

The Style Invitational

Week 629: Odd Couplings



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

If Lance Armstrong married Peter Boyle, would he be Lance Boyle?
If Condoleezza Rice married Howard Fast, would she be Minute Rice?

The Empress decided on **this week's contest** after hearing from two Losers: Deborah Guy of Columbus, Ohio, remembered this type of joke from "Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In" in the 1960s and '70s and figured it was time for an update, as in the examples above. And then we received an e-mail from one Mary Cronin Cherry, who, you will agree, is the World's Most Patient Person, someone who makes Job seem like an overcaffeinated finger-drummer. Mary won an honorable mention and she was wondering if we'd sent her prize out yet. It turns out that she got her Invitational ink for Week 54 — whose results ran April 14, 1994. And guess what the contest was! Mary's entry: If Heidi Fleiss married Everett Koop, you'd have Heidi Fleiss Koop. Mary, you get a magnet if you remember to send us your address. Everyone else, now it's your turn: **"Marry" or otherwise combine famous names and supply the result.** Names that have gained prominence since 1994 would be nice, but you can use older ones, too.

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up receives a package of authentic Jamaican Grace™ Cock Flavoured Soup Mix (Spicy), bought at Giant by Peter Metrinko of Chantilly, plus some cherry-flavored wax lips.

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get one of the lusted-after Style Invitational Magnets. One prize per entrant per week. Send your entries by e-mail to losers@washpost.com or, if you really have to, by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Oct. 3. Results will

be published Oct. 23. Put "Week 629" in the subject line of your e-mail, or it risks being ignored as spam. Include your name, postal address and phone number with your entry. Entries are judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Entries may be edited for taste or content. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. The revised title for next week's contest is by Russell Beland of Springfield.

Report from Week 625, in which we asked you to come up with an alternative plot for an actual movie title: Dozens of Losers ventured that "Casablanca" was about the household of the first Hispanic president, and that "A River Runs Through It" was a travelogue of New Orleans.

◆ **Third runner-up: The Whole Nine Yards: Kirstie Alley's instructional video on making a miniskirt.** (Phyllis Reinhard, East Fallowfield, Pa.)

◆ **Second runner-up: Baby Makes Three: A new mother finds something really, really disgusting in a used diaper.** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

◆ **First runner-up, winner of the book "Change Your Underwear Twice a Week: Lessons From the Golden Age of Classroom Filmstrips": White Men Can't Jump: Three-year-old Bobby Fischer learns the rules of chess.** (Kyle Hendrickson, Frederick)

◆ **And the winner of the Inker: The Asphalt Jungle: In this series finale, Tarzan suffers his untimely death.** (Kevin Jamison, Montgomery Village)

◆ **Honorable Mentions: The Magnificent Seven: Aftermath of a nuclear disaster, starring Dolly Parton.** (Gordon Jones, Draper, Utah)

Garfield: The Movie: Oliver Stone finds another presidential assassination conspiracy. (Pam Sweeney, Germantown)

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea: The story of Louisiana's fight to save its community baseball fields. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

She's All That: After a suicide bombing, forensic investigators have lots to piece together. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

Yojimbo: A daring new chapter in the enduring saga finds Rocky Balboa going back in time to defend President and Dolley Madison from the invading British. (Brad Alexander, Wanneroo, Australia)

Silent Running : A mime, frustrated by the government's refusal to support his endangered art, launches an unusual campaign for public office. (John Shea, Lansdowne, Pa.)

Gone in Sixty Seconds: A documentary on America's recent budget surplus. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

The Shawshank Redemption: Michael Moore's film about a man who finds a coupon for a free shawshank in his Val-Pak and his struggles with Corporate America to redeem it. (Pete Hughes, Alexandria)

She Wore a Yellow Ribbon: The owner of a small-town strip club finds a loophole in the city's anti-nudity law. (Russell Beland)

You've Got Mail: King Arthur convenes the Knights of the Round Table. (Charles Mann, Baileys Crossroads)

The Big Easy: The Mae West Story. (Michelle Stupak, Ellicott City)

The Exorcist: A woman with poor English skills becomes an aerobics instructor. (Scott Campisi, Wake Village, Tex.)

