

MISS MANNERS

Order in the Courtship

By Judith Martin

Even allowing for the way nostalgia softens and glamorizes the past, Miss Manners is sure she recalls a time when two people having a romance were assumed to be fond of each other.

"Great and good friends," we used to call them when the association took a particularly enthusiastic and active turn. How did such dear friends come to think of themselves as enemies in need of legalistic protection from each other?

She means before one of them got tired of the other. Miss Manners is not speaking of people with lecherous and/or criminal intent. She is referring to couples with foolish expressions on their faces and the belief that they are participating in an unprecedented miracle. Far from considering themselves opponents, they revel in the discovery that they are truly and uncannily one. They both like the outdoors, for example. Or the indoors. Whatever. It is perfectly amazing.

True, society was always cynical. All sorts of devices—chaperons, curfews, shotguns, girdles, rules that college roommates had to be of the same sex—were invented to keep such friends from having too good a time together.

None worked, of course, except for the useful (possibly, as it turns out, essential) function of complicating a relatively simple act to make it a challenge. Nevertheless, these customs—and society itself—acquired the nasty reputation of being barriers to perfect bliss and, by extension, to world peace.

It took a tremendous effort for lovers to get rid of all those impediments. There were so many different little and big restraints woven into the pattern of proper courtship. Finally, the entire structure was destroyed—the rituals by which the society brought eligible people together, right along with the ones that tried to keep them from getting too comfortable together.

After the barriers fell, Miss Manners remembers a few frenzied years when lots of people kept themselves busy trying out the new freedom. Then, suddenly, they got up and started agitating for legalistic codes to regulate courtship.

What's the matter? Weren't they having a good time? Never mind. This brings us to the great prototype of such efforts, the Antioch College Sexual Offense Policy.

There was a time when nearly every conversation landed there, even if it started with farm prices. The entire society was rickling with merriment at the very idea of a college promulgating rules of courtship, in which one party was required continually to be asking explicit consent of the other to each of a series of specific acts: May I do this? Is it all right if I do that?

Miss Manners was not amused. It seemed to her very proper and natural that people indulging in such a consequential activity as romance should want it to be governed by etiquette. That they came up with something awkward and adversarial does not surprise her.

There was no going back to the old system. The matron-policewoman who scowled at lovers were unavailable for a return to duty. Left unemployed for so long, they all went off to law school.

So today's lovers, who have forgotten about demanding to be left alone, follow the spirit of their time and devise legalistic codes to act as their chaperones. It is similar to the way that people who scorned marriage because it inhibited freedom and spontaneity marched off to court to

demand protection and responsibility for their extralegal unions.

All this racing around the board to get to square one strikes Miss Manners as unnecessarily tiring. But if this is what it takes to make everyone realize that love is incompatible with perfect freedom because it involves more than one person, she supposes it is worth it.

Surely, however, the explicit consent code could be improved. Miss Manners agrees that ongoing feedback is needed to make sure that everyone continues to be happy as things go along. Using the Q & A format, however, has its drawbacks for the worthy but inarticulate. Cads are notoriously eloquent.

Those who have exhausted their persuasive powers by setting up the occasion will be out of luck, and George Gordon, Lord Byron, will get all the ladies. But then, he always did.

Miss Manners is aware that explicit permission is built into the code because there is a presumption that no one would bother paying attention to the old vocabulary of gestures and expressions. The old-fashioned young gentleman who froze and retreated when the young lady on whose chair back his arm had come to rest squirmed away has been replaced. The new model is supposed to be chortling with the realization that it is safe to go ahead and grab her, because her signal would never stand up in court.

That is what bothers Miss Manners the most. Everyone seems to concede that it's such a mean new world, that it would be preposterous to assume that two people pursuing love have any interest at all in one another's happiness.

DEAR MISS MANNERS:

Our supervisor recently left to take a position with another company. We thought it would be appropriate to have a small going-away party prior to her departure. She thought the same.

However, she told us she would prefer a larger affair, and therefore asked us to arrange a large dinner party for approximately 100 of her closest friends and colleagues. She gave us the plan for her program and told us what she expected her guests to present to her as a parting gift.

Needless to say, as her subordinates we complied with her requests, but were less than enthusiastic about having to do so. Would Miss Manners please comment on what we consider her impropriety?

