

Hallway havoc

I dragged my feet down the crowded, odd smelling hallway on the way to my first block class. It was biology, so I obviously wasn't in any hurry.

The mob of my peers that surrounded me, like myself, were slowly shuffling forward, waiting for the neverending line to the stairway to become less condensed.

All of the sudden, *BAM!* Some 200-pound, deodorant-less senior with AirPods in his grimy, bacteria-filled ears slammed right into me, before disappearing into the crowd, doing the same to everyone else he walked past.

"What a jerk," I muttered under my breath, likely voicing the thoughts of my fellow peers. As I continued "walking," I saw a group of freshmen standing in the middle of the hall, creating an impenetrable gate of people.

"How inconsiderate," I only thought to myself this time, as the people my sentence was referring to were only a few feet away from me, as well as AirPod-less.

Finally, right before I entered hell (biology), I saw a close friend of mine walking in the opposite direction.

One of the guys I've been in school with since preschool.

A guy I have countless inside jokes and have spent some of my best ever memories with.

A guy I would trust my life with.

A guy that would NEVER ignore me when I greet him in the hallway before I step into my first period biology class.

Take a guess what happened.

It was scarring. It's the type of thing that changes a man.

I walked over to him with an ear-to-ear smile on my face, not aware of how naive my optimism would soon feel.

I nodded my head and gave a solid "Sup?", but to no avail. He walked right past me, with no acknowledgement of my presence. And then ... *oh*, I can't continue.

Not only is it becoming too painful to recall, but all the tears on my keyboard are going to cause water damage to my laptop.

However (this is when I was still thinking clearly, before the heartbreak,) I remember the primary question in my head immediately after the incident.

"Why isn't anybody following the rules?"

"Rules?" I hear you question out loud to your paper, no doubt confusing the mentally stable people in the room. "What rules?"

Well, dear strawman, the kind of rules we all subconsciously follow. The kind that aren't enforced, but not abiding to them make you look like a jerk.

What do you mean I still sound insane?

Whether you think about it or not, there *are* decisions we all collectively make when walking to our classes. It doesn't matter if you call them "unspoken rules," "etiquette," or whatever.

These acts we make go deeper than the "Well, I don't want to be a *cen-

sored*" status; they actually stem from something much bigger (unless you are one of those *censored* people, in which case you can go *censored* yourself*).

But before I blabber about *why* we have etiquette, we need to understand *what* said etiquette *is*.

Despite being the #1 biggest "The Unspoken Rules of <fill in the blank>" writer, I believe senior Jack Mannion describes hallway etiquette simply and perfectly.

"Just be respectful of other people," Mannion said. "Know [that] you're not the only person in the hallways."

Mannion also had more specific comments on not being a burden on others when traversing the halls.

"Just stay to the right side [when walking], and if you're going to talk to people, get to the side of the hallways, don't just stand in the middle ... Don't be too loud either," Mannion said.

The best part of this advice, however, is who it's coming from.

Mannion is: #1, A senior, the grade which is well known by underclassmen as the worst hallway walkers in the school (you know who you are). #2, A 6'4", 210-pound athlete, meaning if he bumps into you you're gonna *feel* it. And #3, Involved in a ton of extracurriculars, including baseball, ultimate frisbee and Knights Way, on top of being a Blue Leader, meaning he knows, what, *everyone* in the school?

If those three attributes aren't the unholy trinity of horrific hall usage I don't know what are, but Mannion subverts this simply by being considerate.

If he can do it, I'm fairly confident you can too.

And that's all I ask of anyone walking around the school. Nobody cares how much of a hurry you're in or how funny that joke is that your friend just *needs* to hear *right now*, they just want to get to their class and maybe say "hi" to some friends on the way.

Just because you don't care about being tardy doesn't mean everybody else does too.

Sure, I could individually list every single "rule" that I believe is "rule-worthy" on the sacred *Declaration of Hall-dependance*, but at the end of the day just don't be *that* guy.

Y'know, *that* guy. Who stands still on moving sidewalks in the airport, doesn't use a turn signal half the time, the kind that makes you accidentally swear in front of your grandparents out of annoyance.

But why is that bad? Not the oddly specific "swearing in front of Gram and Gramps" thing that 100% definitely didn't happen to me, but having no care for others around you?

It sounds like a stupid question, I know, but I'm also the guy talking about fake laws in a school hallway, so take that as you will.



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WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE: STUDENTS TRAVEL THROUGH CHAOTIC CROWDS AND INTENSE SITUATIONS TO MAKE IT TO THEIR CLASSES. (ART BY COLLEEN KARSTEN)

Seriously though, everybody knows it's good to kindly acknowledge people we know when we see them and know it's bad to impolitely ignore those same people.

Passing someone you know in the hall is the most minor example of this, but the impact it can have is still monumental.

Psychology teacher Jay Heilman explains that minor interaction serves as a great reminder of the support of others. A simple greeting in the hallway is an example of this support.

"Kindness goes a long way, even [if it is] just recognizing each other," Heilman said. "Life is hard to go through by yourself ... you want to acknowledge someone when you see them because that's just being a kind human."

A school hallway isn't just some place to house these reminders, it's *the* optimal location.

No other environment has the relativity and fast-paced nature that school halls during passing periods have, which make for a truly unique environment, even if most won't

**IT'S A GATHERING;
A MEETING SPOT,"**

- Jay Heilman, psychology teacher

"It's a common space that we share. Obviously it is just to get from one place to another, but why not have that happen while doing something else fun [like] catching up with friends and colleagues?"

But we are a bunch of teenagers after all, so you know things are immediately going to get messed up.

With how popular wireless earbuds are, many students use them during passing periods, which unfortunately means they're likely to accidentally ignore someone trying to get their attention.

Heilman explains how being social in the halls has changed from when he was in high school, mainly due to earbuds and possibly intimidated students.

"If it's a student [that ignores me] I usually think 'Okay maybe they have an earbud in,'" Heilman said. "Because students [are] still learning how to interact with adults, and not all students are good at that. Some students ... might be a little overwhelmed by that and might just ignore them."

It's just as easy to make someone feel ignored as it is to make them feel acknowledged by ... y'know, ignoring them.

But it's also possible to go too overboard and get their attention (along with everyone else's) by yelling at them, which seems to be a lot of senior boys' favorite pastime.

"You want to get their attention without embarrassing them ... [others] being too loud and obnoxious can be annoying..." Mannion said, apparently forgetting he was a senior boy and was therefore required to do the same.

Obviously there aren't a ton of times where someone is being intentionally ignored, or someone is screaming at the top of their lungs, but there are still an infinite amount of ways to be a burden to someone while doing the "passing" part in "passing period" (can you tell I'm running out of different ways to say "walking down the hall?")

But there are also an infinite number of ways to make someone's day a little better. Acknowledging someone is a little thing, sure, but it reminds that person of something much bigger: the support, respect, confidence and all of the other positive adjectives in the dictionary that you (probably) have for them.

I mean, don't say "hi" to someone if you both immensely hate each other, but it never hurts to be friendly, even if it's someone you don't know well.

Or don't, y'know? It's not like people are going to hold a grudge over such a small thing for such a long time, right?

And it's not like that would cause that person to rethink your entire friendship, right?

And that person would NEVER do both of those things and then publicly vent about it in the newspaper, right?

No, I couldn't imagine *that*. *Y?*