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Entertainment

Style Invitational Week 1433: Questionable Journalism

Our perennial contest to reinterpret the paper. Plus wry Shakespeare translations.



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers

April 22, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. EDT

Add to list

(Click [here](#) to skip down to the winning modern paraphrases of Shakespeare quotes)

Sentence in The Post: “I’m encouraged that it hasn’t been an overwhelming number of cases.”

Question it might answer: What’s it like being an airport baggage handler as people start flying again?

(Duncan Stevens)

A. “Adults over 16 in all 50 states, plus D.C. and Puerto Rico, are eligible.”

Q. Who can try out to be the next host of “Jeopardy!”? (Ken Rosenbaum)

Sometimes news reports can raise more questions than they answer. They don’t necessarily raise *good* questions . . .

And this is where, once again, you come in. **This week: Choose any sentence (not a headline!) in an article or ad in The Washington Post or another publication dated April 22 through May 3, and write a question that it might humorously answer,** as in the examples above from the April 19 Post, which the Empress solicited from members of the [Style Invitational Devotees](#) group on Facebook. You don’t have to use the entire sentence (and you can use two consecutive ones) but don’t drop words out of the middle that would change the meaning of the sentence. Please include the name, date and page number of print papers and magazines, and a link to the Web page for online ones.



Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1433 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is

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- 1 What’s it really like to guest-host ‘Jeopardy!’? Bill Whitaker can tell you.
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- 4 Students created faux New Yorker covers about the pandemic — and they were so good they went viral
- 5 In uber-rich Silicon Valley, her camera captures those struggling to survive

Monday, May 3: results appear May 23 in print, May 20 online.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, the Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives **an oversize hardcover collection of 13 Dr. Seuss stories**, including several being taken out of print because of old-time racist content. Donated by 85-time Loser Pie Snelson.

Other runners-up win their choice of our “[For Best Results, Pour Into Top End](#)” Loser Mug or our “[Whole Fools](#)” Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, “[No 'Bility](#)” or “[Punderachiever](#).” First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air “freshener” ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline “Update Your Will” is by Tom Witte; Tom also wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev; “like” the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday; and follow [@StyleInvite](https://twitter.com/StyleInvite) on Twitter.



The Style Conversational: The Empress’s weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. See this week’s, published late Thursday, April 22, at wapo.st/conv1433.

The “You’re Invited” podcast: A dozen half-hour episodes, including dish from the Empress and the Czar, and tips from top Losers. See bit.ly/invite-podcast.

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

Update your Will: Modernized Shakespeare from Week 1429

In [Week 1429](#) we asked you to exemplify a Shakespeare quote with a modern one, real or imagined. The Empress was looking for the same idea expressed in today’s language by today’s people, but some of the funnier entries took the words totally out of context, and so what the heck, she threw in a few of those, too.

4th place:

Shakespeare: “Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio, a man of infinite jest.” (*Hamlet*)
Now: **yorick lol**
(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

3rd place:

“I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, but only vaulting ambition, which o’erleaps itself, and falls on the other.” (*Macbeth*)
“I announce my candidacy for president of the United States.” (Nancy McWhorter, Isle of Palms, S.C.)

2nd place

and the Shakespeare-pun soaps:
“May I, sweet lady, beg a kiss of you?” (*Troilus and Cressida*)
“Hi! I’m Governor Cuomo.”
(Frank Mann, Washington)

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

“If it be a sin to make a true election, she is damned.” (*Cymbeline*)
“Ms. Abrams, the Georgia legislature thinks there's been way too much voting going on.”
(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

The Errors of Comedy: Honorable mentions

“How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!” (*Sonnet 97*)
“Two weeks since my second shot — here I come, Cheesecake Factory!” (Bruce Alter, Fairfax Station, Va.)

