

# Maddog Unleashed

## From a Glass SUV Comes a Fusillade Of Rocks at Riders

*The right to swing my fist ends where the other man's nose begins.* —Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.



BY PATRICK O'GRADY

It's probably a good thing that Congress replaced the de facto national motto "E pluribus unum" (Out of many, one) with "In God We Trust." Some of us couldn't care less about the common good without the threat of spanking from a supernatural hand.

Spring has sprung a bumper crop of cyclist-motorist conflicts, most of which end badly for the two-wheeler. Paradoxically, motorists invariably claim the status of victims trapped in rolling fortresses besieged by hordes of Spandexed Visigoths. "It was like one of them human-wave charges in Korea, or maybe Custer's last stand," said Billy Bob Beernut as he spritzed gobbets of flesh and scraps of Lycra from the grille of his Escalade EXT. "It was just me and my 7,200-pound Caddy against the mongrel hordes.

"See that scratch on the hood? I b'leve that last fella had hisself some eyeglasses on, or maybe it was a wedding ring. But hell, I can buff that right out. Won't no amount of Bondo patch the dent me an' Esky put in ol' Lance Whatsisface there."

**Share MY Road?** Tensions seem particularly high here in Colorado. A drug-addled serial shoplifter who drove her pickup into a group of Colorado Springs cyclists last year, killing two, got just three years in prison in June.

Up north, clashes among cyclists, pedestrians and motorists have escalated into a call from a safely anonymous rabble-rouser for a "celebration of driver's rights" intended to impede the Sunrise Century on July 25.

Whether this Combustionist Manifesto circulated in rural Boulder County is merely a practical joke remains to be seen. It could be the work of a Groucho Marxist, though it smells like the brain farts of an underachiever who had every opportunity to enjoy an education at public expense but chose not to—on political grounds, no doubt.

**The Bluecoats Are Coming.** There is no such thing as a "right" to drive in Colorado, on narrow mountain roads or anywhere else. See the Colorado Driver Handbook, page 7: "Having a driver's license is a privilege. Protect that privilege by driving with care and consideration for others."

Among those who can be denied this privilege, in addition to those who refuse to drive with care and consideration for others, are drunks, drug fiends and the insane. Those so afflicted still retain their actual rights as enumerated in the Constitution. Regrettably, these include freedom of speech, even unto the issuance of boneheaded calls for "civil disobedience," as the Left Hand Canyon Liberation Army flyer misspells it.

**Of Fists and Noses.** This seems elementary, but not even in the Land of the Free can we do exactly what we want to do, when we want to do it. That's no way to run a sandbox full of preschoolers, much less a republic.

The Sunrise Century applied for and received a special-event permit. And while some of its 1,500 participants are certain to be as self-righteous, smug and sanctimonious as our manifesto author—yes, I have ridden in Boulder—in this instance, at least, they are abiding by the rules we have all agreed to live by.

Well, most of us, anyway. On my hour-long ride today I saw two libertarian motorists defy red lights and a third blow right through a stop sign. Two more executed unsignaled turns directly into my path.

Those "rights" aren't in the Constitution, either. Or the Colorado Driver Handbook. I checked.