

The Style Invitational

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

Week 665: Your One-in-a-Million



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Punion: A wordplay so painful that it makes you simultaneously cry and clench your feet.

S ometime very soon, according to the highly disputed but good-enough-for-our-purposes calculations of one Paul JJ Payack, the English language will expand to include its 1 millionth word. Paul JJ has a Web site called Global Language Monitor and has "devised GLM's proprietary algorithm, the PQ Index/Indicator, that helps track the frequency of words and phrases. . . in relation to their frequency of use and contextual usage." While Paul is a swell algorithm-deviser, even he doesn't know what that 1 millionth word will be. (Or should have been.) You do. And you know what its last three letters are. This week: **Coin the millionth word in the English language and define it. The word must end in -ion.** You're welcome to use it in a sentence. It can't be a redefinition of a well-known existing word; for example, you can't submit "carrion" and define it as damaged luggage.

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. And first runner-up receives something that even the Empress admits is better: When Jeff Brechlin of Eagan, Minn., received his second Inker in the mail, he found that it had been slightly damaged in shipping, i.e., shattered into a dozen pieces. So Jeff offered, in exchange for an intact replacement, to put the broken one back together, with a little enhancement. Thus: The Brechlinker, Mixed Media (Alabastrite and Malibu Beach Barbie).

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt, Honorable Mentions (or whatever they've called this week) get one of the Justed-after Style Invitational Magnets. One prize per entrant per week. Send your entries by e-mail to losers@washingtonpost.com or by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, June 12. Put "Week 665" 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. Contests 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. Results will be published July 2. 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 Honorable Mentions name is by Chris Doyle of Forsyth, Mo. The "Brechlinker" name was thought up by Kevin Dopart of Washington. This subject of this week's contest was brought to the Empress's attention by Brendan O'Byrne of Regina, Saskatchewan. The Revised Title for next week's contest is by John O'Byrne of Dublin. (We're just O'Byrneing up all over.) The Empress's wardrobe was provided by Village Thrift Stores.

BY JULIA EWAN — THE WASHINGTON POST



Try to be just less than best: Inker and Brechlinker.

REPORT FROM WEEK 661

In which we sought alternative titles for actual movies — either comically long "foreign translation" titles or comically pithy ones, such as the upcoming says-it-all "Snakes on a Plane." In general, we got better examples of the latter; we've just mixed them together below.

4 "The Graduate": "Doin' Your Mother's Girlfriend and Your Girlfriend's Mother" (Michelle Stupak, Ellicott City)

3 "United 93": "Snakes on a Plane" (Dave Brewer, Shoreline, Wash.; Peter Metrinko, Chantilly)

2 The winner of the aerosol can of Poop Freeze: "The Ten Commandments": "Elderly Jewish Man Tries to Tell Everyone Else What to Do" (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

STRAIGHT TO DVD

"Tora! Tora! Tora!": "Razing Arizona" (Russell Beland, Springfield)

"Bonnie and Clyde": "Kiss Kiss Bang Bang Bang Bang Bang Bang Bang Bang . . ." (Tom Witte)

"The Passion of the Christ": "Jesus and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day" (Matthew McCollum, Los Angeles)

"Life Is Beautiful": "Life May Be Beautiful, but This Here Is a Movie About the Holocaust" (Heather Trew and Jeff Bridgman, Arlington)

"The Good, the Bad and the Ugly": "The Bad, the Very Bad and the Not Only Bad but Also Ugly" (Russell Beland)

"Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs": "One Bride for Seven Brothers" (Ira Allen, Bethesda)

"The Birds": "Meet the Flockers" (Dennis Lindsay, Seabrook)

"Taxi Driver": "Back in the Day When Cabdrivers Were More Normal and Spoke English" (Judith Cottrill, New York)

"Harold and Maude": "How Many Times Does 20 Go Into 80?" (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

"It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World": "A Series of Harrowing Mishaps Leading to the Big W" — *N. Pelosi, Washington* (Mark Eckenwiler, Washington)

"Fantastic Voyage": "Here's Looking in You, Kid" (Mary Ann Henningsen, Hayward, Calif.)

"Animal House": "Beware of Greeks Throwing Food" (Marty McCullen, Gettysburg, Pa.)

"Field of Dreams": "If You Build It, and Film the Building of It, and Use Some Post-Production Special Effects to Make an Iowa Cornfield Look Exciting, They Will Come" (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

"Deliverance": "The Afting Trip" (Tom Witte)

"A Few Good Men": "Two Overacting Men" (Russell Beland)

"Stalingrad": "All I Want for Christmas Is My Two Front War" (Peter Metrinko)

"The Alamo": "Immigration Reform, the Early Days" (Joel Knanishu, Rock Island, Ill.)

"Jesus Christ Superstar": "The Savior Is Very Talented Musically!" (Douglas Frank, Crosby, Tex.)