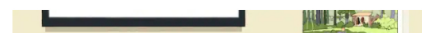
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MOST READ





"Devouring pestilence hangs in our air, and thou art flying to a fresher clime." (*"Richard II"*)

"There goes Ted off to Cancún!" (*Richard Franklin, Alexandria, Va.*)

"Vengeance is in my heart, death in my hand/ Blood and revenge are hammering in my head." (*"Titus Andronicus"*)

"I'm having a really bad day." (*Ellen Raphaeli, Falls Church, Va.*)

"Away with the dotard!" (*"The Taming of the Shrew"*)

"OK boomer." (*Duncan Stevens*)

"I do desire we may be better strangers." (*"As You Like It"*)

[Swipe left.] (*David Stonner, Washington; Jim Sproules, Arlington, Va., a First Offender; Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.*)

"But men may construe things after their fashion, clean from the purpose of the things themselves." (*"Julius Caesar"*)

"I never really felt threatened at the Capitol" . . . they're people "that truly respect law enforcement, would never do anything to break a law." — Sen. Ron Johnson (*Karen Golden, Prince Frederick, Md., a First Offender*)



"Nature teaches beasts to know their friends." (*"Coriolanus"*)

"It is even said that he likes beautiful women as much as I do, and many of them are on the younger side." — Trump on his pal Jeffrey Epstein (*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

"Now I see the bottom of your purpose." (*"All's Well That Ends Well"*)

"Please don't stand up during a Zoom meeting." (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

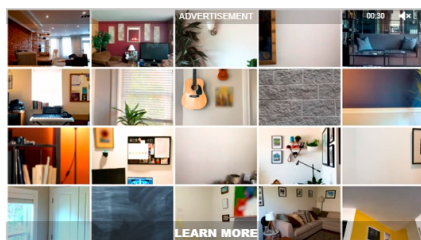
"Alas, poor wenches, where are now your fortunes! Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom . . ." (*"Henry VIII"*) **"Ladies, I'm afraid your Amazon orders are stuck in the Suez Canal."** (*Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.*)

"The empty vessel makes the loudest sound." (*"Henry V"*)

"The chair recognizes Senator Cruz." (*Nancy McWhorter*)

"Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie." (*"Venus and Adonis"*)

"Bring a bucket and a mop." — Cardi B (*Jeff Rackow, Bethesda, Md.*)



"Let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp, and lick the pregnant hinges of the knee, where advantage may follow fawning." (*"Hamlet"*)

"Is Kevin McCarthy going to Mar-a-Lago again?" (*Dan Helming, Trenton, N.J.*)

"Wisely, and slow. They stumble that run fast." (*"Twelfth Night"*)

"Take your time, Mr. President — the plane won't leave without you." (*Jon Gearhart, Des Moines; Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

"... Then might I not say so,



1 Meghan and Harry are becoming your typical American mega-celebrities

2 Florida Republicans rushed to curb mail voting after Trump's attacks on the practice. Now some fear it could lower GOP turnout.



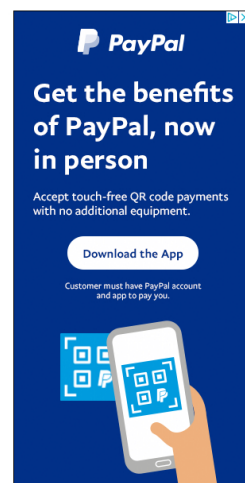
3 The mask slips, revealing the truth about the GOP voter suppression game



4 Facebook's Oversight Board has decided the fate of Trump's account. Here's everything you need to know.



5 How two young math geeks solved the mystery of Mexico City's covid-19 dead



To give full growth to that which still doth grow.” (*Sonnet 115*)

Urologist: **“You really should have called me after the fourth hour.”** (*Sarah Walsh, Rockville, Md.*)

“Round about the cauldron go; in the poison’d entrails throw.” (*Macbeth*)

“You can’t beat home cooking.” (*Diana Oertel, San Francisco*)

“Out, damned spot.” (*Macbeth*)

“Delete! Delete! Delete! My confirmation hearing is in an hour.” (*Bob Kruger, Rockville, Md.*)



“We cannot be here and there too.” (*Romeo and Juliet*)

“I just can’t cope with Zoom AND the classroom any longer!” — “Remote-plus” teacher (*Karen Golden*)

“All strange and terrible events are welcome, but comforts we despise.” (*Antony and Cleopatra*)

“Welcome to Marine Corps basic training, maggot!” (*David Stonner*)

“Good night! Good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow!” (*Romeo and Juliet*)

