

Entertainment

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The Style Invitational

By the Empress

Style Invitational Week 1067: Tinker with a quote, plus the alternative-history winners



Bob Staake for The Washington Post - "We're gonna need a bigger bolt." — Igor. Scroll down past this week's results for this week's new contest, Week 1067: to change a quote and attribute it to someone else.

By Pat Myers, Published: April 10

(Note: This week's new contest appears farther down the page, after this week's results. It's an experiment — in our new design in the print paper, in The Post's Arts & Style section, the results and new contest run basically side by side, an option we don't have online. Let the Empress know what you think of having the results first, for a change: Write her at pat.myers@washpost.com.)

Report from Week 1064: HistoRebuffs

The Style Invitational

The Style Invitational is The Post's weekly humor/wordplay contest, serving up since 1993 an irreverent mix of highbrow and lowbrow -- haughty and potty -- in genres ranging from neologisms to cartoon captions to elaborate song parodies. A new contest appears at [washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational](http://www.washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational) every Friday.

Archive






Style Conversational E-mail

Actually we called it Week 1066 Minus 2, in honor of just about the only event we knew that took place in a year we could associate with an Invite week: The contest was to explain what would happen if some moment in history had happened differently.

The winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

1972: If the Democratic National Committee headquarters had been in the Willard Hotel, every scandal since then

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Weekly schedule, past shows >

Going Out Guide

Movies

- Rio 2 in 3D
- Rio 2
- Draft Day



(Pat Myers) - Second prize for this week's new contest, Week 1067: A set of Russian-style nesting dolls each painted with a picture of a household pest, all in a little wooden house. (Real stink bugs at right, direct from the Empress's home, included on request.)



Best news photos of the week

A look at some of our favorite images from the week of April 6.

- Best news photos from the week of March 31

Going Out Guide

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1 million B.C.: *Homo erectus* fails to tame fire. We celebrate the Fourth of July by standing around a pile of wood. (Douglas Raybeck, Amherst, Mass., a First Offender)

1912: What if the Titanic had avoided hitting the iceberg? Celine Dion would be singing the theme song from "Costa Concordia." (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

66 million B.C.: If the dinosaurs had decomposed into butter instead of petroleum, we'd

would have a name ending in "lard." (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

2nd place and a burlap sack called the Official Penitential Hair Shirt:

1963: Because of Cold War tensions, JFK's trip to Germany is rerouted through several other cities to avoid Berlin. He declares to the crowds, "*Ich bin ein Wiener, ein Bad Homburger und ein Putbusser!*" The president returns home in disgrace. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

3rd place:

1949: What if George Orwell hadn't written "1984"? Today, we wouldn't use the term "Big Brother" to refer to the [REDACTED]. (Kathy El-Assal, Middleton, Wis.)

4th place:

1603: Shakespeare has Horatio kiss Hamlet on the lips right after saying, "Good night, sweet prince." Soon, the stigma of homosexual relationships all but vanishes in the Western world. Then, in 2123, South Carolina legalizes same-sex marriage. (Ken Schwartz, Burke, Va.)

Going down in history: honorable mentions

1618: John of Arc leads the French army to victory at the Siege of Orleans. He is immediately recognized as a saint, given command of all French forces and named second in line to the crown. (Scott Poyer, Annapolis, Md.)

1865: If Lincoln had survived, though wounded in the assassination attempt: The president decides to bolster audience confidence in the safety of attending plays by creating a Theater Security Administration, requiring theatergoers to remove their clothing for a daguerreotype before entering. (Seth Brown, North Adams, Mass.)

- Oculus

[More Movies](#)

Best Bets

- Best Bets for this weekend
- Best spots to lock lips
- A week's worth of taco happy hours
- Best sushi happy hours
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have trouble running our cars, but movie popcorn would taste better. (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

144 B.C.: If the Maccabees hadn't succeeded in liberating the Temple, there would be no Hanukkah. Then Fox News wouldn't be able to complain about stores wishing people "Happy holidays." (David Schildkret, Chandler, Ariz.)

455: The Vandals are driven back at the walls of Rome. The city is saved from being sacked, but its walls are permanently scarred with graffiti. (Konrad Schwoerke, Durham, N.C.)

525: What if Dionysius Exiguus had remembered to include a Year Zero in his definition of the A.D. era? Every hundred years, crestfallen pedants would be unable to point out when the *real* turn of the century occurs. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

1517: If Martin Luther hadn't nailed his 95 Theses to the church in Wittenberg, the FBI would have wiretapped John Calvin King in the 1960s. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

1832: If the June Rebellion had succeeded in overthrowing the French crown, Russell Crowe's singing would've ruined the movie musical "Les Triomphantes." (Matt Monitto, Elon, N.C.)

