

To quote Gloria Galloway of the Globe & Mail on June 28th, “Anger at soaring gas prices has supplanted fear about global warming as the No. 1 issue Canadians say is facing their country.” This statement is based on polling that could very well be tilted to find whatever outcome is desired, but I think it’s fair to say this sentiment is definitely present across the country to at least some extent.

I know I can’t be alone in noting the glaring contradiction going on here. To any pedestrian walking around in virtually any large North American city, it’s pretty obvious that what’s coming out of the majority of tailpipes is not exactly fresh air. In fact, it is downright toxic. Sure, I love being a passenger, sometimes getting a ride in a car can be so much more convenient and pleasant than public transit, plus where would we be without road trips and sunny days with music blasting from car stereos? That being said, I have made it through twenty-five years without so much as a learner’s permit and I’m ok.

People have many different reasons for “needing” a car and in many cases they are quite valid. I don’t think *not* driving altogether is a viable option for everyone at this point but I do think it’s time to start exploring our dependence on driving and interrogating the underlying causes of it rather than just imposing surface solutions that don’t address the root factors.

We all know driving is a big contributor of carbon emissions; it comes just after power plants on the list of major culprits. So why on Earth would we claim to be concerned about global

warming then as soon as fuel costs go up, as they rightly should considering the amount of detriment our addiction to them is causing, we immediately displace the environment as our top concern? The irony is palpable. *Fuel emissions are **causing** global warming!* Rather than logically assessing the long-term impact of our behaviour now, it is easier to safeguard one's own money and convenience, continuing right along engaging in "business as usual."

The sad truth is that change for most people is only worth it if it's easy and doesn't mean any drastic changes to a comfortable lifestyle. On top of that, our modern infrastructure has literally been constructed around the car, [Bill McKibben](#) has a lot more to say on this matter. There are some deep questions that arise from this environment vs. cost of fuel paradox; humans have always liked to have their cake and eat it too, and in this case, drive their cars and have a pristine world to do it in. This is just not the world we are living in. I would suggest looking into [car sharing programs](#), if you've been thinking of permanently kicking your car habit to the curb.

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