"King Kong": "Furry Animal Finds Stray Girl and Promises to Take Care of Her" (Jay Shuck, Minneapolis)

"Shrek": "It Ain't Over Till She's Ogre" (Russell Beland)

"The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe": "The Passion of the Christ" for Kids" (Grey Maggiano, Arlington)

"The Aristocrats": "Flying Excrement, Blowholes and Your Sister, Together at Last" (Jay Shuck)

"The Breakfast Club": "Shouldn't You Kids Be Out of School?" (Brendan Beary)

"Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom": "Indiana Jones and That Terrible Middle One" (Russell Beland)

"One Million Years B.C.": "Raquel Welch Wears the Skins of Mammals That Haven't Yet Evolved to Her Bra Size" (Mark Eckenwiler)

"Pretty Woman": "My Favorite Whore" (Tom Witte)

"Pride & Prejudice": "He's Rich and He's Hot: Is There a Problem?" (Jane Auerbach, Los Angeles)

"Pulp Fiction": "Gratuitous Violence Committed by Various Thugs, Plus a Really Cool Dance Scene" (Jerilyn Schweitzer, Bethesda)

"Rent": "Eight Thousand One Hundred and Seventeen Seconds" (Nick Curtis, Gaithersburg)

"Silent Hill": "A Movie That Makes as Little Sense as the Video Game of the Same Name but Unlike the Game It Won't Cost You \$50 and You Can Finish It in Two Hours" (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

"Silkwood": "Whistle on Your Work" (Kyle Hendrickson, Frederick)

"West Side Story": "Death Battle of the Dancing Pretty Boys" (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

"The Wizard of Oz": "The Farm Girl's Wild Time With Three Guys and a Dog" (Rob Kloak, Springfield; Kevin Dopart, Washington)

"Curious George": "Except for Buckingham Palace, Your Best Shot at Seeing Monkey Ears and Gaudy Yellow Hats" (Jay Shuck)

"Transamerica": "Heather Has a Mom/Dad" (Chris Doyle, Forsyth, Mo.)

And Last: "The Maltese Falcon": "Another Much-Sought-After Ugly Little Statue That Turns Out to Be Worthless" (Brendan Beary)

Next Week: **How Low Will You Go? or An Embarrassment of Wretches**

Eastern's Big Prom Surprise: Yung Joc

PROM, From D1

white (Eastern's colors), the hip-hop song "I'm N Love (Wit a Stripper)" is thumping over the sound system. It's a curious choice for a prom night playlist, but it's basically just background noise. The dance floor is empty; all the kids are milling around or sitting at tables, picking at food from the dinner buffet. Nobody appears to be interested in making the first move under the ballroom's gigantic chandelier.

Randall thinks he has a pretty good idea about what might get the party started, though, and when his phone finally rings, he begins the countdown.

"Ten minutes," he says. "It's going to be hot."

Just after 11 p.m., Randall briefly addresses the students before giving way to a radio deejay named II Face the Wild Boy from WKYS (93.9 FM), who summons Eastern senior Jessica Jones. Having won a contest through the station, Jones has been made up and fed and driven to the prom in a classic Rolls-Royce. But wait, there's more, the jock says. Something about a date for Jones, who came to the prom without one, having shared the ride in the Rolls with her good friend Charmice Robinson. "We've got a little somethin' somethin' for you," Wild Boy says. "Make some noise for Yung Joc!"

Thus begins the pandemonium, as students shriek and rush to the front of the ballroom, where the ascendant Atlanta rapper has materialized to perform his hit single, "It's Goin' Down."

Your mileage may vary, but prom memories are typically made up of fashion decisions that tend to look exponentially more ridiculous as time passes, plus all that angst suffered in getting a date and then figuring out how to finance the night. However, sometimes you go to a prom and a five-minute concert breaks out, and that becomes the headline.

And so Eastern High's 2006 senior prom will go down as the night Yung Joc (pronounced "young jock") surprised the roughly 200 promgoers when he stopped by to perform the song that currently sits atop Billboard's national R&B/hip-hop chart. "It's Goin' Down" isn't exactly "Always and Forever," as Joc raps of selling dope, being pursued by the FBI and having a pistol in his lap; but still.

Memories. Nothing more than promotional-meets-prom memories. In a raspy drawl, the 23-year-old entertainer (real name: Jasiel Robinson) tells the kids at the end of his performance that his new album, "New Joc City," comes out Tuesday.) "I was, like, shocked," says Jones, the contest winner. "It's a night I'm always going to remember."

Says Janay Allen, another senior: "I was like, 'What? Yung Joc?! Whatever, you're playing.' But he came out, and I was like, 'It's really Yung Joc!' It



PHOTOS BY MARVIN JOSEPH — THE WASHINGTON POST



Assistant Principal Alonzo Randall proves light on his feet at Friday's Eastern High School prom. Senior Jessica Jones, left, won a WKYS radio contest that brought a surprise visit from rapper Yung Joc. "I was, like, shocked," says Jones. "It's a night I'm always going to remember."