Sorry, Wrong Number: Barbara Stanwyck portrays a tough-as-nails heiress who, day after day, fails to win the lottery. (Matthew Cole, Northfield, Minn.)

I Know What You Did Last Summer: An IRS agent pursues a lifeguard over undeclared poolside earnings. (Steven King, Oakton)

Chariots of Fire: In ancient Rome, a cartwright's wagons explode when pulled by pintos. (Brendan Beary)

Fantastic Four: A man tries to convince women that it's not the size, but what you do with it. (Art Grinath, Takoma Park; Tom Witte)

Around the World in 80 Days: The story of the world's slowest hooker. (Steven J. Allen, Manassas)

Gladiator: The true confessions of Hannibal Lecter. (Dave Prevar, Annapolis; Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

The Rocky Horror Picture Show: A Sly Stallone retrospective. (Russell Beland)

Stand By Me: The story of a man who always gets discount airline seats. (Russell Beland)

Maria Full of Grace: A gruesome tale of cannibalism in a small-town convent. (Katherine Burke, Washington)

Spring Break: A child is traumatized when his beloved Slinky rusts out. (Tom Witte)

Total Recall: Poisoned wheat flakes kill hundreds as a cereal killer strikes. Only complete regurgitation can stave off death. What did you have for breakfast? (Martin Bancroft, Ann Arbor, Mich.)

The Bad News Bears: The Berenstain family goes to Iraq. (Erika Reinfeld, Medford, Mass.)

March of the Penguins: An enthusiastic young basketball coach inspires little Youngstown State to reach the Final Four. (Pam Sweeney)

Groundhog Day: The folks from "Deliverance" celebrate Thanksgiving. (Michelle Stupak)

Miracle on 34th Street : A house in Georgetown actually sells for under a million dollars. It is, however, only six feet wide, having been a stable up until 1904. (Peter Metrinko, Chantilly)

This Is Spinal Tap: Part 3 of the successful documentary series, on the heels of "This Is Goiter Removal" and "This Is Colon Irrigation." (Russell Beland)

The Green Mile: A rival team sabotages a track meet with food poisoning. (Peter Metrinko)

The Last Temptation of Christ: The story of the man who ran the dessert cart at the Last Supper. (Art Grinath)

The Man Who Knew Too Much: Gov. George W. Bush realizes that the American voting public is put off by smarty-pants officials. So he begins a crafty campaign to make himself look less intelligent than the average voter. (John Shea)

Northwest Passage: The D.C. neighborhood clash over Klinge Street access culminates in a hilarious quiche fight. (George Vary, Bethesda)

The 40-Year-Old Virgin: Chef Tell is pressured to uncork his final bottle of rare vintage olive oil. (Ryan Poston, Florence, S.C.)

Twelve Angry Men: Chaos ensues when budget cuts force a small town in Nebraska to drop the Drummers Drumming from the Christmas pageant. (Bill Thompson, Columbia)

An American in Paris: The biggest Internet porn video of 2003. (Douglas Frank, Crosby, Tex.)

Return of the Jedi: In Part 1 of an epic trilogy, the patriarch of the Clampett clan leaves Beverly Hills in a journey back to his ancestral homeland. (Andrew Hoenig, Rockville)

MISS MANNERS

Judith Martin

With This Ring, I See Red

A virulent strain of Wedding Fatigue has become increasingly common and dangerous. Although it has not been shown to cause permanent damage, it nibbles away at otherwise healthy brains, rendering them useless for months.

