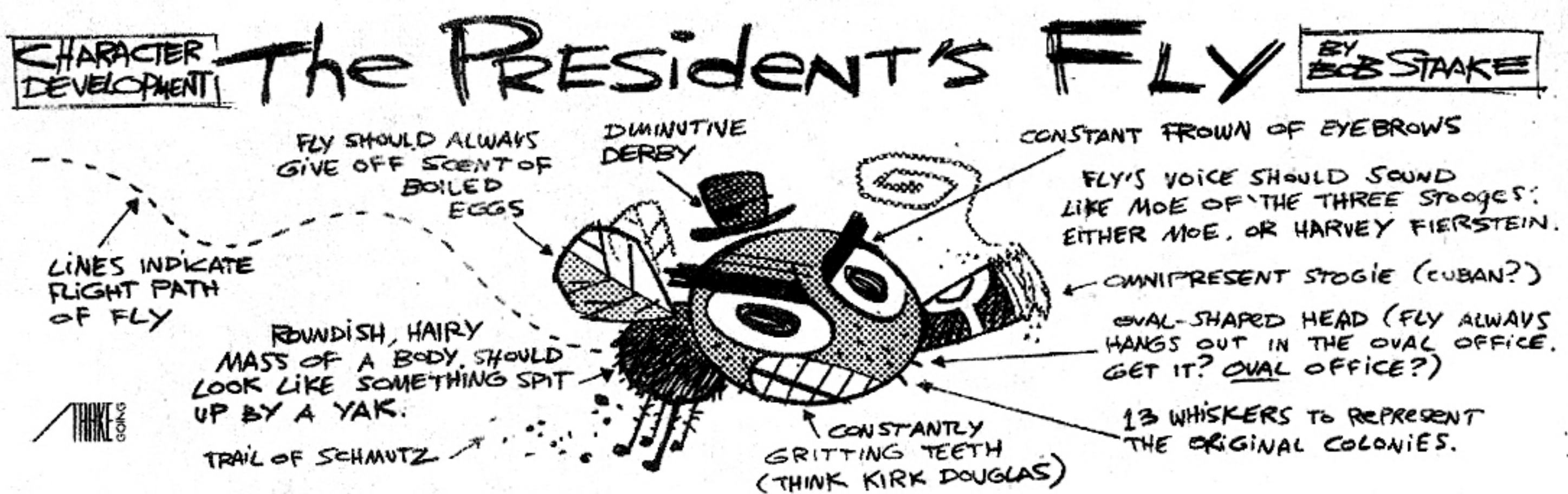


The Style Invitational

WEEK 331: DRAWING ON CREATIVITY

"PAC Man"—The story of an aggressive lobbyist. Liberally sprinkling money, he gobbles up congressional support for his many dubious special interests, including Perpetuating Oral Sex in Middle Schools, Using Mashed-Up Kittens for Fossil Fuels. . . .

"Apartment 366-G, Northwest Tower"—The serial-style adventures of a yuppie family who live in a suburban Washington high-rise and never leave home. There is Mom, Dad, Wally, Sis and Anneke, the au pair, whose rotating roster of "visitors" includes an Iraqi spy, a ventriloquist and Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. . . .



"The President's Fly"—His name is Marty. He is very cynical. He loves getting fresh poop. He lives at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. But he spends a lot of his time on the wall. . . .

This Week's Contest is a first for the Style Invitational. You do not have a full week to respond. You must get your entries to us, by e-mail or fax, by 3 p.m. Tuesday. Snail mail must arrive here on or before Wednesday. Here is the contest: Pretend you are creating a comic strip based in Washington, D.C., and the environs. Come up with an idea for a fictional central character. He, she or it must be someone around whom funny and intriguing adventures can be built. Describe

your character in as much detail as you wish, but do not supply an entire episode. Give the strip a name. These entries will be judged for humor and originality, but a key factor will be how adaptable your character is for promising story lines. The first-prize winner will be announced next week, and will become the basis of a new contest. First-prize winner gets "Love Ewe," an inflatable sheep. This is worth \$50.