Gentle Reader:

You allowed yourselves to be bullied by a supervisor who was leaving, on a matter that would give you no work credit with anyone but herself?

Wow. She must be a good supervisor.

Her manners, however, are atrocious. Miss Manners doesn't know how the idea got around that the guest of honor need not depend on the kindness and imagination of her hosts to please her, but should simply dictate how it should be done. This method may be an efficient way to run a company, but socially it is counterproductive, as it destroys morale, motivation and joviality.

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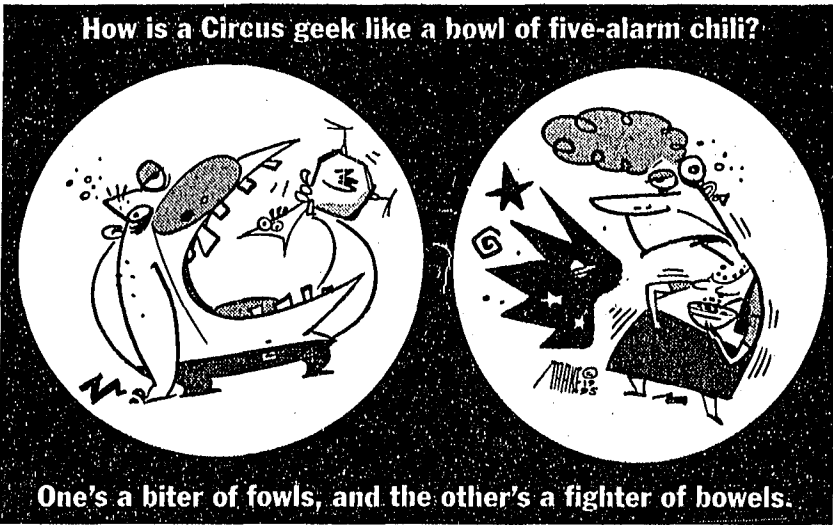
The Style Invitational

WEEK 124: SPOON-FEED US.

How is the Amway Corp. like the organism that causes trichinosis? One is a weird firm, the other is a feared worm.

How is Loni Anderson's ex hubby, eating pastrami, like a wad of navel lint? One is Burt in a deli, the other is dirt in a belly.

How is a Tennessee Warbler like a shy Style Invitational contestant? One is a Nashville bird, the other is a bashful nerd.



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

This Week's Contest was independently suggested by Thomas Edward Knibb of Walkersville, Md. who wins a human molar, and by Lori Millen of Washington, who wins an alligator foot. Both prizes were donated to the Style Invitational by Stephen Dudzik of Silver Spring, who wins a pair of Central African condoms donated to the Style Invitational by Kitty Thuermer of Washington, who wins a pair of disposable underpants personally autographed by Joseph Romm of Washington, who wins a toilet bowl night light donated to The Style Invitational by Dave Barry of Miami. Anyway, Thomas and Lori suggest that you come up with spoonerisms: expressions based on the transposition of the initial sounds of two paired words. Spoonerisms were named after English educator W.A. Spooner, who used to make these unintentional slips every thou and nen. Please frame the entries as questions and answers, like the ones above. Spare us all the jokes about track teams and sneaky pygmies,

okay? We've heard them all. First-prize winner gets "The Mona Lisa," a framed original piece of artwork by some earnest if talentless admirer of Leonardo da Vinci. We bought it for \$30. Runners-up, as always, get the coveted Style Invitational losers' T-shirts. Honorable mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper stickers. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to the Style Invitational, Week 124, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071; fax them to 202-334-4312; or submit them via the Internet to this address: losers@access.digex.net. Internet users: Please indicate the appropriate Week Number in the "subject" field. Entries must be received on or before Monday, Aug. 7. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced in three weeks. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, appropriateness or humor. No purchase necessary. The Fairie of the Fine Print & the Ear No One Reads thanks Russell Beland of Springfield for today's Ear No One Reads, which is in its usual location. Employees of The Washington Post and their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 121

in which you were asked to come up with useless products.

