

## LETTERS

# Courtesy isn't enough for these non-smokers

**OUR** world would be a much better place to live in if it were true that "all that smokers and non-smokers need is courtesy — not new laws," as claimed in your editorial of May 20.

Laws against anti-Semitism, dope, prostitution, driving without a seat belt, etc., have been a great factor in keeping such harmful behavior from going completely out of control.

Knowing that such laws are in effect, regardless of how ineffective they may be, makes it much easier to convince violators with average decency to cease and desist.

JOSEPH LETO  
Bethpage, L.I.

**WHEN** it comes to smoking, people who are otherwise courteous and understanding change completely.

They simply feel it is their right to smoke and if others don't like it, too bad!

Asking them to please stop smoking is an exercise in futility.

I work in an office where I am subjected to having to inhale smoke from one of my co-workers all day long.

I also cannot go to a movie without being subjected to smoking from people in the non-smoking section lighting up.

Requests for them to stop or move on fall on deaf ears.

It is obvious that only legislation and enforce-

ment of legislation can remedy this problem.

I. BIORER  
Staten Island

**OF** all the arguments raised by tobacco industry spokesmen and their high-priced lobbyists at the city's public hearings on proposed smoking restrictions on May 19, none left me more aghast than the assertion that "common courtesy" is adequate to handle disputes between smokers and nonsmokers.

Leading medical experts not in the employ of the tobacco industry agree that cigaret smoke contains toxic substances which claim the lives of thousands of non-smokers each year.

In view of this evidence, to regard smoking policy as a matter of courtesy — like holding a door open for a woman or setting the table with the right forks and spoons — is ludicrous.

Second-hand smoke is not just a nuisance, it is life-threatening and should be treated as such.

When evidence began to mount that toxic auto emissions were killing people, no one suggested that this health hazard would be solved by "courteous" motorists who would refrain from driving their cars in heavily polluted areas.

Instead, the government moved to protect the air quality of the outdoor environment by mandating that emissions meet acceptable levels.

Mayor Koch is right to submit legislation which preserves the air quality of the indoor environment and protects the health of those who choose not to smoke.

ALEXANDER GRANNIS  
N.Y.S. Assembly  
65th Dist., Manhattan

**IF** two people were trapped in a telephone booth and one was a smoker, he or she would light up. That is my answer to the tobacco industry lobbyists who say common courtesy can solve disputes between smokers and non-smokers.

MARA FRIEDMAN  
Brooklyn

**HAS** anyone in your group ever tried to reason with a smoker? The three times I tried, once in a restaurant ("If you don't like it, change your seat"), in a supermarket line ("Mind your own g...m business") and in a bus ("Who's going to make me?") suggest that short of legislation, the public smoker is not going to be susceptible to reason, still less courtesy.

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