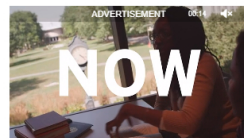
“You hang up first.” “No, YOU hang up first.” “Okay, on the count of 3 ...” (*Mark Nocera, Alexandria; Francesca Kelly, Highland Park, Ill.*)

“Haply your eye shall light upon some toy you have desire to purchase; and your store, I think, is not for idle markets, sir.” (*Twelfth Night*)

“It’s impossible — no one can ever ‘just grab one quick thing’ at Target.” (*Sarah Walsh*)

“Heat not a furnace for your foe so hot that it do singe yourself.” (*Henry VIII*)

“Be careful what you’re doing with that filibuster, Senator Schumer.” (*Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station, Va.*)



[Learn more](#)

“If thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!” (*Othello*)

“Mr. Snyder says the Washington Football Team has received a helpful suggestion.” (*Duncan Stevens*)

“I’ll rant as well as thou.” (*Hamlet*)

“I’d like to speak to the manager.” (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

“O, what a scene of foolery have I seen, Of sighs, of groans, of sorrow and of teen!” (*Love’s Labour’s Lost*)

“I resign as Matt Gaetz’s communications director out of principle.” (*Bill Dorner, Indianapolis*)

“Out with it boldly: truth loves open dealing.” (*Julius Caesar*)

“Look, here’s the deal, we will be transparent as soon as we are in a position to implement what we’re doing, but I don’t know when, to be clear.” — President Biden’s news conference (*Drew Bennett*)

“Methought I was enamor’d of an ass.” (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*)

“Deep in the jeans she’s wearing/ I’m hooked and I can’t stop staring.” — Sir Mix-a-Lot (*John McCooey, Rehoboth Beach, Del.; Jeff Contompasis*)



"Sir, spare your threats: The bug which you would fright me with, I seek." (*"The Winter's Tale"*)
"No, really, I'm excited about the Brood X cicadas — they're fascinating." (Sarah Walsh)

"Small things make base men proud." (*"King Henry VI"*)
"Look at these hands. Do these look like tiny hands to you?" (Jesse Rifkin, Glastonbury, Conn.)

The common curse of mankind, folly and ignorance. (*"Troilus and Cressida"*)
"You can't fix stupid." (Lee Graham, Rockville, Md.)

The miserable have no other medicine but only hope. (*"Measure for Measure"*)
"I'm sorry, your plan does not cover that prescription." (Nancy McWhorter)

Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, creeps in this petty pace from day to day. (*"Macbeth"*)
"I can't remember the last time I buttoned a shirt." (Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring, Md.)

"There's no more faith in thee than in a stewed prune." (*"Henry IV, Part I"*)
"If you're going to hold up a bible in front of a church, you should probably be stronger on the whole 'love thy neighbor' thing." (Danielle Nowlin)

And Last: "Oft expectation fails, and most oft there where most it promises." (*All's Well That Ends Well"*)
"If you think you're getting ink this week, think again." (Rob Cohen, Potomac; David Shombert, Washington)

And Even Later: "This is the pearl, that pleased your empress' eye." (*"Titus Andronicus"*)
"Hey, Pat; thanks for the magnet! So I guess you got that little package I sent?" (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Still running — deadline Monday night, April 26: Our contest for novel takes on fairy tales, nursery rhymes, etc. See wapo.st/invite1432.

DON'T MISS AN INVITE! [Sign up here](#) to receive a once-a-week email from the Empress as soon as The Style Invitational and Style Conversational go online every Thursday, complete with links to the columns.

2 Comments



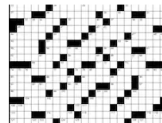
Pat Myers Follow

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.

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Analysis May 2, 2021



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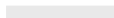
Kevin Merida is named executive editor of Los Angeles Times

Today at 11:49 a.m. EDT



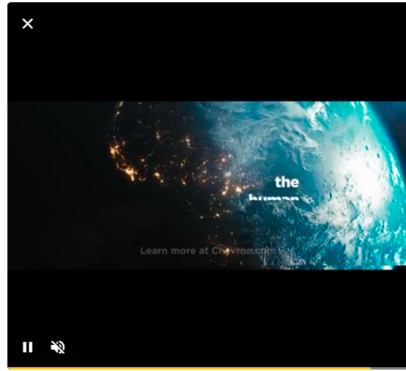
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