

Opinion



By Dave Barry

Our topic today, in our continuing series on guys, is: Why Guys Act Macho.

One recent morning I was driving in Miami on Interstate 95, which should have a sign that says:

WARNING: HIGH TESTOSTERONE LEVELS NEXT 15 MILES

In the left lane, one behind the other, were two well-dressed middle-aged men, both driving luxury telephone-equipped German automobiles. They looked like responsible business executives, probably named Roger, with good jobs and nice families and male pattern baldness, the kind of guys whose most violent physical activity, on an average day, is stapling. They

WHY GUYS ACT MACHO

were driving normally, except that the guy in front, Roger One, was thoughtlessly going about 65 miles an hour, which in Miami is the speed limit normally observed inside car washes. So Roger Two pulled up behind until the two cars were approximately one electron apart, and honked his horn.

Of course Roger One was not about to stand for THAT. You let a guy honk at you, and you are basically admitting that he has a bigger stapler. So Roger One stomped on his brakes, forcing Roger Two to swerve onto the shoulder, where, showing amazing presence of mind in an emergency, he was able to make obscene gestures WITH BOTH HANDS.

At this point both Rogers accelerated to approximately 147 miles per hour and began weaving violently from lane to lane through dense rush hour traffic, each risking numerous lives in an effort to get in front of the other, screaming and getting spit all over their walnut dashboards.

I quickly lost sight of them, but I bet neither one backed down. Their co-workers probably wondered what happened to them. "Where the heck is Roger?" they probably said later that morning, unaware that, even as they spoke, the dueling Rogers, still only inches apart, were approaching the Canadian border.

This is not unusual guy behavior. One time in a Washington D.C. traffic jam, I saw two guys, also driving nice cars, reach a point where their lanes were supposed to merge. But neither one would yield, so they very slowly -- we are talking one mile per hour -- DROVE INTO EACH OTHER.

Other examples of pointlessly destructive or hurtful macho guy behavior include:

-Guys at sporting events getting into shoving matches and occasionally sustaining fatal heart attacks over such issues as who was next in line for pretzels.

-Guys on the street making mouth noises at women.

-Boxing

-Foreign Policy

Why do guys do these things? One possible explanation is that they believe women are impressed. In fact, however, most women have the opposite reaction to macho behavior. You rarely hear women say things like, "Norm, when that vending

machine failed to give you a Three Musketeers bar and you punched it so hard that you broke your hand and we had to go to the hospital instead of to my best friend's daughter's wedding, I became so filled with lust for you that I nearly tore off all my clothes right there in the emergency room." No, women are far more likely to say: "Norm, you have the brains of an Odor Eater."

But the real explanation for macho behavior is not that guys are stupid. The real explanation is that because of complex and subtle hormone-based chemical reactions occurring in their brains, guys frequently ACT stupid. This is true throughout the animal kingdom, where you have examples such as male elks, who, instead of simply flipping a coin, will bang their heads against each other for hours to see who gets to mate with the female elk, who is on the sidelines, filing her nails and wondering how she ever got hooked up with such a moron species, until eventually she gets bored and wanders off to bed. Meanwhile the guy elks keep banging into each other until one of them finally "wins," although at this point his brain, which was not exactly a steel trap to begin with, is so badly damaged that, in his confusion, he will mate with the first object he encounters, including shrub-

bery, which is why you see so few baby elks around.

Another example of macho animal behavior is guy dogs, who are so dumb they make elks look like Rhodes scholars. Every male dog firmly believes that if he makes weewee in enough places, he will be declared Dominant Male Dog Of The Entire Earth and receive a plaque plus valuable dog prizes, such as a bag of chicken heads. Of course since there are several billion dogs in the competition, everybody is extremely busy trying to stay ahead of everybody else. One time I took a hike on a mountain with two male dogs named Rubio and Moo Shu. Every three minutes Rubio would carefully select a spot and establish his dominance over it; then Moo Shu would come sprinting from as far as a mile away so that, despite having the entire mountain to choose from, he could establish HIS dominance over the same four square inches previously dominated by Rubio, who by now was several hundred yards away, dominating a new spot, which Moo Shu would then frantically sprint toward, and so all day long, with each dog absolutely convinced that he was the Baddest Hombre on the planet. Ha ha! At least we humans males don't do THAT. We don't need to. We have tanks.

St. Lawrence University The Hill News

Editorial Staff

Editor-in-Chief
Justin T. Scott

Managing Editor
Kenneth T. Polk

Front Page Editor
Editor-at-Large
Editorial/Letters Editor
In Focus Editors

Campus/Greek Editor
Assistant Editor
Vilas/Faculty Editor
Assistant Editor
Community/National Editor
Assistant Editor
Features Editor
Assistant Editor
Music/Entertainment Editor
Assistant Editor
Sports Editor
Photography Editor

Advertising Manager
Graphics/Art Editor
Assistant Graphics/Art Editor
Business Manager
National Advertising Manager
Circulation Manager
Courier
Faculty Advisor

Contributing Editor
Michael Cowan

Kim Cattat
Gina Vitiello
Rebecca Ten Eyck
Dale Lally
Elinor Tatum
Alicia Scott
Lisa Marotz
Michele Fazekas
Abigail Rock
Chris Gardner
Jay Smith
Michael Martinez
David DeFazio
Laura Marshall
Kate Harrington
Steve Charlton
David A. High

Operations Manager
William Paczkowski

Timothy Lesko
Gerald Howatt
Michael Willis
John Biele
Pamela Hansen
Amy Conway
Robert Coolidge
Susan Ward

The Hill News is published every Friday of the year, except during holiday and examination periods, by the students of St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY 13617.

Unsolicited manuscripts, articles and letters to the editor must be typed and signed. Copy deadline is 4 p.m. on Monday prior to publication and advertisement deadline is 4 p.m. on Monday prior to publication.

Editors reserve the right to edit all material selected for publication and to withhold any material considered libelous or unsuitable for publication.

Opinions expressed in The Hill News are not necessarily those of the editors, the staff, the student body, the faculty, or the St. Lawrence University administration. The Hill News office is in the lower level of the E.J. Noble University Center. News phone: 315-379-5139, business phone: 315-379-5140.

Letters

Abroad Programs

Will Continue

Dear Editor:

Having just returned from Africa, I am happy to report that all the students who enrolled in the Kenya semester program have arrived safely and are beginning their studies.

The SLU programs in Kenya, Denmark, France, England, Spain, the Soviet Union, and Japan are all continuing as planned, and to my knowledge, no student enrolled in any of our programs has left because of the threat of terrorism or civil unrest.

Although we continue to monitor the situation, the State Department has not issued any travel advisories in any of the countries in which we have programs; nor does advice from the U.S. embassies in those countries where we have programs suggest that it is advisable that our programs not continue.

That does not mean that SLU does not take the situation seriously. We have contingency plans in the event that the situation in any of the locations where we have programs deteriorates; but, at this time we see no reason to suggest that it will be necessary to put them into action. The students in all our programs have been advised to use common sense about accepting packages from

strangers and picking up unmarked packages, and to adopt a profile that does not call attention to themselves...advice that is likely appropriate in the best of times.

The staff in the Office of International Education continues to monitor the situation, and the directors of our abroad programs continue to keep in contact with the U.S. embassies. In the event the situation changes, we will, of course, notify the students enrolled in our abroad programs, as well as their parents.

In summary, at this time, it is business as usual in all of our abroad programs.

Dave Hornung
Director of International
Education