

Comment & Opinions

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Saturday, November 15, 1997
Vol. 13, No. 46

EDITORIAL

'Road rage' can lead to tragedy

Road rage is becoming more and more common on our streets and highways.

On Thursday, it had tragic results in a Markham accident. According to police, a car driver in a hurry apparently bumped a slow-moving van in front of him a number of times in an effort to get it to move out of the way.

But instead of getting to his destination faster, the driver of the car lost control, and veered into oncoming traffic. The result, one innocent man dead, three seriously injured.

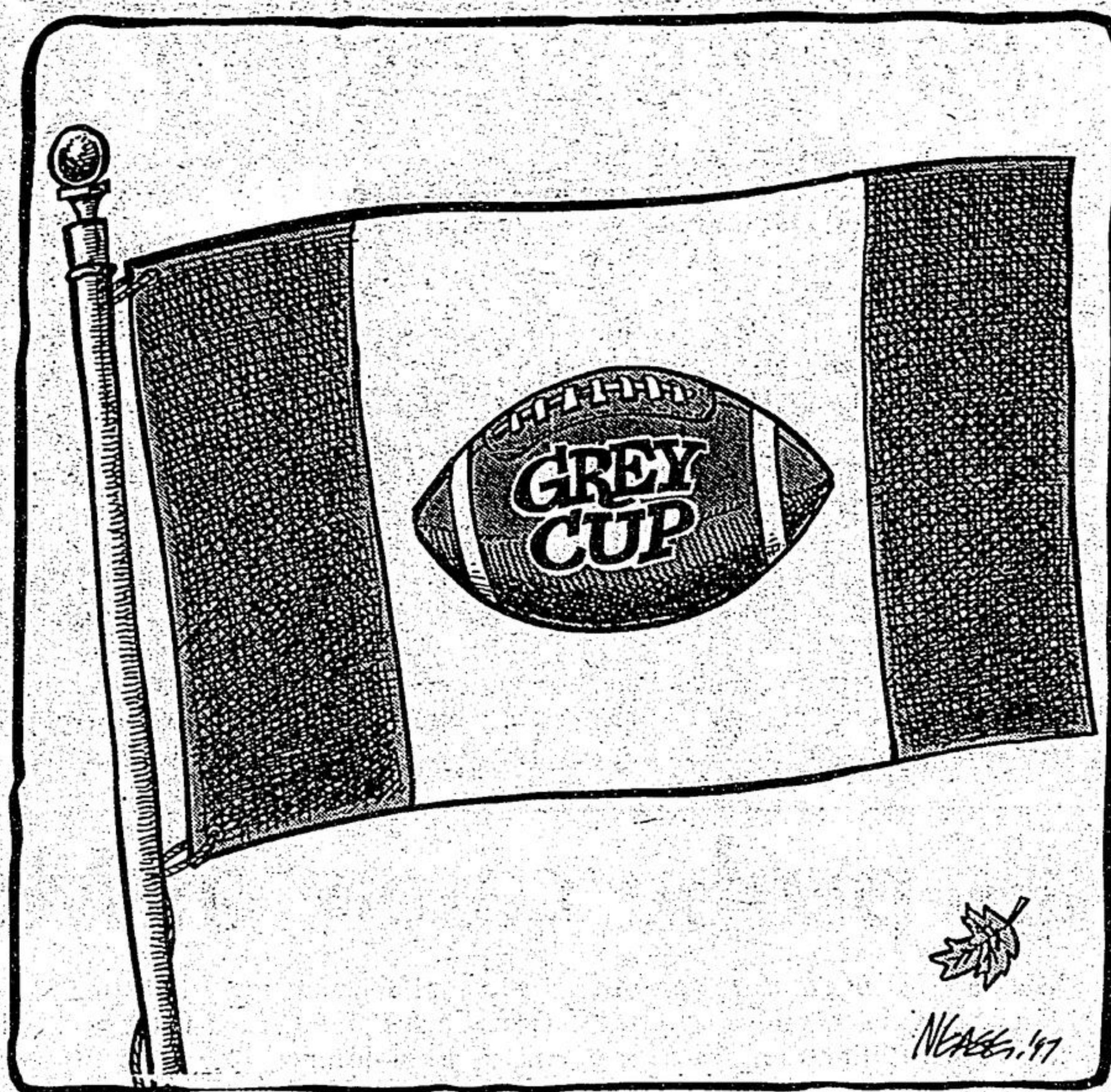
Drivers everywhere have to stop and think about the consequences of their actions while behind the wheel. Getting enraged while driving can have horrific results, as Thursday's crash proves.

Getting somewhere two minutes earlier, or avenging the fact that you were cut off, can never be worth a human life.

Why some drivers become completely different people while behind the wheel is a question for the psychologists. The results of their actions, however, can have a profound impact on others.

We are living in a stressful and increasingly-violent society, and it seems that too many people have decided to start using their cars as weapons.

We need more education for drivers, and much stiffer penalties from courts to put a stop to such insanity. And we need it now.



