

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Rock-it science: Winning parodies

BY PAT MYERS

Our parody contest for **Week 1235** asked for songs related to science and technology. It was a deliberately broad category, embracing everything from gene splicing to tweets, and both the informational and the political.

In reading the hundreds of songs submitted, the Empress discovered that a bunch of profs out there enjoy writing parodies for other scientists or their college students, since dozens of the songs had such catchy lyrics as “Competing inhibition keeps the substrates from the active site/ They raise Km, but leave Vmax and shirk” (from a parody of “Close to You”). For our more nerdically inclined readers, the E links to some of these Chem Lab Rock parodies in this week’s Style Conversational at [wapo.st/conv1239](http://wapo.st/conv1239).

4th place

Heat It (To “Beat It”)

They tell me that it’s getting warm around here,  
The polar ice is shrinking, gonna disappear.  
The carbon that we use will trap air around the sphere  
And heat it, yes, heat it,

We better act, we better do what we can,  
Don’t wanna swell the seas, don’t wanna lose Japan,  
The Earth is in a bind, and stuff’s gonna hit the fan  
And heat it.  
If you wanna survive, don’t heat it (heat it),  
Do I have to go and repeat it?  
If we don’t stop, we’ll be in a plight,  
It really matters who’s wrong and right,  
Don’t heat it!  
(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

3rd place

The Cabinet Is Bare (to “Wonderful World”)

Don’t believe in prehistory; pooh-pooh paleontology.  
Don’t know what evolution’s for; Grandpappy rode on a dinosaur.  
But I’m solidly pro-GOP; I gave ‘em 2 million, maybe 3  
So now I’m gonna run DOE.  
Don’t know much about fossil fuel; made me rich, so I think it’s cool.  
Just can’t understand climate shift; my diploma was Daddy’s gift.  
If the Earth goes kaput one day, I’ll be raptured up anyway,  
So now I’m gonna lead EPA.

Oh, I don’t claim to be an A student; never tried to be,  
‘Cause all that I’ve needed for qualifications is the Right ideology.

Got a D in biology; then flunked organic chemistry.

Don’t know squat about the human bod; just leave everything up to God.  
But we’ve got the best résumé — greasing palms is our big forte —  
And now we’re dumbing down U.S.A.  
(Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

2nd place and the face-covering chicken hat:

The Beauty of Drug Patents (to “Be Our Guest”)

We “invest”! We “invest”!  
‘Cause our game plan is the best!  
We make plays for medications  
Where the prices are depressed!

We know lives are at stake,  
But what profits we can make!  
So who cares about the karma?  
Don’t believe me? Ask Big Pharma!

Do we gouge? Maybe so!  
But we’re raking in the dough!  
If the patent system’s broken,  
who’d have guessed?  
So chill and don’t be jelly  
Of ol’ Martin Shkreli,  
Be impressed! He’s been blessed!  
We “invest”!  
(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

And the winner of the Ink’ Memorial:

Come Together

Spermatozo-on, he come swimming real speedy  
In some gooey liquid, got plans, yes indeedy.  
He is sure one motile guy,  
Got to reach that ovum with an X or a Y.

Egg hated ovary, found it quite dystopian,  
Burst loose from her prison, toward the tube fallopian.  
She say, “Male gamete, I surmise:  
We’ll become a zygote if we just fraternize.”  
Come together right now,  
Fertilize!  
(Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New for Week 1239: MASH 3

**The Hateful Eight Is Enough:** Trump decides to fire yet more White House aides.  
**La La Land Before Time:** Peppy candy-colored dinosaurs strut their stuff on the La Brea Swampway.  
**Bringing Up Baby Driver:** A spoiled heiress and her pet leopard are on the lam after a botched robbery.