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To view a photo gallery of rapper Yung Joc's visit to the Eastern High School prom, go to www.washingtonpost.com/photo.

was such a big surprise. I was already happy when I came to the prom, but that made me happier."

The idea of bringing a major-label recording artist to a high school prom attended by roughly 200 students isn't necessarily new; record companies have been doing it sporadically for at least a few years. The impact on an artist's career is debatable, though there are bound to be small-scale fan-loyalty benefits and a slight bump in localized buzz. But with Joc's single in heavy rotation across the country, his album is already expected to make a lofty entry onto the Billboard Top 200 upon its release next week, most likely in the Top 5.

Joc wound up at the Eastern dance because he was in town Friday for a concert at Love, and WKYS was looking to do some sort of promotion, and Joc's camp was amenable to crashing a prom, and Eastern's happened to be scheduled for Friday at a building about five minutes from the WKYS studios.

"We want to give our listeners stuff they can't get anywhere else," says Derrick Brown, the program director for WKYS. "Stuff that money can't buy." (Sort of, anyway: Tickets to the prom were

\$80 per student.) Wearing a Sean John T-shirt and embroidered jeans, along with thousands of dollars' worth of diamond jewelry — a massive diamond crucifix, a diamond-encrusted watch, a diamond tennis bracelet, a diamond ring, etc. — Joc says he's now performed at two proms this year, and he'd gladly do more.

"I don't care if I have a No. 1 record; it's just a pleasure to be in a situation like this," he says. "These kids, they seemed to enjoy me, and I enjoyed them." He left a few minutes later.

Says Harve Pierre, the general manager of Sean "Diddy" Combs's Bad Boy Records, whose new Bad Boy South imprint is releasing Joc's album: "We try to do things like this if we can. Joc likes to reach out to people and get to the fans."

But there is at least one problem with playing at a prom: Eastern's Class of 2007 will probably expect Diddy himself to perform.

"We definitely appreciate Yung Joc coming to our prom," says Randall, the assistant principal. "It was really cool. But the administrator for the senior class next year will definitely have to step it up a notch. This is going to be hard to top."

ASK AMY

Dear Amy:

My husband and I are helping my daughter and her husband with the maintenance of a farm that they just bought.

Last week, we called a company that used to do a service for the previous owner. We explained to the company owner that we needed this service immediately, as some very expensive trees on the property were dying because the sprinkler system was not working in that area.

At first she was very friendly to my husband. When she said they couldn't come out to the place for three weeks, my husband responded, "Jesus Christ!" This woman got very offended. My husband gave me the phone because he could not believe her reaction. She told me that they would not service the farm because my husband offended her.

I said, "My husband did not offend you. We are Catholics. We practice our religion and for us to say, 'Jesus Christ!' or 'Oh, my God!' as a response is not considered an offense; it's just an expression."

She said that for her it was a great offense and that she would no longer do business with us.

Please let me know if this woman's behavior was appropriate. We have had a business since 1961; we have never been offended by an expression, and we have never mixed our personal beliefs with our business.

We have always respected others' beliefs and have behaved respectfully.

I think that some people are such fanatics that instead of being an example, they condemn others.

Should a person mix religion with business? We are astonished by this incident.

Astonished Consumer

I'm astonished that you're astonished.

If I were a vendor and a prospective customer spontaneously expressed his disappointment by saying "Jesus Christ!" — I'm not sure I would want to continue the business relationship, not only because of the nature and use of the term but also because I wouldn't necessarily want to become entangled with a customer who was also a hothead.

You and I could wrangle back and forth about whether "Jesus Christ!" is more or less offensive than "Oh, my God!" but I think that it is, and I'm not sure that a person's level of religious belief

or practice really has that much to do with it. "Jesus Christ!" as a response isn't widely heard on television, in popular culture, or in real life presumably because it makes Christians uncomfortable in a way that, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn" no longer does.

The beauty of the free market is that you can choose to hire a vendor who doesn't have these particular sensitivities.

Dear Amy:

More on the subject of pre-meal prayer.

Our government has a special agency dedicated to defending discrimination by faith-based agencies. Faith-based organizations lobby vigorously and sometimes violently to prevent access to medicines or medical treatments they consider wrong. These faith-based agencies receive enormous government funding on top of their tax-free status, which enables them to promote their agendas far more aggressively than secular organizations, let alone individuals. So I can understand why some individuals would want to draw the line against the imposition of faith-based behavior at the door of their home.

On the other hand, I agree that a host's first priority is to make a guest comfortable. If your guests want to pray, you should let 'em rip. Of course, when your original letter writer is a guest at her relatives' home, they should show the same manners and "lighten up" and refrain from praying.

What do you bet they will?

Not an Atheist

I understand your point. If a host is meant to adjust her behavior to suit her guests' prayer practices, then shouldn't those guests also adjust their prayer practice when they are hosts to non-believing guests?

Well, no. I wasn't suggesting that the host should force herself to pray along with her guests, but that she should tolerate it. Just as those who pray at their home tables shouldn't tolerate those who don't wish to.

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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