First runner-up gets the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up receive the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable Mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Mail your entries to the Style Invitational, Week 331, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071; fax them to 202-334-4312; or submit them via e-mail to this address: losers@washpost.com. E-mail users: Please indicate the week number in the "subject" field. Also, please do not append "attachments," which tend not to be read. Important: Please include your postal address and phone number. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, humor or appropriateness. No purchase necessary. Today's Warning No One Heeds Until It Is Too Late was written by Gwen@engineer.com. Employees of The Washington Post and members of their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 328,

- in which you were asked to For God's Sake Say Something Nice.
- ◆ Third Runner-Up: **Having multiple personalities isn't that bad. It can lead to valid consensus decision-making.** (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)
- ◆ Second Runner-Up: **Overcrowding on Metro trains is nice. Without it, some of us would have no sex life at all.** (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)
- ◆ First Runner-Up: **Being black in America is very nice because you get all this extra attention from sales people in fancy stores.** (Wesley McGee, Falls Church)

◆ *And the winner of the coffee mug from the launching of the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower:*

Ad[☺]olf Hitler (Janet Arrowsmith-Lowe, Ruidoso, N.M.)

- ◆ Honorable Mentions:
 - The ready availability of inexpensive handguns certainly does discourage drive-by stabbings and bludgeonings.** (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)
 - Mimes are nice. They don't scream when you kill them.** (Sandra Hull, Arlington)
 - Getting your hand amputated for thievery in some foreign country isn't as bad as it sounds. Imagine the fabulous practical jokes you can play in Benihana.** (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)
 - Thanks to my HMO, I spent a lot less time in doctors' offices this year.** (David Genser, Arlington)
 - The Y2K bug might spare the life of an innocent man sentenced to die in the electric chair on midnight, Dec. 31, 1999.** (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)
 - Middle-age spread is nice because it lowers your center of gravity, so it is just that much harder for you to tip over.** (Susan Reese, Arlington)
 - Marion Barry was a wonderful mayor. He helped remove drugs from the streets.** (Susan Gruen, Gaithersburg)
 - Give Latrell Sprewell credit. He never choked in the playoffs.** (David Genser, Arlington)
 - It's nice that Monica Lewinsky got famous and rich because now there is one less surly spoiled brat working at the Gap.** (Mike Long, Burke)
 - Pol Pot never persecuted the Amish.** (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)
 - It is nice of Milosevic to remain in Belgrade, so we can keep an eye on him.** (David Genser, Arlington)
 - Getting your eye poked out is nice because then you will only have to spend half as much for contact lenses.** (Beth Baniszewski, Columbia)
 - Metro's Blue Line is more dependable than Metro's escalators.** (Russell Beland, Springfield)
 - Snoring is nice because it keeps your spouse from having bad dreams.** (Sandra Hull, Arlington)
 - Isn't it great that when you have a really crappy life it gives you something to write about?** (Kevin Mellema, Falls Church)
 - Teenage acne is nice because it teaches youngsters to look past appearances and appreciate each person's inner beauty.** (Sarah W. Gaymon, Mitchellville)
 - It is nice of the airlines to serve such bad food, so that if passengers have to use the barf bag they won't feel it's such a great loss.** (David Genser, Arlington; Jennifer Hart, Arlington)
 - Having my baby is a lovely way of saying how much you love me.** (Russell Beland, Springfield)
- ◆ Rookie of the Week:
 - It is thoughtful of Ken Starr to keep investigating every obscure allegation made against the Clintons, so as to keep their reputations spotless and assure their high place in history.** (Bob Grossman, Columbia)
- ◆ And Last:
 - The Style Invitational may be tasteless, but it is also odorless.** (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Next Week: **The Style Invitational: Hell**