

The Washington Post

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Style Invitational Week 1039: Rearrange 'To be, or not to be'; plus cartoon captions

By [Pat Myers](#), Published: September 19

Once again, the Style Invitational pursues its primary mission of enlightening The Washington Post's readers through the literary arts. Often these literary arts run to poop jokes, but today we'll shoot arguably higher as the school year gets underway: **This week: Combine any of the words in Hamlet's "To be, or not to be" soliloquy, in any order, to create a humorous sentence or longer passage.** You may change the capitalization and punctuation of any word, but you may not add or delete "s" or otherwise change the spelling. You may use a particular word only as often as it appears in the soliloquy: for example, "would" appears twice, so you could use it twice. There are different versions of "Hamlet" out there; we'll be using the 1623 "First Folio" text as it appears in Wikipedia ([click here for the link](#)). This contest was suggested by the ever-lit'ry Marni Penning Coleman.

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a pack of Shakespearean Insult Gum — a set of seven little book-shaped boxes, each containing two gumballs and a different Shakespearean insult (e.g., "Thy wit's as thick as a Tewksbury mustard," from "Henry IV, Part 2"). Donated by Loser Nan Reiner, at whom we do not bite our thumb. And we'll even throw in a set of [Grillz candy teeth](#), which give you fake dental bling until you swallow your smile. Donated with a glittery grin by Mike Gips.

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. 30; results published Oct. 20 (online Oct. 17). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 1039" 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 is by Mae Scanlan; the alternative headline in the "next week's results" line is by Beverley Sharp. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev.

Report from Week 1035

in which we asked what news our cartoonist, Bob Staake, was trying to convey in any of these cartoons: (See the cartoons larger [here](#).) The Empress was pretty darn lenient about what could constitute news, allowing just about any discussion of a public figure, or any sort of event. But still, there's just no way it could encompass an entry like this one by (*Dave Komornik, Danville, Va.*) for Cartoon B: "Jane finally fulfilled her fantasy of sliding off Claude's trousers." No prize for Dave.

The winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

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Cartoon C: The Air Force's "Tail-Look" scandal has exposed serious deficiencies in pilot training. (Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.)

2. Winner of the fabulous "[Eat-a-Bug Cookbook](#)" plus the box of [Larvets mealworm snacks](#):

Cartoon A: Gov. Rick Perry has decided that the best way to change a woman's views on reproductive issues is to insert the ultrasound wand directly into her cerebrum. (Roberta Dobbins, Herndon, Va., a First Offender)

3. *Cartoon B:* Nate Silver's latest statistical prediction for 2016 shows clearly that Hillary Clinton will finish comfortably on top of Chris Christie. *(Kevin Dopart, Washington)*

4. *Cartoon D:* Carson Daly interviews Beyoncé during the filming of her new music video, "All the Sinkhole Ladies." *(Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)*

It's a draw: honorable mentions

CARTOON A

Hallmark decides to offset declining Christmas card sales by marketing a life-size Estelle Getty tree ornament. *(Ken Schwartz, Burke; John McCooley, Rehoboth Beach, Del.)*

Fashion Week trunk shows reveal a new concept for the "bowler hat." *(Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.; Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)*

New OSHA rules require female executives to be fitted with headgear to protect against glass-ceiling collisions. *(Pam Sweeney, Burlington, Mass.)*

It has not been widely publicized that Obamacare will cover exorcisms. *(Danielle Nowlin, Woodbridge, Va.)*

Gov. McDonnell tries to blame the pin on his wife. *(Doug Hamilton, College Park, Md.)*

Apple's iRabbitEars has been proved to improve receptionists. *(Art Grinath, Takoma Park, Md.)*

CBS plans a temporary workaround for viewers during its dispute with Time Warner. *(Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)*

A newly discovered photo shows an early cartoonist getting closer to inventing the thought balloon. *(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)*

One of the first things the Post's new owner does to improve the paper's image is to drop the Invitational and hang the Empress out to dry. *(Levon Buller, Charlottesville, Va., a First Offender)*

CARTOON B

Tired of twerking, a new but clueless generation takes an interest in dancing cheek-to-cheek. *(Jeff Contompasis)*

Mrs. Bloomberg announced that she is taking a different approach to tackling obesity. *(Jim Stiles, Rockville, Md.)*

"Hop on Pop" claims its 1 millionth victim. *(Art Grinath)*

Studies indicate that the Hind-lich maneuver is barely effective in clearing an obstructed airway. *(Stephen Dudzik, Olney, Md.)*

In the latest episode of "The Biggest Loser," Jillian Michaels cheers on new contestant Darryl as he attempts to complete the 50-meter land swim. *(Jim Stiles)*

Rush Limbaugh died Saturday in the first known fatality attributed to The Clapper. (*Andrea Kelly, Ashton, Md.*)

CARTOON C

In the spirit of budget compromise with Congress, the White House will contract out any airstrikes on Syria to Captain Bob's Flying Circus and Crop Dusting, LLC. (*Kevin Dopart*)

After her swimming triumph, Diana Nyad inspired millions by flying to Iceland while seated backward in an open airplane with a stationary propeller. (*Elden Carnahan, Laurel, Md.*)

Recently discovered photographs show that Lucky Lindy was far luckier than previously known. (*Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.*)

NTSB officials investigating July's San Francisco accident announce they've found a flaw in Asiana Airlines' pilot training program. (*Kevin Dopart*)

North Korea will unveil its next-generation fighter jet, aiming to disprove Western claims of a "backward military." (*Trevor Kerr, Chesapeake, Va.*)

To its list of optional services, Spirit Airlines adds a sealed cockpit and attached propeller. (*Stephen Dudzik*)

Jeff Bezos will steer The Post in a new direction. (*Gary Crockett*)

CARTOON D

Tonight on CNN, Anderson Cooper's exclusive interview with the economy! (*Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf, Md.*)

The Channel 5 news crew during its extremely low-budget interview of the Chinese premier. (*Stan Breedlove, Fulton, Md., a First Offender*)

Old Faithful Calls It a Career: 'I Just Ran Out of Steam,' Says Retiring Geyser (*Vytas V. Vergeer, Washington*)

Russian inspectors: "There is no direct evidence of a bomb being dropped." (*Dave Prevar, Annapolis, Md.*)

"As I've said before, this political race is not about my private life." (*Mark Asquino, Washington*)

Missing their former celebrity lifestyles, the Chilean miners returned to the ground. (*Randy Lee, Burke, Va.*)

Satan Announces Candidacy for N.Y. Mayor, Instantly Rises to Third in Polls (*Dale Hample, Silver Spring, Md.*)

Some paparazzi really can't get enough of Michael Jackson. (*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

Unable to book Alec Baldwin, Channel 7 decided viewers couldn't tell the difference and instead interviewed a hole in the ground. (*Mark Richardson, Takoma Park, Md.*)

Mrs. Cyrus plans to wait until it all blows over. (*Joanne Free, Clifton, Va.*)

Still running — deadline Monday night: our contest for long, ridiculous answers to simple questions. See bit.ly/invite1038.

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: [Just for Liffs](#), or **Iraq Kandahar Place**, our contest to turn place names into new words.



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