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Style

Style Invitational Week 1038: Taking the 'plain' out of 'explain,' plus top 'I like my X ...' jokes



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By **Pat Myers**, Style Invitational editor
September 12, 2013






Why are firetrucks red?

Because they have eight wheels and four people, and 4 plus 8 is 12, and 12 is a foot and a foot is a ruler, and Queen Elizabeth was a ruler, and Queen Elizabeth was also a ship, and the ship sails the sea and in the sea is fish and fish have fins, and the Finns fought the Russians and the Russians were red and that's why firetrucks are red.

That brilliant bit of logic, which is floating anonymously around the Internet, was brought to the Empress's attention by the globe-trotting diplomatic Loser Robin Diallo, somewhere between Senegal and Afghanistan. It's a bit like the Invitational's occasional name chain contest, in which each name in a string of 25 connects to the next one in some novel way, until it comes back to the original name. But believe it or not, the firetruck "explanation" here makes better reading than a name chain. **This week: Answer a simple question with a ridiculously argued answer citing various connections and parallels**, as in the example above. Don't make it much



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longer than that one, but it certainly could be more clever.

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives, also from the peripatetic Ms. Diallo, a necktie she found in the Philippines, depicting cute cartoon pigs that are pursuing romantic activities not suitable for printing in a newspaper section that's in close proximity to KidsPost. (Online, not so near KidsPost, you can peek at it [here](#).) If you are an actual kid and win second place, or if you have a shred of propriety, we will substitute a [plain ol' mug](#) or something. (And we can't even tell you about the *other* donation from Robin, except that it's a polished wooden ashtray topped with a six-inch polished wooden, anatomically correct, uh, fertility totem? We won't be giving that one out.)

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#) or the ardently desired [Grossery Bag](#). Honorable mentions get a lusted-after [Loser magnet](#). First Offenders receive a smelly, tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Sept. 23; results published Oct. 13 (online Oct. 10). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 1038" 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/inviterules. The subhead for this week's honorable mentions was suggested independently by Tom Witte, Dave Prevar and Ward Kay; the alternative headline in the "Next week's results" line is by Kevin Dopart. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/inudev.

Report from Week 1034

in which we asked for original takes on the well-worn joke form "I like my X the way I like my Y": The Empress's predecessor, the Czar, suggested this contest and bet her a lunch that it would draw plenty of great (and even printable) entries. He wins. If you're at a D.C. lunch spot and see two wild-haired people wearing cute little ermine stoles and yelling at each other, drop by and say hello.

Note to the Easily Offended: Jokes starting off "I like my women" or "I like my men" tend to be less than cerebrally worshipful. We are confident that the views expressed herein are not reflective of the high esteem in which the various authors actually hold their women, men, underwear, etc.

The winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

I like my girlfriends the way I like Apple customers: flush with cash, stylish and unaware they can do better. (*Robert Falk, Takoma Park, Md.*)

2. Winner of the [grotesque rubbery finger puppets](#): I like my in-laws the way I like my Komodo dragons: on Komodo. (*Edmund Conti, Raleigh, N.C.*)

3. I like my teenage daughter to be the way I like my olive oil: extra-virgin. (*Mark Richardson, Takoma Park, Md.*)

4. I like my carnal knowledge the way I like my rodeo rides: finished in eight seconds, with clowns to create a distraction while I escape. (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

Likewise . . . : honorable mentions

I like my women the way I like my gas grills: easy to turn on, dirty enough to be well seasoned, but not enough that you'd immediately want to wash your

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be well seasoned, but not enough that you'd immediately want to wash your hands. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

I like my grammar the way I like my cat: gender-neutral. (Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

I like my "Jeopardy!" results the way I like my Abbott & Costello routines: [Watson second](#). — Ken Jennings (Nan Reiner, Alexandria, Va.)

I like my underwear the way I like my NASA facilities: with a Johnson Space Center. (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

I like tornado drills the way I like colonoscopy prep: all clear after the evacuation. (David Komornik, Danville, Va.)

I like my cellular service the way I like Bourbon Street: five bars at any given spot. (David Komornik)

I buy my candidates the way I buy my dinner rolls: rich, white and half-baked. — Charles Koch (David Smith, Santa Cruz, Calif.)

I like my D.C. politicians the way I like my Syracuse cheerleaders: dressed in orange. (Bill Ade, Burke, Va., who got his last Invite ink in Week 61, 1994)

I like my privacy the way I like something else, the details of which are none of your business. (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

I like my Washington Redskins like I like my Washington Bullets: called something else. (Craig Dykstra, Centreville, Va.)

