

Heather
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Crowd control

Where two or more are gathered, there go I

Living in a world that's covered with billions of people, you would think I would be used to all of them by now.

You would think I'd be used to the nutty drivers in the Target parking lot, the overly aggressive women pushing their way through the grocery stores, the people who cut in line at the food court.



Since I am a card-holding member, one would think I'd be used to the public. Sadly enough, I'm not.

I think the word "public" should be added to George Carlin's list of the seven dirty words that can't be said on the air. Public would be the eighth. (For all the perverts out there, that's public with an L.)

I truly understand why the wealthy build private bowling alleys and movie theaters in their homes. I understand why there is development of programs on the Internet that would let a person order their groceries to be delivered. I understand why people use catalogs.

I guess I should become a recluse, because I can't go out of my home without being annoyed. Don't get me wrong. I love most of my fellow

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women and men. If I saw any one of you walking down the street, I might be apt to smile, say hello and give you a big wet kiss right on the lips.

But there is something about people congregating in large groups in public places that leads me to believe that the police need to exercise their right to use tear gas more.

People seem to undergo a metamorphosis when gathered in large groups. People who you would normally like one-on-one become people that you'd like to back over with your car. Any trip to a large movie theater will prove my point.

Scenario 1:

You and your date arrive at the movie theater early to avoid waiting in a long line. You are standing politely in line when a large herd of teen-agers comes up to talk with the people directly in front of you. "Hey man, can we stand in line with you guys?" I guess I just assume people would learn. Do you remember the boy in your kindergarten class who

got beat up for cutting in the chocolate milk line at snack time? The annoyance with "cutters" doesn't go away with age.

You may not be pummeled by 12 5-year-olds, but just when you think you've gotten away with the perfect crime, a chewed-up gummy bear will be hurled into your hair.

Scenario 2:

You and your date are sitting and enjoying the movie. Suddenly a pair of feet, smelling like aged cheese, arrange themselves on the back of the chair next to you.

Meanwhile, the women in front of you, who have seen the movie three times before, talk loudly, revealing how the movie ends. Just as you are about to beat them with your popcorn tub, you see smoke and panic that the theater may be on fire. But alas, it is just these women's husbands smoking cigarettes that smell worse than the feet that are cuddling with your head. Maybe they couldn't read the NO SMOKING signs — the illiterate go to the movies, too, you know.

Scenario 3:

You chug a supersize soda and have to relieve yourself 15 minutes into the movie. You walk into the restroom and are overtaken by the stench in the air. No amount of potpourri could save you now.

Gagging, you walk to the first stall, only to be met by an unflushed toilet. Nearly unconscious, you stagger to the next stall and nearly slip and fall in the puddle in front of the toilet. (Do these people pee on the floor at home or do they save this experience just for me?)

You finally decide going to the bathroom may put you at risk of contracting a flesh-eating disease and decide not to go. But since you touched all the door handles, you decide you had better wash your hands. You wash your hands with scalding water and diluted soap and are ready to dry them, but find out that the movie theater refills the paper-towel dispensers every leap year.

You run screaming from the theater, leaving your date alone to contend with the cheesy feet.

This hermit thing is looking better and better.

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Brent
POPE

A meaty issue

Hunting: I just don't get the thrill of the kill

The following quote represents the ramblings of a madman: "Be vewwwwwy quiet. I'm hunting wabbits." That's right, I'm suggesting that loveable, bald Elmer Fudd is actually a bad man, a vewwwwwy bad man.

Now before you start labeling me as a hunter-hater and a hypocrite for eating meat myself, let me

explain. I'm not naive enough to believe that the meat I eat is simply delivered to the store by the Meat Fairy, but if you hunt for food, that's a different story. Hunting for that purpose is OK. I'm talking about the hunters who kill just for the fun of it. That's why I despise good old Elmer J. Fudd; he is the stereotypical example of a bad hunter. He just goes out and tries to shoot whatever Daffy Duck says is in season.

But even though I tolerate it in certain situations, hunting just doesn't seem that fun to me. My dad tried to get me to go deer hunting with him one time. Here's a rough recollection of that conversation:

ME: Can I bring a radio?
DAD: No music, it'll scare away the deer.

“*That's why I despise good old Elmer J. Fudd; he is the stereotypical example of a bad hunter. He just goes out and tries to shoot whatever Daffy Duck says is in season.*”

ME: Can I tell jokes?
DAD: No talking, it'll scare away the deer.

ME: Can I bring something to eat?
DAD: No food, the smell will scare away the deer.

ME: When do we have to leave the house?

DAD: Before sunrise, so we don't scare away the deer.

ME: So we'll have to bring flashlights, right?

DAD: No flashlights, they'll scare away the deer.

ME: What if I can't see and fall off of a cliff?

DAD: No falling off cliffs, the noise will scare away the deer....

All of this brings me to the heart of what I'm getting at, which is this: I don't GET hunting. I mean, I just don't understand why it's still popular in this day and age. I think of

hunting as something you do to get meat, and that's what I thought grocery stores were for.

There's got to be a less dangerous (and lazier) way to obtain meat and still have some of the "fun" that hunters have. Here are a few things that I came up with:

1. We could have a store where you can go in, grab a rifle, and shoot blanks at a man in a walrus costume. Then the man in the costume reels around for a while and finally collapses on the floor. Then you go in back and pick up meat from the butcher that supposedly comes from the animal that you "shot." (And the whole time the butcher tells you how you are a mighty walrus slayer.)

2. Or, we design a store where you grab a harpoon at the front door. Then you go to a giant swimming pool at the back of the store, get in a

raft and harpoon the floating pieces of meat in the pool that you want to take home. (And the whole time you can pretend that you are Ismail the great whale hunter.)

3. How about this? A store where you get a bow and arrow and sit in a tree until a mechanical bull waddles in front of you. Then you shoot arrows at the bull until you hit it. And just in case you aren't a great shot, the bull keels over after three minutes and you can claim that you scared it to death!

4. Here's a new concept: Meat pifatas! One of those new-age stores could have pifatas hanging from the ceiling filled with your choice of meat. All you would have to do is grab a club and slug the pifata until it breaks and you are showered with a glorious batch of delicious beef jerky. (Conan would declare you a powerful Barbarian indeed.)

As you can see, there are plenty of exciting meat-gathering options other than actual hunting. And I didn't even mention CYBER-HUNTING and punching slabs of meat Rocky style. (YO!)

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