- ◆ Fourth Runner-Up: **Cream of Mushroom Slurpee** (Ken Krattenmaker, Landover Hills)
- ◆ Third Runner-Up: **Seeling-eye giraffes** (Blair Thurman, Reston)
- ◆ Second Runner-Up: **The Popell® Pocket Wasp & Hornet Teaser** (Ken Rochester, Centreville)
- ◆ First Runner-Up: **Garfield™ condolence cards** (Paul A. Sone, Silver Spring)
- ◆ *And the winner of the nesting Russian dolls:*
New, lemon yellow Ty-D-Bol™ (Russell Beland, Springfield)

Honorable Mentions:

- ◆ **Loxster Helper** (Buddy Baker, Silver Spring; Nancy Jones, Germantown)
- ◆ **"Welcome Home Kamikaze" banners** (Joe Shepherd, Gaithersburg)
- ◆ **Purina® Roach Chow** (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg; Joseph Romm, Washington)
- ◆ **Miss Manners' Guide to Prison Etiquette** (Ellen Dean, Frederick)
- ◆ **Mobius toilet paper** (Buddy Baker, Silver Spring)
- ◆ **Frog arms platter** (Dave Zarrow, Herndon)
- ◆ **Birthday candle snuffers** (Linda K. Malcolm, Silver Spring)
- ◆ **Nuclear hand grenades** (David T. Harrison, Frederickburg)
- ◆ **Snooze bar on a fire alarm** (Paul Kondis, Alexandria)
- ◆ **Sweet and Sour Maalox** (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)
- ◆ **Wild rat feeder** (Sarah Worcester, Bowie)
- ◆ **Hamburger Helper Helper** (Joe Shepherd, Gaithersburg)
- ◆ **Car alarms for Yugos** (Russell Beland, Springfield)
- ◆ **Refrigerator tacks** (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)
- ◆ **Inflatable dartboard** (Gene Van Pelt, Verona)
- ◆ **Chutney-flavored condoms** (Kitty Thuermer, Washington)
- ◆ **Tuna-safe dolphin, packed in oil** (Mary E. Reese, Alexandria)
- ◆ **A light on the outside of the refrigerator to indicate when the light inside the refrigerator is off** (Ed Steam, Upper Marlboro)
- ◆ **Scrabble, special dyslexics' edition** (Linda K. Miacomi, Silver Spring)
- ◆ **Intermittent headlights** (Mark Lesko, Grafton)
- ◆ **Nymphomaniac Repellent** (Twink Ruffing, Bowie)
- ◆ **Vibrating hedpan** (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)
- ◆ **Roach Motel art** (Linda K. Malcolm, Silver Spring)
- ◆ **The Jarvik-7 artificial appendix** (Jeremy Hancock and Justin Sondak, Arlington)
- ◆ **Bird laxatives** (Cissie Owen, Leesburg)
- ◆ **Female popo fashions** (Carole Dix, Gaithersburg)
- ◆ **Silicone thigh implants** (Jerry Pannullo, Chevy Chase, and Russ Beland, Springfield)
- ◆ **Salted bandages** (Ken Krattenmaker, Landover Hills)
- ◆ **Non-alcoholic vodka** (Paul Styrene, Olney; Joseph Romm, Washington)
- ◆ **Kosher communion wafers** (Joe Shepherd, Gaithersburg)
- ◆ **Ankle watch** (Sarah Worcester, Bowie)
- ◆ **A transparent colostomy bag** (Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)
- ◆ **Can-opener-in-a-can** (Michael J. Hammer, Washington)
- ◆ **Corn niblet holders** (Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

Next Week: **The Unkindest Cute of All**

Bridge

By Alfred Sheinwold and Frank Stewart

One game requires a knack for problem-solving, the other good eye-hand coordination; but bridge and baseball do have common threads. Both have diamonds and clubs; both have squeeze plays, doubles and sacrifices; and then there's the good old fielder's choice.

After North passed twice, South was sure his opponents were about to wrap up the rubber. He therefore tossed in an overall, hoping to direct the opening lead or derail East-West's auction. This bid gave West a fielder's choice: West thought his side might make game, but was sure South couldn't make one spade.

West cashed the king of clubs and shifted to the king of diamonds. When South refused the trick, West led a heart. East took the queen and shifted back to diamonds, forcing out the ace.

South next led a trump, and West took the queen, cashed the ace of clubs and led the queen of diamonds. East ruffed his partner's trick and led the ace and a low heart. West ruffed and led another diamond, and East ruffed with the eight. South had to overruff with the ten, and West got two more trump tricks with the A-9. Down four.