1853: If Elisha Otis had not invented the elevator safety brake, no one would have bothered to invent the StairMaster. (Brad Alexander, Wanneroo, Australia)

1863: Gen. George Pickett says at Gettysburg, "Let's circle around and surprise them from behind." For centuries thereafter, commuters at the American Legion Bridge curse "Pickett's Surprise" as they line up to show passports twice a day at the Maryland-Virginia border. (Ken Schwartz)

1881: Billy the Kid survives being shot and continues his outlaw ways. When finally killed years later, he's known as "William the Man." (Ellen Ryan, Rockville, Md.)

1886: France gives the United States a giant replica of Rodin's "Thinker." The gift proves embarrassing when busy New York harbor activity behind the structure cause scatological laughs. "The Stinker," as it's soon called, is hastily removed from the harbor. All French immigration is terminated. (Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.)

1912: What if Jackson Pollock had not been born? We'd have to clean up after all our paint jobs. (John Glenn, Tyler, Tex.)

1917: Had the Bolshevik Revolution not happened, the Beatles' White Album would have started with "Back in the Land of the Czar." (Brad Alexander)

1990: J.K. Rowling gets a rewarding but time-consuming job, goes off the dole and gives up writing. Kids continue to stay away from books. Thus humanity is saved from the "Twilight" phenomenon. (Steven Steele Cawman, Poughquag, N.Y.)

???: If the extraterrestrials hadn't messed with all those ancient cultures, the History Channel would have to make up some real garbage to fill its schedule. (Josh Feldblyum, Philadelphia)

1596: If John Harrington, the inventor of the flush toilet, had gotten the credit he deserved, instead of Thomas Crapper (who improved it in the 19th century), then nobody would give a harr-y. (Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.)

1897: After seven years of research, note-taking, and revisions, Bram Stoker gives up on his vampire novel. In 1942, moviegoers swoon over the romance of "Casablanca," starring Ingrid Bergman and Bela Lugosi. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf, Md.)

2000: If Al Gore had prevailed in the 2000 presidential election, Michael Moore would still have made a movie blaming the 9/11 attacks on George W. Bush. (Mark Raffman)

1740: What if George Washington had been a child in 2014 instead? He would have said, "A cherry tree has been chopped down, and I accept responsibility." (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

O: The Big Bang: God does *not* have an orgasm; the universe is not created. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

1803: If Napoleon hadn't needed cash, there'd be great restaurants in Des Moines. (Kevin Dopart)

Still running — deadline Monday night: Our famous contest to "breed" two given racehorse names and name the "foal." See bit.ly/invite1066.

NEW CONTEST FOR WEEK 1067:

A(T)RIBUTE TO YOUR WIT

["You're gonna need a bigger bolt."](#) — Igor

"All me are created equal." -- Dolly the sheep
(David Genser, Week 251, 1998)

"And males to go before I sleep." — Jenna Jameson
(Mike Gips)

We're bringing this contest back from 16 years ago, at the suggestion of 150-time Loser Mike Gips, who didn't start Inviting until a mere 11 years ago. **This week: Alter a well-known quote slightly and attribute it to someone else**, as in the examples above. In Week 251, the now-deposed Czar of The Style Invitational decreed that the quote be changed by only one letter; the Empress, however, will be a bit more flexible, but she's not looking for a rewrite or expansion of the original; it should be very close. Feel free to include the (correct!) original quote and attribution along with your altered one; the E might include both if the original isn't so well known. If the quote is from a company or organization rather than a specific person, that's fine, too.

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives an amazing bit of promotional swag that fellow Stylista and Big Deal Radio Star Roxanne Roberts found in the discard bin in The Post's mailroom and immediately brought our way: Courtesy of the National Pest Management Association — the exterminators' lobby — it's [Pest World](#), a set of Russian-style nesting dolls with various household critters painted on them — you got your rat, your cricket, all the way down to your ant. And they all nest inside (besides one another) a cylindrical wooden house with a roof that you lift off.

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#) or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" [Grossery Bag](#). Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet, either the [Po' Wit Laureate](#) or [Puns of Steel](#). First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or, if you were born in the 19th century, fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, April 21; results published May 11 (online May 8). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 1067" 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/InvRules. This week's honorable-mentions subhead was submitted by both Danielle Nowlin and Kevin Dopart; Danielle also wrote the alternative headline in the "Next week's results" line. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev, and click "like" on Style Invitational Ink of the Day at bit.ly/inkofday.

The Style Conversational: The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.

Next week's results: Fasten Your Doublets, or A Show of Ands, our [Week 1065](#) contest (or, as we called it, 1066 minus 1) to slightly alter any phrase of the form "A and B" and define the new phrase.

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