As Miss Manners recalls, the old form merely immobilized that part of the brain that was designed to participate in debates about which shade of peach the bridesmaids' shoes should be dyed and whether Grandma's beau should be seated up front. This paralysis chiefly attacked the relatives and friends of brides and, not infrequently, the bridegroom. How long it took the bridegroom to learn to fake an interest in such questions was a good test of how smart he was.

But now that couples insist on doing all the planning for their own festival-long weddings, Wedding Fatigue has begun to attack them both. Rather than producing paralytic boredom, as it did to others, this strain deprives its victims of even a modicum of common sense.

So here, in the spirit of healing, are answers to questions Miss Manners has received, which people in their right minds would not have had to ask:

Q. "On the invitations, do I have to list my last name? It is still my name from my first marriage; I did not change it back due to my child. I really would like it if there was some way not to have it on the invitation."

A. But your prospective guests would really like to know who is getting married. What makes you think you are the only Madison they know?

Q. "I would like to ask for my g/f's hand in marriage, but due to the nature of things now, her parents are divorced and her father lives in another state and she currently resides with her mother and siblings. I would like to do the traditional thing of asking her father, but I do not know his phone number and I would like for it to be a surprise. What should I do?"

A. Consult an online telephone directory.

Q. "What is the rule of thumb for wearing the man's wedding ring prior to the wedding day? Can the man wear the ring on his left hand, third finger, or should it be put in a safe place till

the wedding day?"

A. It's not his ring yet; it's the bride's. Read the wedding ceremony — she gives it to him then. And the thumb has nothing to do with it.

Q. "My wedding dress is ivory and the tux shop and dress shop recommend ivory shirts, ties and vests for the men. They say that since the wedding dress is ivory, the men should be in ivory so as not to make the dress appear dirty. My fiancé is sure that we will lose that formal evening flair if he is wearing ivory with his tux."

A: The groomsmen can make the bride look dirty only if they get drunk and make off-color jokes about her. But if you want to be really safe, you had better skip the wedding cake so its icing doesn't make you look soiled.

Miss Manners apologizes for any signs that she might have been impatient with these questions. She wishes all these brides and bridegrooms great happiness and a speedy recovery.

Dear Miss Manners:

I have often frequented family restaurants that serve delicious large sandwiches. The problem? Often the sandwiches are too large, and even the toothpick in the center fails to keep them together. I find it impossible to eat one without part of the tomatoes and almost all of the mayonnaise, mustard and ketchup ending up on my fingers, face and shirt. Using a fork and knife is fruitless, because then the sandwich slides apart. Is there a way to enjoy the food without feeling like a slob of a diner?

No. Ask the waiter to take the sandwich back to the kitchen and have it cut into quarters. Or eighths, if necessary. Miss Manners does not believe in setting up food to be a trap to the diner, although she realizes that this is how most people think etiquetteers get their jollies.

Feeling incorrect? E-mail your etiquette questions to Miss Manners (who is distracted that she cannot reply personally) at MissManners@unitedmedia.com or mail to United Media, 200 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

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ASK AMY

Dear Amy:

My mother received a fancy invitation to my cousin's daughter's wedding. It is to be held in a mansion rented for the occasion in Northern California.

The invitation was addressed to my mother and to my son, both of whom live in the Midwest.

Because I live in Southern California and another first cousin lives along the California coast (the only relatives of this family in California) my mother told the bride that my cousin and I would be happy to attend the wedding in place of her and my son.

To which my cousin replied, "Oh, we never really thought that you were going to show up, the mansion's already crowded and there just isn't any more room."

Translation: We want a present for my daughter, but you're not really invited.

Mom said that it was very rude and that she would not be sending a gift.

I know what I'd send.

Memo to relatives: Because we're not good enough for your tawdry wedding, we won't be attending your scurvy funerals, either.

Not Lost in Translation

Memo to you: If you're not invited to a wedding, then you're not invited to a wedding. Wedding invitations are not fungible, transferable or otherwise up for grabs.