Baseball's fielder's choice occurs when a fielder has his pick of runners to retire; South gave West his pick of ways to score 800 points. The trouble was that South paid to prolong a rubber he'd probably still lose.

South should have passed, hoping for better cards in the next rubber.

East-West vulnerable
NORTH (D)
♠ 5
♥ K 7 4 3
♦ A 8 4
♣ J 10 7 6 4
WEST
♠ A Q 9 2
♥ 8
♦ K Q 10 9 3
♣ A K 5
EAST
♠ 8 4 3
♥ A Q 6 5 2
♦ 5 2
♣ 8 3 2
SOUTH
♠ K J 10 7 6
♥ J 10 9
♦ J 7 6
♣ Q 9
The bidding:
North East South West
Pass Pass Pass 1♦
Pass 1♥ 1♣
All Pass
Opening lead: ♠ K
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ATTENTION

INDIVIDUALS WHO HAD A TMJ IMPLANT (OR THEIR SPOUSES)

Your rights may be affected by a class action pending in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas.

SUMMARY NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT

TO: ALL PERSONS WHO, DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY 1972 THROUGH MAY 1994, UNDERWENT A SURGICAL PROCEDURE IN THE UNITED STATES OR CANADA IN WHICH THEY WERE IMPLANTED WITH ANY IMPLANT PRODUCT OR DEVICE CONTAINING PROPLAST FOR THE PURPOSE OF CORRECTING OR TREATING TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT ("TMJ") DISEASE OR A TMJ DISORDER, TOGETHER WITH PERSONS WITH SPOUSAL OR ESTATE CLAIMS RELATED TO THE IMPLANTEE'S CLAIM.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Rule 23(e) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and an order of the Honorable Sim Lake, Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Houston Division (the "Court"), that a hearing will be held in the United States Courthouse, 515 Rusk, Room 9-B, Houston, Texas 77002, at 1:30 p.m. on January 18, 1996 to determine (1) whether the terms of a proposed settlement of the above-captioned class action lawsuit (the "Lawsuit"), on terms and conditions as set forth in a Stipulation and Agreement of Settlement, dated March 29, 1995 as amended by the Stipulation of Settling Parties dated June 22, 1995 (the "Stipulation"), are fair, reasonable, and adequate; (2) whether a proposed final judgment dismissing the Lawsuit on the merits should be entered; (3) whether a proposed Plan of Allocation of the proceeds of the settlement should be approved; and (4) whether an application for attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses by the attorneys who have prosecuted the Lawsuit and negotiated the settlement on behalf of the Class should be approved.

IF YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE HAD A TMJ IMPLANT CONTAINING PROPLAST BETWEEN JANUARY 1972 AND MAY 1994, YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO SHARE IN THE PROCEEDS OF THE SETTLEMENT OF THE LAWSUIT. IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY RECEIVED A NOTICE OF THIS SETTLEMENT MAILED TO YOU, YOU MUST FURNISH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS TO THE SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATOR BY OCTOBER 20, 1995 IN ORDER TO BE FULLY ADVISED OF YOUR RIGHTS AS A SETTLEMENT CLASS MEMBER, INCLUDING YOUR ELIGIBILITY TO SHARE IN THE SETTLEMENT PROCEEDS.

The settlement proceeds will consist of \$30,000,000 received in settlement of the Lawsuit less certain fees and expenses approved by the Court.

Copies of the detailed Notice of Settlement describing the Lawsuit, the proposed settlement, and the rights and options available to members of the Settlement Class may be obtained by calling 1-800-514-7007 or by writing to: Proplast TMJ Class Action Settlement, P. O. Box 2, Cromwell, Connecticut 06416-0002.

Any requests for exclusion from the Lawsuit and Class must be filed no later than November 10, 1995 in the manner described in the Notice of Settlement. The rights of persons requesting exclusion are explained in the Notice of Settlement. Any objections to the proposed Settlement, the Plan of Allocation, and/or the application for attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses must be filed no later than November 10, 1995 in the manner described in the Notice of Settlement. Please note that numerous lawsuits alleging TMJ injury are also pending in the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota. That litigation, known as MDL-1001, is separate from, and not a part of, the Lawsuit.

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DO NOT CONTACT THE COURT OR THE CLERK'S OFFICE FOR INFORMATION.

Dated: July 7, 1995.