

I Honk Therefore I Am

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A famous poet once wrote, *“Tis better to have driven and honked, then to have driven and never honked at all!”*

What's wrong with that?

“Love!”

No! Because, some of us "love" to honk...*and occasionally for good reasons too!*

A study somewhere must prove, "drivers who never honk, die of more stress related diseases than consummate honkers." Consequently, non-honkers who stuff emotions or just take what's sounded out to them, all find themselves at the ER or cemetery much sooner only to be surrounded by – you guessed it – honkers.

During a visit to a country in the Middle East, I heard constant honking (even when I wasn't behind the wheel.) Everybody honked about this, that, and the other thing. Nothing that could be honked about, went un-honked. There, to not honk is cause to have the coroner called.

Imagine, from the earliest glimmer of dawn until the darkest dead of night, silence plus traffic is unknown. An opportunity worth a honk, in which honking does not occur, has never happened in that land since camels were put out to pasture...or the desert. I checked this out, *don't ask me how.*

To my point. I think two styles of car horns should be standard equipment in every new vehicle. Each honk, one friendly, one commanding, conveys two clearly different mood messages. Number One: "Excuse me, but I think it's going to rain, don't you?" Pleasant, loud enough to gain notice but in no way stirs up the use of firearms, the finger, or rebuttal shouting. Number Two: "Excuse me! But, obviously I'm NOT the first person, and probably I'm just the latest representative of a vast multitude of drivers who all believe YOU BELONG ON YOUR OWN ROAD – **ON AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PLANET!**"

I'd prefer the two options, light or blatant. Nice or downright scary. "Hello" or "Please evaporate!" Yes, guilt can rule and reign over nice people who are subject to the uncontrollable volume and the overly authoritative tone of their current car horn. Maybe a middle option is needed? Number One and a Half: "Perhaps we could both pull

off the road and discuss this controversial matter over a cup of coffee or a cigarette, hmm...what do you say?"

So often, when I'm trying to be polite towards another driver, loud **Number Two** is all they hear. Have you ever duly honked at someone (non-honkers are exempt from this question) who you then recognized as a friend or good neighbor? Did you still think less of them, or did you immediately lose the whole angry "**idiot-get off the road**" thing...and kindly offer a conciliatory wave?

If not, thank the car manufacturer if you own a vehicle with exceedingly dark, tinted windows.

Who goes shopping for a car and makes their final decision due to the sound of the horn. Color, maybe. Horn, no! Decades ago, tapping lightly used to be achievable. Sadly, since landing on the moon, that civility gene in car designers was bred out. Maybe volume control is needed. If the designers won't provide that feature, how about a convenient two-sided, rooftop display, with LED lights flashing cliché or customizable messages? A small siren couldn't hurt.

In conclusion, after my trip abroad and returning to my own small city of Spokane, Washington (population 470,000) I noticed the quiet. Yes, all cars here are equipped with car horns. So what's up!?! Drivers simply let things go. Whether futility-mindedness prevails, we're more forgiving, or there's something "they" put into our drinking water - I don't know. But I sure prefer our rare and speedy trials, by judge-and-jury motorists. *After all*, those drivers only end up doing the same mistakes everybody else does, whether they'd admit it or not!