

Rick's Rant: The War on Fun

I don't know what's sadder but this country woke up a few weeks ago and read this story about a school in Toronto banning the use of soccer balls on the playground or the fact that deep down none of us were really surprised. I know I wasn't because I am familiar with the vice principal law of enjoyment which simply stated is that for every instance of a child having fun there is an equal or slightly more powerful force that exists solely to stop that activity from happening. And every generation is different when I was in grade 8 my school banned the Rubik's Cube and why because some kid was wandering down the hall with his head buried in the Rubik's Cube. He went headfirst into a door and split his nose open. And I'm sorry, I remember that kid, he was always walking into doors. In fact, if I bumped into him today I wouldn't recognize him without the nosebleed. But the school, their rationale was well we can't have kids walking around with their heads down so they banned the cube. Meanwhile it is because we wandered around with our heads buried in a Rubik's Cube that my generation can safely navigate through traffic on foot with our heads down while texting on our blackberries. You could say it saved our lives. This is a war on fun. And it is a slippery slope in 2014 and this is a fact in Ontario, school clubs will no longer be able to fundraise by selling chocolate. Only nutritional items. There's your future Canada: a sad child on your doorstep trying to sell you a bag of radishes so they can go to band camp. Get used to it, because if you let them take your balls your freedom is the next to go. (307)

Rick's Rant: Flu Shot

Well, the malls are packed. The bells are jingling. It's that wonderful time of year when Canadians from all walks of life prepare to experience the miracle of flu season. Not a lot of talk of the flu this year; we only get freaked out when it's named after a pig or a chicken, but yet every year the old-fashioned no-name flu kills our wax of Canadians basically the population of Flin Flon good town and the best defense better than washing your hands or even avoiding that moron who comes to work sick and then coughs on your neck in the elevator is the flu shot. In my office we gave it away for free. I stood there. I said okay folks free flu shot who's in? Two out of ten people made a move. Two out of ten. If I had said there were free smoked meat sandwiches at the end of the hall there would have been a stampede. Turns out a lot of people won't get the flu shot on principle. Why? Well I haven't had the flu in years why would I get a flu shot said one. Good point. I have never been run over by a car, why would I look both ways? Or, and this is my favorite, when someone looks at you very seriously and says: did you know there's dead flu virus in the flu vaccine? Yes I am aware of that; it's why it's called a vaccine. It's why we don't all have polio! I have one friend who refuses any vaccines at all based on something he read on the Internet, but to be fair he still smokes Export A in the green package, so he's basically a medical doctor. Look I get lazy, I'm lazy. I get afraid of needles. But even if you are healthy enough to fight the flu, if you get the flu, chances are you could pass it on to someone who can't fight it. So come on Canada, roll up your sleeves! It's just a little prick. Don't be one, get one. (350)

Rick's Rant: Driving in the Dark

I love Canada in November. It's that magical time of year when so many of us - we get up and go to work and it's dark and then we come home from work and it's dark. They say it leads to seasonal affective disorder. Canada the birthplace of SAD. But I got to say, on my way to work this morning, I wasn't so much concerned about the lack of sunshine and my mood, as I was with the two pedestrians I almost ran over and believe me the fact that there were just two of them means this was a good day. Why did I almost run them over? Well as I mentioned it was dark. A fact that seems to be lost on the vast majority of pedestrians this time of year - that and I swear to god one of them was head to toe in black and might as well have been wearing a burka or a cloak of invisibility if it wasn't for the little tiny light coming from the cellphone that he was texting on in the middle of the street. I want to hit him at 40 kilometres an hour! And, is it just me or do pedestrians in this country actually slow down when they have to cross the street? I believe they do. Science will back me up on this. Now don't get me wrong, I've been a bad pedestrian I know that we all have. Just last month I was texting with my sister I was halfway through the crosswalk and it dawned on me I'm in the middle of the busy street my head is down and I'm texting. If I die in the next five seconds it's my own fault and not only that the people I know the people that love me the most and I know this about them, they will make fun of me at my own funeral probably by a text. Now, I don't know what the solution is here I'm not a nanny state guy, I'm not saying everyone's got a slap on a safety vest when they go to work in the morning, but for God's sakes the average person weighs a hundred and fifty pounds, a Prius weighs 3,000 pounds, and it's dark out - do the math! So heads up Canada let's get through this winter together better SAD than sorry. (397 words)

Rick's Rant: Turn Signals

I have a question it's been bothering me for a while now. Well actually it's been bothering me since about 8 o'clock this morning when I was almost crushed by an SUV on my way to work. When did using a turn signal become optional in this country? Remember the turn signal? The little stick on the left-hand side of the steering wheel? I say remember because I'm guessing a lot of Canadians - they have no idea what that stick is or what it's used for. If aliens came down from outer space and studied the way Canadians drive they would assume that using a turn signal was a voluntary exercise and that there were no actual firm guidelines surrounding its use. Refresher: it's to signal people! It tells people what you're about to do before you do it, which comes in handy at a hundred and ten kilometers an hour. And all of you people who use it to tell people what you have done after you have done it, you were doing it wrong. And to you: the guy in the intersection who decides at the last minute to turn left but decides that there's no reason in the world to tell anyone what you're up to or why you've suddenly stopped on a green light - You sir are not only a bad driver, you're a bad person. How bad? Everyone around you hates you, but don't worry I can help you. There's a simple solution. Signal. It's as easy as lifting a finger - literally - so this holiday season save a life. Lift a finger so the rest of us don't have to show you ours. (278)