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Entertainment

# Style Invitational Week 1287: Oldies for newsies — a song parody contest

Plus the winning poems featuring National Spelling Bee words



He won't learn your parody's lyrics either — and likely wouldn't want to. (Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers July 5 [Email the author](#)

(Click [here to skip down](#) to this week's winning poems from Week 1283)

For this latest song parody contest, the Empress was planning to ask for song lyrics on some theme like food or sports. But dang it, it just seems wrong to steer our cadre of Loserbards away from What Is Happening to Our World. **This week: Write some song lyrics about something in the news these days, set to a familiar tune.** They should comprise at least one full verse. The songs I'll run in the print paper (including the top four winners) are likely to be very well known, and short; online, however, I'll include links to video clips of the original tunes, so we can include some deeper cuts so readers can follow along with the melodies. Feel free to submit your own videos, but it's the quality of the lyrics, not video production, that gets the ink. **You get an extra week! Deadline is Monday night, July 23.** That way it's less likely your lyrics will already be out of date by Aug. 5.

Submit entries at the website [wapo.st/enter-invite-1287](http://wapo.st/enter-invite-1287) (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Lose Cannon**, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a cute li'l **squeeze toy consisting of a shark with a human foot sticking out of its mouth**; squeeze Sharkie and it sticks out farther. Now *that's* a stress-reliever during beach season. Donated by Mike Creveling.

**Other runners-up** win our **"You Gotta Play to Lose"** Loser Mug or our

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**4 Review**



Grossery Bag, “[I Got a B in Punmanship](#).” Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, “[We’ve Seen Better](#)” or “[IDiot Card](#).” First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air “freshener” ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). Results published Aug. 5 (online Aug. 2). See general contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/InvRules](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The headline for this week’s results is by Tom Witte; Danielle Nowlin and Chris Doyle both submitted the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](https://on.fb.me/invdev). “Like” Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](http://bit.ly/inkofday); follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

**The Style Conversational** The Empress’s weekly online column, published late Thursday afternoon, discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at [wapo.st/styleconv](http://wapo.st/styleconv).

[And from The Style Invitational four weeks ago . . .](#)

## BEE: OUR JEST — WINNING SPELLING-BEE POEMS FROM WEEK 1283

In [Week 1283](#) we asked for humorous poems featuring any of 21 words that were used in this year’s National Spelling Bee. Not surprisingly, our perennial Loserbards rose to the occasion.

### 4th place:

**Lochetic**, *describing an animal that lies in wait for prey:*

A small spider, lochetic, it lies  
In its web all day, seeking a prize,  
Which is fine, for it feels,  
When it comes to good meals,  
Time’s fun when you’re out having flies.  
(Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)



Now just relax and squeeze this stress reliever and watch the leg go in and out . . .

### 3rd place:

**Grognard**, *an old soldier:*

I worked for seven years inside a  
home for Jewish vets,  
Grognavards who moaned and kvetched  
all day while venting their regrets.  
None bought the farm while I was  
there, so I am proud to say  
That *my* old soldiers never died; they

just oy-veyed away.  
(Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

### 2nd place and the bar of soap with real rolled-up money inside:

**Amadelphous**, *gregarious, tending to live in herds:*

(*A poem on a joke that’s been making the rounds*)

Young Justify was quite a guy, the amadelphous sort,  
With poise and equine-imity, well liked within his sport.  
And could he run! A thundering blast of hoofs and heart and hide;  
His Derby, Preakness, Belmont wins were fully Justified.  
And when his feat was thus complete – he’d won the Triple Crown,  
He heard the brays and whinnied praise for garnering renown.  
Neighed he upon his triumph, when a White House visit beckoned,  
“If I want to see a horse’s arse, I would’ve come in second.”  
(Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

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Nan Reiner incorporated "perduellion," "groggnards" and "whyos" into a parody of "Camelot" that she recorded on YouTube. (Screen image)

**Cointise** (*kwan-TEEZ*), a scarf given by a lady to a knight for him to wear on his armor:

Said the damsel, "I'm building my brand —  
My cointise is in such high demand  
That it waves in the breeze  
By the twos and the threes:  
I won't do with a mere one-knight stand."