I like Anthony Weiner the way I like my nose: not running. (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

I like my New York politicians the way I like my surprise gifts: not knowing what's in the package. (Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.)

I like Rafael Soriano the way I like my nose: not [blowing it](#). (Ward Kay)

I like my women the way I like my tollbooths: E-ZPass, not SmartPass. (Mark Raffman)

I like my daytime dramas the way I like my falafel: [hot, delicious and soapy](#). — Bill O'Reilly (Randy Lee, Burke, Va.)

I like my movies the way I like my Parmesan: G-rated. (Neil Starkman, Seattle)

I like my corrupt politicians the way I like my fondest memories: recalled. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

I like my tautology the way I like my tautology: true. (Doug Frank, Crosby, Tex.)

I like my interns the way I like my Pacific Islands: not gonna stop at Midway — I've gotta have Samoa. — B. Clinton (Mark Raffman)

I like my hummus the way I like my pervasive sense of ennui: thick but receptive to potato chips. (Sandy Moran, Santa Rosa, Calif., a First Offender)

I don't always drink beer, but when I do, I prefer it to be pretentious and gassy, like my TV character. (Most Interesting Man, The World) (Mark Raffman)

I like my reality TV the way I like my bridge hands: no Trump. (Gary Crockett)

I like weighing myself the way I like Adam Sandler movies: with zero gravity

I like my hoagies the way I like my cockroaches: under a foot. (Mike Gips)

I like my women the way I like my mountains: tall and beautiful, but not impossible to climb. (Tom Witte, *Montgomery Village, Md.*)

I'll like Barack Obama the way I like George W. Bush: as a harmless former president. (Adam and Russell Beland, *Fairfax, Va.*)

I like my pizza the way I like our current D.C. mayor: ordered to go. (Frank Mann, *Washington*)

I like my campaign "contributions" the way I like my Persian rugs: large, spread out and under the table. — V. Gray, *Washington* (Kevin Dopart)

I like my hoagies the way I like my cockroaches: under a foot. (David Garratt, *Silver City, N.M.*)

I like my money the way pelicans like their fish: in large bills. (Mae Scanlan, *Washington*)

At my age, I like my urine the way I like my video: streaming. (Ward Kay)

I like my political punditry the way I like my cornflakes: packaged by weight, not volume. (Brendan Beary, *Great Mills, Md.*)

I like my airport checks the way I like my dental checkups: cavity-free. (Brendan Beary)

I like my man to be like my car: good-looking, yet comfortable for a long trip. (Mae Scanlan)

As I get older, I like my romance the way I like my plays: one act only. (Chuck Smith, *Woodbridge*)

And last: He likes his Style Invitational Empresses the way he likes his prostitutes: willing to make a big deal out of what little he has to offer. (Robert Falk)

Still running: Be offended by totally inoffensive names: bit.ly/invite1037. See the Empress's online column [The Style Conversational](#) (published late Thursday), in which she discusses today's new contest and results along with news about the Loser Community — and you can vote for your favorite among the inking entries, since you no doubt figured the Empress chose the wrong winner. If you'd like an e-mail notification each week when the Invitational and Conversational are posted online, [sign up here](#) or write to the Empress at losers@washpost.com (note that in the subject line) and she'll add you to the mailing list. And on Facebook, join the far more lively group [Style Invitational Devotees](#) and chime in there.

Next week's results: [In Toon With the News](#), or [Wackileaks](#), our contest that asked what news was being communicated by any of Bob Staake's incomprehensible cartoons.



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Pat Myers

Pat Myers is editor and judge of The Style Invitational, The Washington Post's page for clever, edgy humor and wordplay. In the role since December 2003, she has posted and judged more than 700 contests. She also writes the weekly Style Conversational column and runs the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook. [Follow](#)

The Post Recommends

Dershowitz says federal probe in New York, not Mueller, is 'greatest threat' to Trump

"There are no constitutional defenses to what the Southern District is investigating," Dershowitz, an informal Trump adviser, said Sunday.

22 hours ago



Opinion

Distinguished persons of the week: Breaking into Trump's inner circle

Who stood tall?

1 day ago



Trump recently sought his lawyers' advice on possibility of pardoning Manafort, Giuliani says

Trump attorney Rudolph Giuliani said Trump was seeking advice on pardons generally, and was upset that Manafort faced criminal exposure on charges unrelated to his work on Trump's campaign.

