

Emotionally Upset Drivers Cause Fatal Mishaps

ANN ARBOR.—"If you're slipping along in a car at 90 miles an hour and make an angry gesture—it can be all over in seconds. You're dead and probably others too," says a University of Michigan psychiatrist.

Addressing rescue workers at a conference dealing with cars for injured patients, Dr. Martin L. Selzer described the link between fatal auto accidents and chronic alcoholics who are emotionally upset.

In a study of Washington County fatalities, the U-M psychiatrist found that 69 per cent of the 95 drivers responsible for the accidents had at least one symptom of mental illness. Thirty-six were chronic alcoholics.

"The highway is a bad spot for impulsive actions," noted Dr. Selzer.

HIS RESEARCH revealed that 39 per cent of the alcoholics responsible for fatal accidents had expressed violence shortly before the mishap; 31 per cent showed evidence of depression, and 50 per cent evidence of paranoid thinking. "This group of drivers represent sick people—drinking brings out a lot of very unpleasant emotional problems. These are often expressed in violent actions when they are behind the wheel," the psychiatrist said.

Lakeshore Water Rights Bill Signed

Confusion and controversy among shoreline owners, surveyors, land developers, and state officials came to an end this week when Gov. Romney signed a bill which established an ordinary high water mark for Michigan's Great Lakes. The measure, House Bill 2621, was given immediate effect.

George Taack, the Conservation Department's submerged lands supervisor, calls the new law a "milestone in setting down a permanent, clear-cut dividing line between public and private water rights along Michigan's Great Lakes shorelines."

Until now, property lines on the Great Lakes have been clouded by constantly fluctuating water levels. The new law sets the ordinary high water mark at these elevations above sea level (International Great Lakes Datum): Lake Superior, 601.5 feet; Lakes Michigan and Huron, 572.8 feet; Lake St. Clair, 574.7 feet; and Lake Erie, 571.6 feet. Among other things, establishment of the ordinary high water mark tightens control over dredging, filling, or building on lands which are temporarily exposed below the mark. Any such projects may only be undertaken after they have been approved by local units of government and state permits have been issued for them.

Lawyers Title Announces Promotions

A list of staff promotions affecting Michigan officers of Lawyers Title Insurance Corporation was announced Monday by Lawrence J. Dowd, vice president and manager of Michigan operations.

Heading the list was Edmund J. Buck, who has served the corporation and its predecessors many years in administrative and sales departments. Buck was named assistant vice president. His new duties will be in addition to his present work as metropolitan Detroit sales manager.

At the same time, Dowd announced four other Detroit promotions—James Kaldjian, Robert Oliver and Nicholas Volino, advanced to assistant title officers, and Eugene Malloy, to assistant secretary.

There were two promotions at the Pontiac office—Ronald Feldman and Charles Miller, named assistant title officers. Edmund Mayers of the Mount Clemens office was named assistant secretary. Lowell Elowsky of the Bay City office was named assistant secretary.

WASHINGTON — A revision being considered in the International Coffee Agreement may result in higher prices for some instant coffee in this country. A controversy has arisen over a provision which would require Brazil to levy an export tax on instant coffee, which it now ships out of the country without a tax. Percy Furuseth, President Johnson's consumer affairs advisor, is scheduled to testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the matter.

trist said. His research showed that 53 per cent of the drivers had vocational or financial problems before the accident. And 50 per cent were upset because of personal tragedy.

He used a control group of drivers chosen at random for comparison. They were of the

same age, sex and country. Of the control group of 66, only 18 were found to be emotionally upset.

DR. SELZER SAID that of the 38 chronic alcoholics responsible for fatalities, 33 had been drinking before the accident. Of control drivers, one-third had

been drinking. But their blood alcohol levels were relatively low.

On the other hand, 19 of the alcoholics registered blood alcohol levels of .16 to .24 per cent. "You've got to drink with dedication to get levels that high," noted Dr. Selzer. "The alcoholic driver is apt to be

very intoxicated. He is heavily over-represented in one-car accidents (69 per cent) and is much more likely to have an accident after 10 p.m. Of the 38 drivers, 16 had at least one prior conviction. Four of every five persons arrested for drunk driving are chronic alcoholics, he said.

The U-M psychiatrist stressed that the problem is not the social drinker, not the person who has been at a cocktail party.

THE CHRONIC ALCOHOLIC is responsible for most alcohol-involved traffic accidents, especially the more serious ones. They are as much due to the alcoholic's underlying emotional illness as to impairment caused by heavy intoxication. Rehabilitation and methods to guarantee these drivers must be undertaken, Dr. Selzer said. "If they could be treated and helped to overcome their problems, we could reduce by

one-third the fatal auto accidents."

The conference at which Dr. Selzer spoke was sponsored by the U-M Medical Center, the Highway Safety Research Institute and the Extension Center. Some 250 ambulance drivers, firemen, police, nurses, and doctors attended.



Sale ends Sat., 9 P.M.



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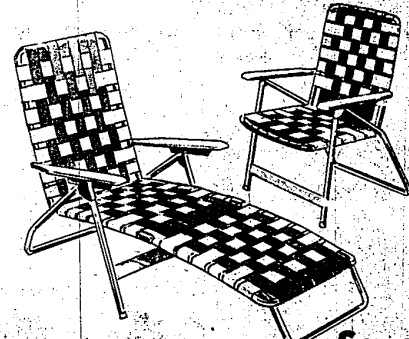
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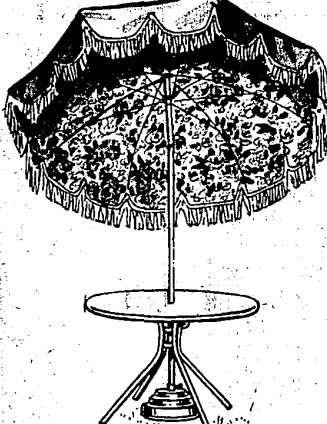


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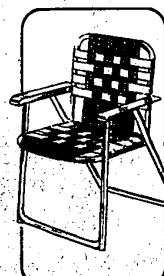


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