(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

#### Bumbled bees: Honorable mentions

**Ankyloglossia** (*ankle-o-glossia*): A condition in which the tongue has limited movement:

I. Hycophant, sycophant,  
When in Trump's Cabinet  
Meetings, you either must  
Rain the praise down  
Or dash a note claiming  
Ankyloglossia:  
Can't use your tongue, but your  
Nose is still brown.  
(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

#### Ankyloglossia II

A genie said to Donald Trump,  
"There's just one wish I'll toss ya."  
"Deal!" cried Donnie, and he gave  
Mike Cohen ankyloglossia.  
(Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station, Va.)

#### Ankyloglossia III

I try to please the women I date  
With what women want — or so they all state:  
Humor, intelligence, listening back,  
But all is for naught; I've a rare lingual lack,  
A flaw that prevents me from making them tingle:  
Ankyloglossia's why I am single.  
(Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

#### Debellation, conquest:

*A limerick of anagrams:*

DEBELLATION is conquering—we  
Must to him ALL OBEDIENT be.  
With the leader we've got,  
We'll be BLEEDIN' A LOT,

As he's LIABLE TO END being free.  
(Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

### **Debellation II**

On a battlefield things get misheard,  
As when Patton, while in a formation,  
Doffed his helmet to say just one word  
To his troops, and that word, "debellation,"  
Was so badly misread that the column stopped dead,  
And they waxed [all his hair off](#) instead.  
(Frank Osen)

**Besticulture**, *the exploitation of wild animals for eating, as in hunting and fishing:*

A manly pursuit is besticulture  
When you have mouths to feed,  
But it becomes the worst o' culture  
If an AK's what you need.  
(Kathleen DeBold, Burtonsville)

**Catachresis**, *incorrect use of a word:*

My catachrestic family! Folks correct us,  
*Inferring* that our usage is a mess,  
But their *discrete reprisals* won't *effect* us  
'Cause *all and all*, we frankly *could care less*.  
Our language skill is *fulsome*, and we *flout* it,  
Not *phased* by all the references they *site*.  
*Except* it, 'cause there's *no two bones about it*:  
*For all intensive purposes*, we're right. (Duncan Stevens)

**Myrmecophagous**, *feeding on ants:*

I may be myrmecophagous,  
But I have a clean esophagus.  
(Neal Starkman, Seattle)

**Amadelphous**, *living in herds or flocks:*

We're amadelphous, we're birds of a feather,  
We're constantly living in fear,  
When kitty cats find us hanging together,  
We just get the flock out of here.  
(Dave Zarrow, Reston, Va.)

**Cointise**, *a scarf, etc., given by a lady to a knight to display:*

"A cointise," I begged Miss Upton, "some item of your clothes —  
I'll brandish it to show the world  
that you're my wife-to-be."  
But my swimsuit-model sweetie's still a secret no one knows,  
For the garments that she gave me are all much too small to see.  
(Duncan Stevens)

**Lochetic**, *lying in wait*:

Lochetic, she waits for her innocent prey,  
Then springs like a sprinter takes off from the block!  
Engaged in a violent, merciless fray,  
My cat has successfully captured my sock.  
(Matt Monitto, Bristol, Conn.)

