

The Style Invitational

Week 524: Around Things Moving



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

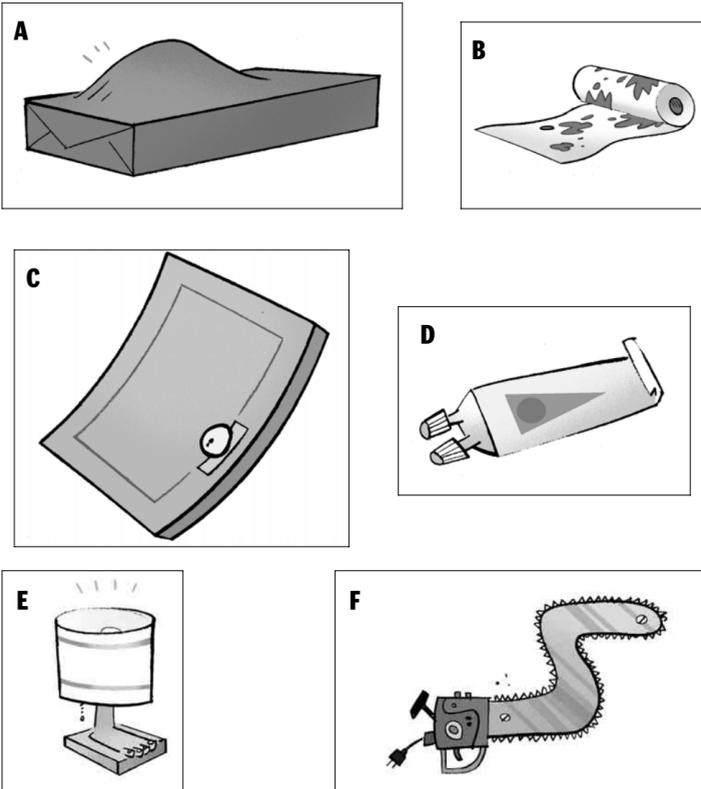
- Frankenstein Young**—A rock documentary on Neil's hideously deformed older brother.
- Man Rain**: A series of vignettes that take place at urinals.
- Wanda Called a Fish**—A very boring sequel to "The Horse Whisperer."

This Week's Contest was suggested by Don Oldenburg, who sits near The Czar and, appropriately, is a recognized expert on the best places to take dogs to pee. Don's challenge: Take the title of any book or movie, rearrange the words, and explain what the new book or movie is about, as in the examples above. You must use all the words in the original title, and may not add or alter any words. (You may add or change punctuation.) First-prize winner gets something truly special donated to The Style Invitational by Kevin Mellema of Falls Church. This one-of-a-kind object may represent the most work, for the smallest return, of any product we've ever given away. It is a diorama of a plastic fawn on plastic grass that has been inserted into a sizable section of a real tree trunk. It is priceless.

First Runner-Up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312 or by e-mail to losers@washpost.com. U.S. mail entries are no longer accepted. Deadline is Monday, Sept. 29. All entries must include the week number of the contest and your name, postal address and telephone number. E-mail

entries must include the week number in the subject field. Contests will be judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Entries may be edited for taste or content. Results will be published in four weeks. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. The revised title for next week's contest is by Russell Beland of Springfield.

Report from Week 520, in which you were asked to identify which celebs ordered these objects, and why.



◆ Second Runner-Up (Cartoon B): **After many failures, Mr. Whipple ordered this bath tissue and asked people to "please don't squeeze the Charmin or I'll have to scatter your brains all over the floor like I did to the guy who squeezed this."** (Art Grinath, Takoma Park; Malcolm Fleschner, San Mateo, Calif.)

◆ First Runner-Up (Cartoon F): **Zorro's friends knew he had fallen on hard times but were still dismayed when he ordered this, and they discovered he was now doing teen slasher movies.** (Clyde Behney, Arlington)

◆ And the winner of the Hubert Humphrey-shaped bottle (Cartoon E): **John Ashcroft ordered this statue of David, but wound up putting a lampshade over it.** (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

◆ Honorable mentions:

Cartoon A:
Emergency "Nose in a Box" ordered by Michael Jackson. (Francene Machetto, Arlington)

A dummy, resembling someone sleeping under bedcovers, ordered by Bill Clinton. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

This specially designed lap blanket was ordered by Pee-wee Herman. (Roger and Pam Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

It's a pulse, in an expedited order from Gray Davis. (Robin D. Grove, Pasadena, Md.)

Cartoon B:
Hampered by budget cuts, D.C. School Superintendent Paul Vance had to resort to this cheaper, dumbed-down version of "Mutiny on the Bounty" for the new school year. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

Cartoon C:
After putting on a few pounds, Marilyn Chambers needs a customized green door to go behind. (Russell Beland, Springfield; Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

Cartoon D:
Ordered by Gypsy Rose Lee, who needs an adhesive to quickly apply both pasties. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

Ordered by David Letterman. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington; Meg Sullivan, Potomac)
Bill bought this special Preparation H applicator in 1998 after Hillary tore him a new one. (Tom Madison, Alexandria)

Cartoon E:
A custom-made lamp for Gordon Lightfoot. (Russell Beland, Springfield; Robin D. Grove, Pasadena, Md.)

Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig ordered this as evidence after Ted Williams memorabilia started illegally showing up on eBay. (Milo Sauer, Fairfax)

Cartoon F:
Ordered by Wes Craven for his next film, "Nightmare on Sesame Street" (brought to you by the letter S and the color red). (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

Sal Dali's tree needs a trim. (Andrew Elby, Arlington)

Sammy Sosa swears that this bat, while not strictly regulation, is just for use during exhibitions. (Russell Beland, Springfield)

Next Week: **Hyphen Nation**



BRIDGE | Frank Stewart

Both sides vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ 9 6
 ♥ A K 7
 ♦ Q 7 5 2
 ♣ A K J 6

EAST
 ♠ 10 8 7 4 3
 ♥ 10 9 5
 ♦ 10 6
 ♣ 5 3 2

WEST
 ♠ A J 2
 ♥ J 8 4
 ♦ J 9 8 3
 ♣ 9 8 7

SOUTH (D)
 ♠ K Q 5
 ♥ Q 6 3 2
 ♦ A K 4
 ♣ Q 10 4

The bidding:
 South West North East
 1 NT Pass 6 NT All Pass

Opening lead: ♣ 9

The late Oswald Jacoby used to conduct a question-and-answer column for readers of Bridge World magazine. Jacoby was a first-rate mathematician and could multiply two six-digit numbers in his head, but when given a difficult problem in dummy play, he would often respond that he needed to be at the table to play the hand. To Jacoby, "table feel" was as important as percentages and technique.

Cover today's East-West cards. Say you're declarer at 6NT. You win the first club in dummy play and lead a spade to your king. West follows with the deuce, so you have 11 tricks in the bag. How do you continue?

The answer depends on your table feel and what you think of West's ability as a defender. An inexperienced West might take the ace of spades if he had it, or if he refused the first spade, he might do so only after a flicker of thought. If your table feel tells you that East has the ace of spades, by all means go back to dummy and lead a second spade toward your queen.

A competent West would unhesitatingly play low on the first spade if he had the ace. He would offer you the losing option of returning to dummy to lead a second spade.

If you respect West's defense, don't lead a second spade. Instead, take your best percentage play. Cash two more clubs and next test the hearts and then the diamonds. If either red suit breaks 3-3 (about a 60 percent chance), you'll have your 12th trick, and you'll still make 6NT if East has the ace of spades but no red-suit winner to cash in the end.

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MISS MANNERS

Judith Martin

The Clannish Inquisition

"So where are you folks from?" the bellman would inquire as he saw hotel clients to their rooms.

Presuming that a couple so queried was not from separate married households in the same town as the hotel, this was considered to be an innocuous way of opening a conversation with strangers.

Whatever they replied, he could say, "Never been there myself, but they say it's great." If the visitors were feeling chatty, they could extol the charms of their hometown, but they could also simply murmur assent and ask for extra pillows.

Since the invention of luggage on wheels, Miss Manners finds that the question lingers chiefly among college freshmen, waiters who don't have specials to recite, and passengers trapped on the tarmac in airplanes that are going nowhere.

Elsewhere, it was replaced by the more pointed question "What do you do?" Suddenly, everyone was racing around demanding everyone else's CV.

This caused some social consternation. Although that question may be intended merely as a conversation opener, it doesn't work very well as such. What conversation follows tends to consist of stock jokes, complaints or requests for free help in connection with whatever work was named. Many people have concluded that it is therefore an attempt to find out whether they are important enough to talk to, and the paltry aftermath always convinces them that their questioners have concluded not.

But the next thing Miss Manners knew, a version of "Where are you from?" was back. Only this time it is not as bland as before. Geography is no longer the issue; the inquiry has to do with race and ethnicity. People who answer as carelessly as before, stating their hometowns, are further interrogated as if they are being disingenuous.

"No, where are you really from? Where are you from originally? Where were your parents from?"

This is particularly galling to homegrown Americans whose looks or names strike the descendants of other immigrants as somehow more "foreign" than their own. The presumption that there is a particular American look or nomenclature is not borne out by the census figures.

Those questions are also heartily resented by people of mixed origins, and never mind that this category should include everyone with ancestors

who married outside the immediate family. Yet mixed answers are not considered satisfactory. If they do not identify solely with whatever side of the family strikes their nosy interlocutors as more exotic, the conclusion is that they must be ashamed. We have gotten to where children no longer have to be part of a divorce case to be asked to choose between mother and father.

Rude as it is, Miss Manners does not rule out the question itself because of its usefulness as a harmless conversation opener. True, even that was abused when the common reply switched from "I hear it's great" to "Lot of crime around here, I hear," but we do need an occasional break from "Lot of rain we've been having, don't you think?"

Her ruling is that it should be answered only in terms of domicile, hometown or last stop, and that no further probing is allowed. The only time it is proper to question people about their bloodlines is when you are contemplating breeding with them.

Dear Miss Manners:

I have enjoyed music all my life. I like to listen to it and I like to dance to it. Because I have also wanted to enjoy symphonic music, I recently bought season tickets to our city's concert series.

Please help me out with this: Is it rude to tap one's toes at the symphony or even move in any slight way?

I'm amazed that no one seems moved to move, but I've discreetly looked around and NO ONE is moving, not so much as a toe. Is there a rule that governs this sort of thing? If so, no wonder everyone there is over 60.

Maybe, but they can move when they're provoked. Miss Manners would not advise this.

The etiquette of symphony concerts is that the only muscles that may be moved are the ones needed for turning to glare at those who dare to breathe too loudly. What is done to toe-tappers is too horrible to mention.

Feeling incorrect? E-mail your etiquette questions to Miss Manners (who is distraught that she cannot reply personally) at MissManners@unitedmedia.com or mail to UnitedMedia, 200 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

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