

# Just Stop, Dammit

by Julia Smillie

*May 29, 2005*

I have only one thing to say to you. And that is: stop it.

Stop driving around without your seat belt on. What kind of idiot are you? You might as well install a pony keg in your dash board and drink up, because you're asking for a whole mess o' trouble, my friend. Don't you read the news? Don't you understand that in the event of a crash, you'll be thrown from your car, your body treated to a far more indelicate fate than if you were strapped in nicely?

What's that? Wearing seat belts isn't cool? I'm going to let you in on a secret – science has been unable to prove a direct correlation between coolness and unbuckled seatbelts. In fact, if that's what you think, then logic dictates that you actually need to buckle up *more* than most people because you need all the help you can get.

Oh, I see. You're not planning on crashing. That's a great strategy. Really. Quite comforting too, since the proximity of your front bumper to my rear end suggest otherwise. Here's a thought though – what if someone is planning to crash into *you*. Hell, what if *I'm* planning to crash into you. Then where does that leave us?

It's all a moot point, however, because I already know you're going to crash. Maybe not today. Maybe not tomorrow, but someday soon. I know, because I've seen you driving and you're so busy talking animatedly on your cell phone that the laws of probability have sat up and cried in unison for you to side check someone in a small import. Think of the factors, here. I know you can't operate a cell phone and use your turn signal. You've demonstrated that nicely. Risk assessment analysts are now going ape shit thinking of your fate.

Plus, that whole thing you've got going on, with your cell phone in your left hand? It's blocking your blind spot. I suspect, in fact, you couldn't locate your blind spot with a GPS tracking device. Although that's a silly thing to say, isn't it? You wouldn't use a GPS tracking device! Why? Because there's no room for it next to your in-dash DVD player.

What I don't get – what I really don't get – is why you are talking on the phone while you're obviously watching a movie. Oh, wait. Perhaps you're narrating the story for the blind. No, you're right. It doesn't seem fair to ask you to pay attention to the road when you're busy doing charity work.

You might want to lose the cigarette, though. Not for the health risks or anything. No, I'm a former smoker and I know exactly how much it helps to beg, beg, beg those you love – or, hell, those you share the roads with – to stop smoking. I'm just wondering how many hands you have. Between the phone in one hand and the cigarette in the other, I'm wondering what, exactly, you are using to steer. Never mind. I don't want to know.

I think I might get the whole unbuckled seat belt thing though. I mean, if you've got a cell phone in one hand and a lit cigarette in the other, what on earth are you going to buckle your seat belt with? Your foot? Now, that's just silly. Silly, I say! Now I almost feel bad for asking about it in the first place. In fact, forget it. Just forget I ever said anything at all.