**Beloid**, *arrow-shaped*:

I shot an arrow in the air.  
It fell to earth. I heard you swear.  
You'd be unscathed and un-annoyed  
If I'd yelled, "Duck!" not "Look out, beloid."  
(Frank Osen)

**Winklepickers**, *pointy-toed shoes that were a fad among rock-and-roll fans in 1950s Britain*:

With winklepickers on our feet,  
We'd rock it out till dawn.  
The loud guitars! The pulsing beat!  
We really got it on!  
Regrettably, our time is past,  
We're gimpy, old and sick —  
But who of us could hope to last  
As long as Keith and Mick?  
(Mark Raffman)

**Squabash**, *to criticize harshly*:

(Three parodies of "[Wabash Cannonball](#)")

From a smartphone at the White House to the boundless Twittersphere,  
He types another put-down, every word a vicious smear.  
His game is vitriolic, his goal a verbal brawl,  
With degrading communication, he's the Squabash Cannonball. (Matt Monitto)

From the downtown trattorias to the crab shacks by the shore,  
She pans the dining-out spots, gives 'em all a one-star score.  
"And if they'd let me do it, I would give no stars at all!"  
And she signs her vicious Yelp reviews "The Squabash Cannonball." (Frank Osen)

I listen to the critics and the cavilers complain  
About the lack of sleepers and a bar car on this train.  
From Tennessee to Birmingham, their captious free-for-all  
Suggests that I am riding on the Squabash Cannonball. (Chris Doble)



**Fourrier (pronounced “furrier”), something that comes before; a precursor:**

“Don’t go pulling our leg! Was it chicken or egg?  
Answer quickly, we’re all in a hurry here!”  
So after a bit, quoth one logical wit:  
“It was whichever one was the fourrier.”  
(Kevin Mettinger, Warrenton, Va.)

**Fourrier II**

“The young man was a furrier,” I thought his lover said.  
I pictured hot, impassioned nights with mink-lined sheets abed.  
But she said, “I misunderstood; ’twas not romantic lore:  
The word, she spoke was fourrier, defined as “comes before.”  
(Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.)

**Propylaeum, the vestibule to a Roman temple:**

Your body is a temple I worship toes to hair  
What I’d give for a chance to see ’em!  
I raise my ardent torch to your vaunted beauty rare  
But can’t get it through your propylaeum.  
(Allan Zackowitz, Brookeville, Md.)

**Whyo, a gangster:**

*(to the tune of “Ohio” from “Wonderful Town”)*

Whyo, whyo, whyo:  
Don’t ever list it in your bio.  
One-eyed MacGreavey, reviewing your CV,  
Will think you’re some fancy-pants snob.  
“Bandit,” “thief” or “bagman,”  
Good, honest words show you can rob,  
But if the word “whyo” appears in your bio,  
No gang will give you a job.  
(Max Gutmann, Sunnyvale, Calif.)

**Verrucous (ve-RU-cus), warty:**

My bride’s nose was dripping mucus,  
Which ran down her face verrucous  
To her shawl,  
But my vows said “for worse or better”:  
“Yes,” I told the priest, “I’ll wed her,  
Warts and all.” (Duncan Stevens)

**Succiniferous** (*SUCK-si-NIF-erous*): *Yielding amber.*

Hunting gold, on a road with no camber,  
Down valleys, up mountains they'd clamber.  
Their cursing? Vociferous:

"Man, that's succiniferous!"

When they learned that they'd only found amber.  
(Frank Osen)

**Perduellion** (*treachery*), **grogards, whyos:**

**Perduellion** (*treachery*), **grogards, whyos:**

(To "Camelot"; see Nan Reiner perform her parody [here](#))

A coup was scored a coupla years ago here by Putin, Bannon and a Facebook bot.

Perduellion's now the longest-running show here in Trumpalot.

The rubes were all riled up that sad November; the racists and the Russkies stirred the pot.

A king with tiny hands (and tiny member?) has Trumpalot.

Trumpalot! Trumpalot! Grogards in Congress are de-spined,  
While in Trumpalot, Trumpalot, the Cabinet whyos rob us blind.

That Mueller guy is on a wicked "witch hunt," though he's been GOP his whole career ...

In short, there's simply not a ripe-for-plucking spot to con the dumb and gullible like here in Trumpalot.

(Nan Reiner)

*And Last:*

**Rondieuserie**. *bad reliaious art:*