, and you'd get go anywhere and do anything.

Of course, since you'd be known worldwide, you'd never be able to go anywhere without being mobbed, you'd have fairly high taxes thanks to your obscene wealth, and the second you went anywhere or did anything people around the world would know about it and would be judging every move you make.

Still want to be a celebrity?

Some would say that celebrities chose the life they have and that they knew what could happen before they became famous. However, who was it that created this need for celebrity knowledge? The fans and admirers of a celebrity or the media sources that need content to fill their websites and TV shows.

With an untold number of websites as well as hundreds of television channels, media companies are doing whatever they can to try and attract your attention, and one of the easiest ways to do that is by doing stories on people everyone knows.

It is a disturbing trend - the amount of coverage the mainstream media provides on celebrities, particularly actors and musicians, and their personal lives. While I understand the desire to learn more about the people that populate our favourite forms of entertainment, sometimes the media goes too far. But where do we draw the line? Do we really have a right to know everything about someone?

Take the NFL's most talked about player, Terrell Owens (T.O.), for example. Every week, we see numerous stories about T.O. if he's practicing, what he's thinking, if he's healthy, etc. These

are all valid questions, since they have an affect on his efforts on the field, on his chosen profession.

Even last week when he accidentally overdosed on painkillers, we knew about it within hours, it was a major story and a valid one as well, since it revolved around his health and if he would be able to play in this week's game.

That, I think, is the line we shouldn't cross - if something affects a celebrity's career then it's a valid story and can be reported, but if something has no bearing on how they do their jobs, then what business is it of ours what their baby looks like or who they went out to lunch with last Thursday?

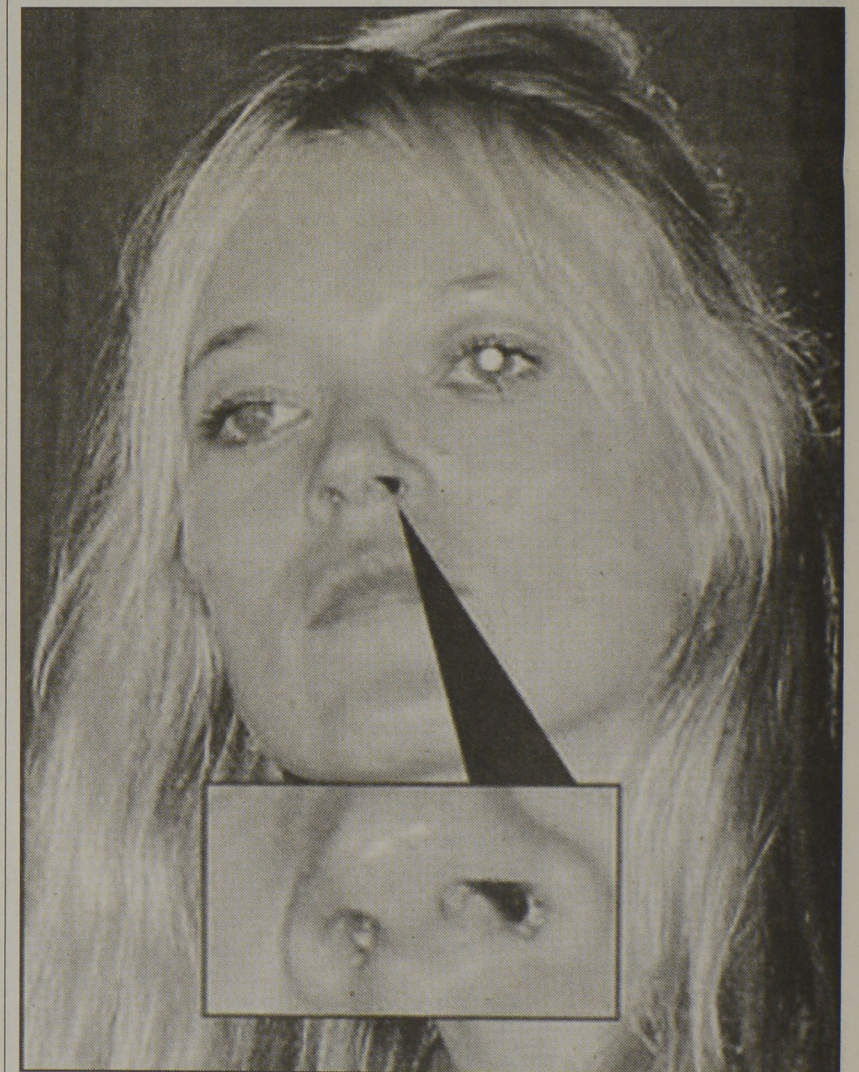
Now, I'm well aware that the media aren't solely to blame, as they are often just giving their viewers what they want, and many celebrities crave the attention they get outside of their professional endeavors, as it can substantially raise their public profile, leading to more opportunities.

So, if people want to read about celebrities, the media wants to cover celebrities, and the celebrities want to be talked about, what's the problem with all of the media coverage?

