

Jupiter's squared circles bane of local motorists

December 12, 2001

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Einstein move over. Your theory of relativity has nothing over what I've discovered here in Jupiter: incontrovertible proof that a circle can be squared. In fact, we residents of Jupiter square circles daily.

No one is arguing that a circle isn't fundamentally round. But, on the other hand, if a circle has corners, by virtue of the fact that we can visibly cut those corners, is a circle still round, or has it been squared?

Confused and frustrated? So am I.

Take a drive down Central Boulevard between Donald Ross and Indian Creek. There you will experience three traffic circles - the cause of inestimable public frustration, concern and civil liability.

Traffic circles are a vanity on the part of the civil engineer, or whoever designs them. I never found one anywhere that worked. They may be entertaining to observe, in a mindlessly hypnotic and kinetic fashion, but they are an absolute pain to drive in.

Back on our home world of Jupiter the problem is not entering these three traffic circles, but staying alive within them. For example, while driving inside the circle, one always wonders if the driver approaching the circle is going to slow down and yield, or enter the circle via your passenger door?

And where is the circle being squared? By that nut on your left! By the driver who, while rounding the circle on the inside lane, thinks nothing of exiting the circle by making a right hand turn from the left lane, as if the person next to him in the right lane,

the exiting lane, doesn't exist!

OK, you ask, why are there two lanes leading out from the circle, if not for both right and left lanes to exit the circle at the same time? Good point, grasshopper. And the answer is conjectural if not philosophical.

First, what if the driver in the outside, right hand lane doesn't want to exit, but rather continues rounding the circle? Bam! Broadside into the driver who's cutting a corner, exiting from the inside lane. Yet there are arrows indicating the right lane has the option of exiting or continuing on, and the inside lane can only continue on. Admittedly, there are not enough of these arrows; in fact it appears someone has penciled in a few here and there. Nonetheless, they're not very convincing, obviously.

Why are there are two lanes connected to the exit? I'd rather let the designer, civil engineer, road planning department head answer that. In fact I dare him or her to answer.

There is a simple solution; close one lane down for a few yards! That might be a good hint to those who are prone to squaring the circle that they shouldn't!

But there is a deeper issue here. Can it be that these traffic circles are a metaphor for American individuality and ingenuity? After all, do we have to be spoon-fed our patterns of behavior? Aren't there enough signs, arrows, lights and directions on our roads already? I mean what's wrong with a little demolition derby now and then? Sort of clears the air, and allows for the survival of the fittest, guaranteeing that generations to come will better understand the promise inherent within a traffic circle.

Problem is, sooner or later there will come a spoilsport who's going to cry for his lawyer, sue for millions of dollars, bankrupt the town of Jupiter, forcing our Town Council to take down the traffic lights to save money on electricity and turn every intersection into a traffic circle.

Interesting.