I'll never look at calamari the same way

I'd be willing to bet that you have not once in your entire life given so much as a passing thought to the sex life of the giant squid.

How self-centred can one person get? Never mind, we're going to rectify that right now. I am here to tell you that the sex life of the giant squid (architeuthis to his nerdy scientific friends) is rough. Very rough.

As a matter of fact, if you were to come across a pair of giant squid 'making out' on your front lawn, you could be forgiven for thinking that World War III had just broken out.

What happens is this: the squid stud approaches the squid gal and casually drapes three or four of his ten arms around her. Same old Saturday night, right? Wrong. This is where things get nasty. Basically, and without wishing to ruin your dinner, I can tell you that the male squid cuts little gashes in the female and then injects sperm in a manner that scientists say is akin to being "under hydraulic pressure, much as a doctor's syringe injects medicine."

Fortunately, giant squid don't do this on your front lawn. They do it in total darkness, hundreds of fathoms down in the deep vastness of the oceans, far from the prying eyes of human voyeurs.

So how do we know it happens this way? Because the scientists tell us so.

Doctor Mark Norman, a zoologist with the University of Victoria, recently got to study the body of giant female squid which was brought up from a depth of more than a kilometre by fishermen working off Tasmania.

Two of the squid's forward tentacles were covered with cuts several centimetres long. Each cut contained packets of forcibly-injected sperm. "I'm still surprised," says Doctor Norman. "I think it's pretty bizarre behaviour."

Well, I think it's bizarre too, and the only squid I've ever seen came as a side dish at a Spanish restaurant.

But I can't say I'm surprised. Nothing surprises me about sex anymore — whether it's between butterflies, giant squid or two computer nerds who meet at a Singles Bar.



Basic Black

Arthur Black

Sexual behaviour is pretty whacky anywhere you look in the animal kingdom. Some female spiders devour their mate as a post-coital treat. The lady praying mantis prefers to munch on the head of her beau while he's still "on the job," so to speak.

And then there's human sexual behaviour. Consider Jimmy Bakker, a religious leader with a cable TV network that brought in \$129 million US in one year alone.

That would be the year before Bakker was found to be spending a fair bit of his out-of-pulpit time nuzzling with Jessica Hahn, a 26-year-old church secretary.

Fellow televangelist Jimmy Swaggart mounted his pulpit to denounce Bakker as "a cancer that needs to be excised from the body of Christ."

That was just before Swaggart was photographed going into a New Orleans motel with a prostitute.

As the humourist James Thurber said: "Love is blind, but desire just doesn't give a good goddamn."

I'm not going to talk about my sex life, because I hate it when readers snore. But I will tell you about my initiation.

It took place in a gravel pit. My father, who was not much for man-to-man conversations concerning the birds and bees, decided it was time for me to learn the nitty-gritty, sex-wise. So he took me down to a gravel pit to witness the mating of a buckskin palomino mare and an Arabian stallion.

You don't run across a lot of poems written about the exquisite delicacy of equine coitus. When horses mate it is not what you would call a display of balletic daintiness. It's more like the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour.

There is much thundering of hooves. Much kicking. And biting. And whinnying. It does not look like a helluva lot of fun for either participant. And I don't recommend it as positive motivation for teenagers. It sure didn't make me look forward to a lifetime of pitching woo.

Besides, have you ever seen a stallion when it's ... hot to trot? I felt utterly inadequate for the next 35 years.

It's quite different nowadays. When the time came to "have a chat" with my 13 year old, I resolved that I would do things differently. No squalid gravel pit blitzkriegs for him. I would deal with him face-to-face and man-to ... well, boy.

So I waited until after dinner, then I called him down to my workshop in the basement. I asked him to take a chair. We chatted about the Canucks the Blue Jays ... and finally I took a deep breath and said: Son, I think the time has come to discuss the Facts of Life with you.

"Sure, Dad" he says. "What do you want to know?"

Bill's aim is to cut funds, not improve education

Dear Editor,
This is in response to Julia Munro's letter ("MPP clarifies government position on Bill 160").

You are right when you say that teachers are saying that there are too many students in their classrooms with too few text books. Then you suggest that Bill 160 will decrease the number of students per class.

This leaves many large loopholes in your reasoning. Smaller classes means more teachers, more schools and more resources.

However, we all know that Bill 160 is about cutting costs and tak-

ing another billion dollars out of the education budget. This does not add up.

You mentioned the board offices. These buildings are already built. Do you suggest these should be torn down and replaced with less modern buildings? Would this save the tax dollars the government wants to cut from the education budget?

You mention that changes to Bill 160 would require full legislative debate. Are we talking about the same kind of superficial legislative debates that are currently taking place for Bill 160?

LETTER

How can you, in full conscience, support such an undemocratic bill that states over and over that issues (referred to throughout the 280 pages) cannot be challenged and that decisions taken by a small appointed committee are final?

We all know that the main function of Bill 160 is to further reduce education funding. It does not refer at all to improving the quality of education in Ontario.

Marie Stevens, Stouffville

STOUFFVILLE TRIBUNE WEEKENDER

A Metroland Community Newspaper

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