Your mother and your son were invited to this wedding. You and your cousin were not. It isn't up to your mother to decide who will be included in this celebration. I imagine that this is why the bride responded to your mother as she did.

Considering your low opinion of these cousins and your reaction to being stiffed, I'm not surprised that you weren't invited to this affair.

Translation: I doubt you'll be missed, either at this wedding or at the funeral.

Dear Amy:

About a month ago, while eating out, I had to use the men's room. When I entered, a man was standing by the sink with his young daughter who appeared to be about 5 years old, drying her hands. There was only one stall, which was occupied, and one urinal, which was essentially in plain sight of where the man and girl were standing.

I walked up to the urinal and just stood there while I tried to make up my mind about whether I should proceed with what I needed to do.

After maybe 30 seconds (it felt like minutes!), the man and his daughter left.

I'm in my thirties and not at all conservative about gender roles, so I tried convincing myself that I had merely experienced the reverse of what women have encountered for decades when mothers bring their small sons into women's rooms. But really, it's different.

Women's rooms are entirely stalls. Little boys whose mommies take them to the bathroom are extremely unlikely to see things they ought not see.

Little girls whose daddies take them into men's rooms are in a different situation.

Is there a correct protocol for this? I recognize that it may just be that more fathers are alone with their daughters or are less hesitant to share bathroom duties with mothers, but I thought maybe you or your readers might have some insights about the right way for someone in my position to deal with this.

Pee-Shy and Polite

You should not urinate in front of a young girl — you did the right thing to give this father and daughter time to finish.

Fathers are in a terrible spot when it comes to using public restrooms with young daughters. I've noticed that more institutions are responding to this by installing "family" bathrooms, in addition to men's and women's rooms.

Young children should never be allowed to go into a public bathroom by themselves, so dads need to find creative ways to deal with this pickle, either by letting a trusted mom take their daughters into the women's room or by using a stall in the men's room.

Dads with daughters in men's rooms should ask for other men to wait long enough for them to hustle their girls out.

I hope that you and other gentlemen will continue to be patient with dads and their daughters until they have more acceptable options.

Write to Amy Dickinson at askamy@tribune.com or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

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BRIDGE | Frank Stewart

Both sides vulnerable

NORTH
♠ A 9 7 5 2
♥ K 6 4 3
♦ J 3
♣ 7 2

EAST
♠ K Q 4 3
♥ 9
♦ A 9 8 4
♣ Q 8 6 4

SOUTH (D)
♠ 6
♥ A Q J 5
♦ 7 5
♣ A K J 10 9 3

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	All Pass		

Opening lead: ♦ K

"Minnie nails me because she can't see straight. Her teammate nails me because he doesn't know what the contract is."

Cy the Cynic was bemoaning another loss to Minnie Bottoms, my club's senior member, whose old bi-focals make her mix up kings and jacks. In a match against Minnie's team, Cy, West, cashed the king and queen of diamonds against Minnie's four hearts and next led the jack of spades.

"Minnie won," Cy said, "and took the A-Q of trumps. When she saw the 4-1 break, she went after the clubs: She led the ace and . . . the jack!"

"She thought she was cashing the ace-king," I observed.

"If she had," Cy growled, "I'd ruff, and she'd go down. As it was, East took the queen and tried to

cash a spade. Minnie ruffed and led good clubs, and I was helpless: When I ruffed, dummy overruffed and Minnie drew my last trump and ran the clubs."

"Bifocals or not, her play guarded against a bad club break," I said. "What happened at the other table?"

"Millard Pringle was West," Cy bit out. "After he took two diamonds, he led a third diamond, giving South a ruff-sluft he didn't want. South could still have made four hearts, but he ruffed in his hand and cashed a high trump. Then there was no way to make the contract."

Millard is a shy little man whose window shade doesn't quite go all the way to the top. "Even Millard knows not to concede a ruff-sluft," I said.

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Next Week: Course Light, or Enrolling With Laughter