It's the celebrities that don't want to be followed everywhere they go and have cameramen sneaking outside their house; they just want to do their jobs and live their lives.

Of course, people will say they knew what they were getting into when they started their career and that's true, if someone chooses a career that puts them in the public eye they should expect some intense scrutiny, but that's not the issue. The issue is should they have to put up with it. Just because something is accepted as normal now, that doesn't mean it has to be that way forever.

Hopefully someday we'll just know what celebrities are doing professionally and we won't know where they ate dinner last week and where they get their dry cleaning done, that's probably a long time off though.



Kate Moss seen here with an up-shot of what seems to be residue in her nostrils - C'mon everyone's got boogers!

Concern arisen over Gregg centre piece

Editor's note: This article is being published as it received and is unedited

by Thomas Finn

dear editor,

I often read over the brunswickian until i catch a headline that peaks my interest and sit down for a while and usually thoroughly enjoy what i read... but today i came across an article and couldn't help voicing my opinion on it. reading over the article about the gregg centre in this weeks issue just irritated me beyond belief. it was an obvious and blatant attempt at attacking our governments decision to stay in afganistan. using something like the gregg centre as a cover over for some really deep political issues is dispicable especially trying to convince people that the department of defense is giving the gregg centre 120,000 dollars a year for funding is going to make the gregg centre biased in its research. obviously the author has to take a step back and look where he is... 120, 000 dollars is a joke when you consider how much the military puts into students alone at unb there are numerous students on campus who have had their intire tuition paid through one program or another

through the military going by those standards geese you'd think half of the campus would be biased. millions over the years have gone through the university whether it was someone enroled through a ROTP or RETP or just being a reservist with the military. the military doesn't need to sway research or opinions in the atlantic provinces by helping to fund a building. they do that just by being an option for every kid in a small town that doesn't wanna end up a farmer, a fisherman, that guy in the only convenience store in town or in some areas of the maritimes the guy whos on welfare. honestly the military has its strongest influence here in atlantic canada and rightly so some towns wouldn't even exist if it weren't for the military just look at oromocton... or just off campus at some of the houses your friends might rent out, many of which are old PMQs. if you want to have a place not influenced at some level by the military get out of the atlantic provinces!

its no joke half the point of the gregg centre is preserving the unique military history of the atlantic provinces the fact that the author doesn't know how much the military puts back into communities and students means he should

probably make a visit to the gregg center when it opens do some research of his own. discrediting the gregg center to spew out another rant on canada being in afganistan is underhanded at best. hes got some good points near the end of the article about some of the things that happen in afganistan but its nothing we haven't heard before. and if you know anybody in the military or know any basic military history you know things are going to get much worse before they get better thats the way socail reform and war go. but when things get worse you can't just pull out or you'll leave things in a worse situation then it was when you came in. my advice for people who can't understand this concept of things will get much worse before they get better is sit down be quiet and let the professionals deal with it... ya thats right the military. if your stomachs go weak to deal with it STOP watching cnn or reading stuff on the net. honestly it should be decades before they leave afganistan. a three year old should be able to stand in the streets, go to a super market.. do whatever he feels like doing and be completely oblivious that nine eleven ever happened when they leave. i say that honestly because thats how old i was when

canadian forces pulled out of lahr germany i was completely oblivious to the whatever battles or injustices had taken place where i stood and if it weren't for efforts to perseve histor i would still be oblivious today. we didn't pack up and leave when the berlin wall went up over night and were not gonna pack up now. people have died and blood has been spilt but if we pull out now it was all a waste it'll mean nothing. dead men may tell no tales but those not still with us would say to you that they will not be told they died for nothing as canadians we fight to the last man till we can go home with our heads held high knowing that those who fought with us didn't die for nothing. at one point in the article he refers to afganistan as the unpopular afganistan mission justify that to people who have relatives over there right now justify that to people who have had relatives friends loved ones killed trying to make a difference. we may not like that thier over in harms way but we damn well know why thier there and if thats the diffinition of unpopular all war is that way and i hope i never live to see a day when we can call a war popular. sincerely,

thomas finn

Holding ExxonMobil's feet to the fires they lit

by Asaf Rashid

This is the story of how a small group of concerned people were able to challenge a recent ExxonMobil recruiting effort on the UNB campus. First, though, I'll give a brief note on why ExxonMobil is a cause for concern.

ExxonMobil is one of the largest corporations in the world. They have intentionally sabotaged action on the greatest environmental issue of our age, global warming. Their relentless pursuit of new oil is resulting in ecological devastation - such activities unavoidably bring this. Devastation

has also resulted from "accidents" that ExxonMobil has been involved in, such as the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, something the company has never paid remotely adequate compensation for (to learn more, search for details on fishing communities' lawsuit against the company).

They have also operated in unstable regions in many different countries over the years, such as Chad, Colombia, Nigeria, Indonesia, and Angola; and it should be noted that the company has been involved in the exacerbation of instability in these and other regions.

