

Style Invitational

by Pat Myers

Report from Week 971

in which we asked you to create a two-volumes-in-one book by pairing an actual title with another real title or a fictional one: "A Confederacy of Dunces" was bound with just about everyone's particular favorite organization to disparage; "To Kill a Mockingbird" was often matched with "101 Unusual Poultry Recipes."

THE
WINNER
OF THE
INKIN'
MEMORIAL

Front cover: "An Unfinished Life: John F. Kennedy, 1917-1963"

Back cover: "A Totally Finished Life: John R. Edwards 1953-Who Cares" (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

2 Winner of the anatomically correct "she-cozy": "Catch-22," by Joseph Heller/ "Drop 23," by Santana Moss (Mike Caslin, Round Hill, Va.)

3 "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother"/ "What to Expect When You're Expecting Too Much" (Carol Applegate, Reston, a First Offender)

4 Bill Clinton: "My Life" / "The Adventures of Captain Underpants" (Les Greenblatt, Ann Arbor, Mich.)

"The House at Pooh Corner"/ "Plumbing: 22 Easy Fix-It Repairs" (Ann Martin, Bracknell, England)

"The Naked and the Dead"/ "Great Parties: The Best of Martha Stewart Living" (John Shea, Philadelphia)

"The Hunger Games"/ "Mastering Pac-Man" (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

A REAL BOOK PLUS A FAKE TITLE

"The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo"/ "The Middle-Aged Divorcee With the Sagging Jowly Fat Salamander-Looking Tattoo" (Cy Gardner, Arlington)

"Three Cups of Tea" / "Three . . . Well, Two . . . Okay, Definitely ONE Cup of . . . umm, Hot, er, Warm Liquid" (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

"Simple and Effective Tips to Cut Your Own Hair" / "Mitt Romney's Guide to Cutting Other People's Hair" (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

"Bossypants," by Tina Fey/ "Working for the Big Guy: My Untold Story," by Joe Biden (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

"To the Lighthouse," by Virginia Woolf/ "To the Nuthouse," by Charlie Sheen (Jeff Brechlin)

"The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" / "The 783 Habits of Highly Obsessive-Compulsive People" (David Genser, Poway, Calif.)

"A Wrinkle in Time" / "Linen Clocks: The Downside" (Diego Pedulla-Smith, Fairfax, Va., a First Offender)

"The Naked Ape" / "Honey, Hand Me a Towel" (Drew Bennett)

More double-booked honorable mentions in the online Invite at wapo.st/inv975.

Still running — deadline is Monday night — is the Week 974 limerick contest. See wapo.st/inv974.

"The Lovely Bones" / "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Becoming a Model" (Joe Neff, Warrington, Pa.)

"Dances With Wolves" / "The Idiot" (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

"Above Washington: Aerial Photographs of the District of Columbia" / "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (Ari Unikoski, Tel Aviv)

"50 Shades of Grey" / "How I Met Your Mother" (Jim Ward, Alexandria; Ruthie Haynes, Boynton Beach, Fla., a First Offender)

"The Fellowship of the Ring" / "The Essential Guide to Gay Weddings" (Chris Williams, Herndon, a First Offender)

"Prostitution Policy Reform in the UK" / "What Ho, Jeeves" (Brendan Beary)

"Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" / "Code of Federal Regulations Title 41, 301-74: Conference Planning" (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

From bad to verso: Honorable mentions

TWO REAL BOOKS

"The Euro Crash: The European Time Bomb" / "Angela's Ashes" (Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

"The Golden Apples of the Sun" / "The World's Best Nude Beaches and Resorts" (Dion Black, Washington)

"The Book of Senior Moments" / "The Book of Senior Moments" (Jayne Osborn, Wellingborough, England, a First Offender)

"What to Expect When You're Expecting" / "Pain" (Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.)

"Pork Chop Hill" / "Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process" (Brad Alexander, Wanneroo, Australia)

"Pain Free: A Revolutionary Method for Stopping Chronic Pain" / "Invitation to a Beheading" (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

POP CD REVIEW

Mary Chapin Carpenter "Ashes and Roses"



D.C.-bred country-singer-turned-folkie Mary Chapin Carpenter went through a serious illness,

a divorce and the death of her father before making the wrenching catalogue of woes that is her 12th official album, "Ashes and Roses." Carpenter (whose 2007 pulmonary embolism was also a subject of her last release, the comparatively cheery "The

Age of Miracles") picks her way through the wreckage in these mournful, minutely observed ballads about the omnipresence of grief.

These are woeful and beautiful coffeehouse folk songs, decorated with sparing, almost offhanded instrumentation that's often limited to guitars and pianos. Sad songs such as "Learning the World" ("Broken wide open/Cut to the bone/All that you used to know/Is no use at all") and "What to Keep and What to Throw Away" feel more accurate than the hopeful songs ("I Tried Going West"), which seem like they're there because they have to be, because they're

part of the inevitable journey, because no one wants to listen to an album about someone who got depressed and stayed that way, unless they're a Ray LaMontagne fan.

Everything here is better than it has to be, even the songs that reach Lifetime TV movie levels of Lady Sadness, except for "Soul Companion," a should-have-been slam dunk about the redemptive possibilities of new love. It's just offsomehow, in a way that's difficult to explain but ultimately proves so immovable that even James Taylor, that great redeemer of awkward duets, can't fix it.

— Allison Stewart



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

Week 975: Gone mything

School food: It is NOT true that the noodles that the cafeteria ladies serve on Wednesday are made of tapeworm poop.

The Post's Sunday opinion section, Outlook, runs an ongoing feature called 5 Myths, in which an essayist presents what he says are five common misconceptions about some topic and then explains (or argues) why each isn't true. This week, at the suggestion of Loser Ward Kay: "Debunk" a "Sixth Myth" about one or more of these recent 5 Myths topics, as in the example above. Our list starts with "The Bust That Will Follow the Boom(ers)," a 2008 5 Myths piece by Russell Beland, the No. 1 Style Invitational Loser of All Time, who moonlights at the Pentagon as deputy assistant secretary of the Navy for military personnel policy.

The bust that will follow the boom(ers)

Breast-feeding	Water	The American Dream
White people	Super PACs	Abraham Lincoln
America's decline	Cheating	School food
Female voters	The presidency	

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Style Invitational trophy. Second place wins an especially distinguished navy blue T-shirt with a giant yellow Spam logo and a photo of a hunk of Spam pretending to be a roast ham, spiked with cloves and everything. Donated by Dudley Thompson.

Other runners-up win their choice of a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt, a yearned-for Loser Mug or the new, ardently desired Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet. First Offenders get a smelly, tree-shaped air "freshener" (Fir Stink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, June 18; results published July 8 (online July 6). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 975" in your e-mail subject line or it might be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/StyleInv. The subhead for this week's honorable mentions is by Roy Ashley. Join the Style Invitational Devotees on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev

3 STYLE CONVERSATIONAL Have a question for the Empress or want to talk to some real Losers? Join us at washingtonpost.com/stylconversational.



RUSS HARRINGTON

MOURNFUL TUNE:

Mary Chapin Carpenter ruminates on grief.