In Indonesia, the breakaway prov-

ince of Aceh has been the victim of ExxonMobil, both as a result of pollution from extraction activities and through the material support ExxonMobil has provided to the Indonesian military on their killing sprees of Aceh people (to learn more, search for International Labour Rights Fund's case against ExxonMobil). Yet, although the company routinely works with governments that have committed serious human rights abuses, they have no company human rights policy to guide its global operations.

Now, onto the description of the action. The intention of the action was to

provide dissenting voices at an ExxonMobil recruiting session that took place at 5 p.m. on Monday, September 25 in Head Hall's Dineen auditorium. We (mostly members of the UNB/STU Social Justice Society: www.sjs.revolt.org) had nine relatively well-dressed supporters of our action, assuming that the "better" dressed we were, the more likely we would be to have our questions answered.

At just before 5 p.m., one amongst the group went inside to hand out our very satirical leaflet that was designed to leave students with some questions in their minds about ExxonMobil's moral standards with regards to human rights and the environment. We had somewhere between 75 - 100 leaflets and most were dispersed as people came into the auditorium.

We sat through the squeaky clean and boring presentations by Imperial Oil and ExxonMobil, and when it was over and the presenters asked, "are there any questions?" I threw my hand up immediately. I was prompted to go ahead with my question. I gave some background about the human rights abuses that ExxonMobil was implicated in through the Indonesian military during the 1990s in Aceh, which led to a lawsuit through the International Labour Rights Fund. I then asked if ExxonMobil had developed a human rights policy.

The indoctrinated ExxonMobil recruiters commented on how they couldn't answer the question because they were not qualified. The next question brought up the issue of ethics. The asker made clear that he wanted to know where ExxonMobil stood when it came to issues of ethics with regards to human rights. Again, the response was, "not qualified to answer the question." I think it was at this time when one of the organizers of the talk (she

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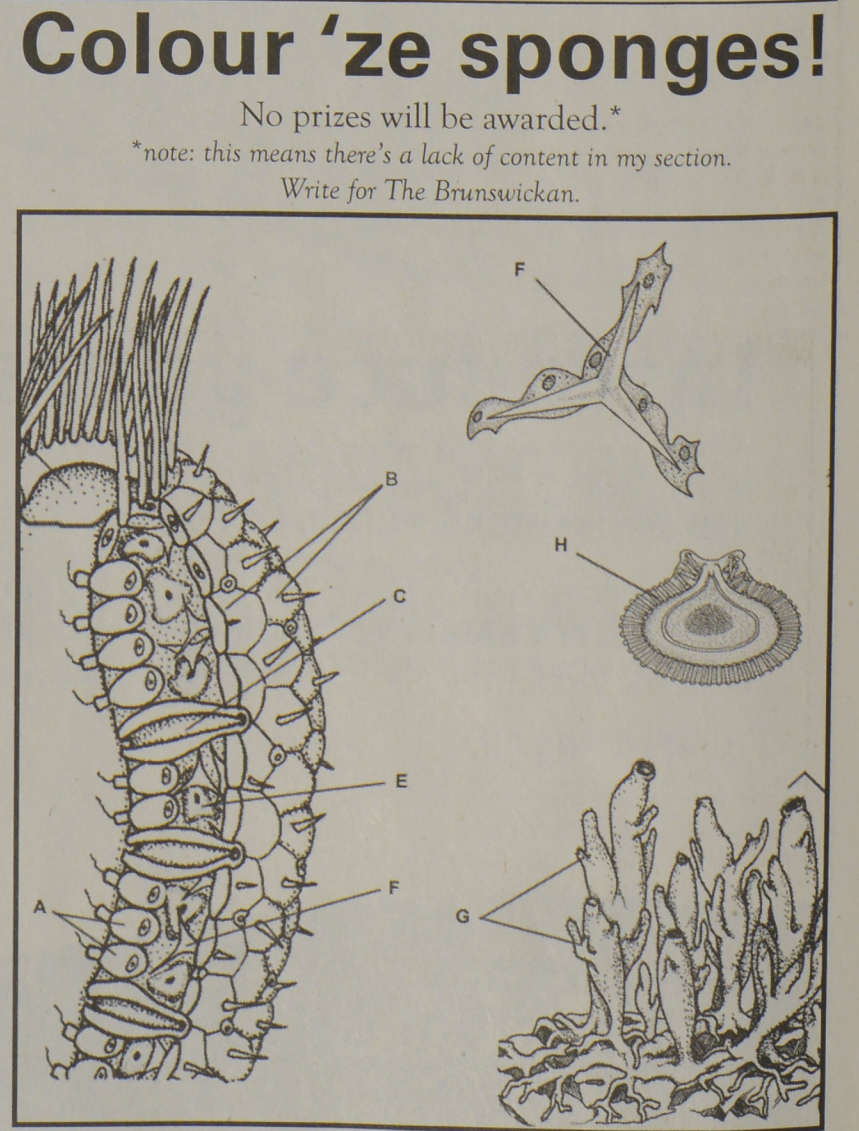
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