Here’s a contest we haven’t done since Week 939 in 2011 (and only once before that, in the Empress’s Invite youth of Week 610 in 2005). And since movies have been coming Fast and Furious (6, 7 and 8) since then, we have lots more titles — not to mention lots more material — to work with. **This week: Combine two movie titles and describe the result,** as in the examples above by Loser Duncan Stevens, who suggested bringing back this contest. **Note:** The two titles need not overlap their last and first words, as they do in the examples; in fact, they don’t even have to have any words exactly in common; what’s important is that a reader can tell which two titles are being combined. For instance, the Week 610 winner, by Paul Whittimore, was “Terminators of Endearment”: At last, the perfect ‘compromise’ date movie.”

Submit entries at this website: [wapo.st/enter-invite-1239](http://wapo.st/enter-invite-1239) (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Inkin’ Memorial**, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy — one of the last few before we come out with a new design. Second place receives a ball cap with a nice fat felt pig snout and ears sticking out of it, along with cute googly eyes. It’s a promotion for a company called (don’t know why) New Pig Corp., a maker of absorbent pads and mats. Donated by Loser Dave Prevar.

**Other runners-up** win our “You Gotta Play to Lose” Loser Mug or our Grossery Bag, “I Got a B in Punmanship.” Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, “No Childishness Left Behind” or “Magnum Dopus.” First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air “freshener” (FirStink for their first ink). Deadline is Monday night, Aug. 14; results published Sept. 3 (online Aug. 31). See general contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/InvRules](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The headline for this week’s results was submitted by both Chris Doyle and Jesse Frankovich; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Jeff Contompassis. Join the Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](http://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 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).



BRADY HOLT

If you already have a porkpie hat: Imperial Scion Valerie Holt in this week’s second prize.

Good in theory: Honorable mentions

**Galileo! (To “Oklahoma!”)**  
Galileo said, “I have big news for everyone.  
Take a look with me and you will see  
That the Earth revolves around the sun!”

“Galileo!” cried a much-infuriated pope.  
“Your apostate views are just fake news.  
You cannot believe your telescope!

“The text of the Testament proves  
That the Earth that God made never moves.

“Now you must say, ‘Abrenunto!’  
Renounce your views today.  
Get on your knees and pray to the Lord,  
Galileo, Galileo, obey!”  
(Barbara Sarshik, McLean, Va.)

**My Biome (To “My Sharona”)**  
Ooh, my little germie one, my squirmie one,  
Thanks for giving all of your slime, my biome.  
Ooh, at making me digest, you are the best,  
Got my vital signs on the climb, my

biome.  
Haute cuisine or slop, you don’t stop; salad, soup or nuts;  
Casserole or chop, sauce on top — ‘cause you have real guts.  
Pie, rye, chai, mai-tai, go!  
M-m-m-microbiome.  
(Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

**Facial-Recognition Payments (To “I’ve Just Seen a Face”)**  
I’ll pay with my face  
For what I buy in every place  
And breathe a sigh  
Once this technology  
Can scan my mug and know it’s me  
Somehow mmm-mmm-mmm-mmm-mmm

Facial recognition would  
For sure promote the common good,  
And we won’t carry cash, IDs,  
Or credit cards on shopping spree  
Oh wow dee-dee-dee-dee’ n-dee  
All in, yes I am all in!  
Let’s start installin’  
These systems now.  
(Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

**And last: (To “I’m Henry VIII, I Am”)**  
I’m a pray-ing ma-an-tis, I am  
Pray-ing ma-an-tis I am, I am  
I got married to the widow next door;  
She’s been married seven times before  
And every one was a [CRUNCH!]  
(Marni Penning Coleman, Falls Church, Va.)

There were far too many excellent song parodies this week even to get ink online. See about a dozen more honorable mentions — covering everything from vaccines to the physics of Max Scherzer’s arm — in the online Invite at [wapo.st/invite1239](http://wapo.st/invite1239). Plus all week, the Empress will post other ink-worthy parodies on the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](http://on.fb.me/invdev).

Still running — deadline Monday night, Aug. 7: our contest for D-E-F phrases. See [wapo.st/invite1238](http://wapo.st/invite1238).

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

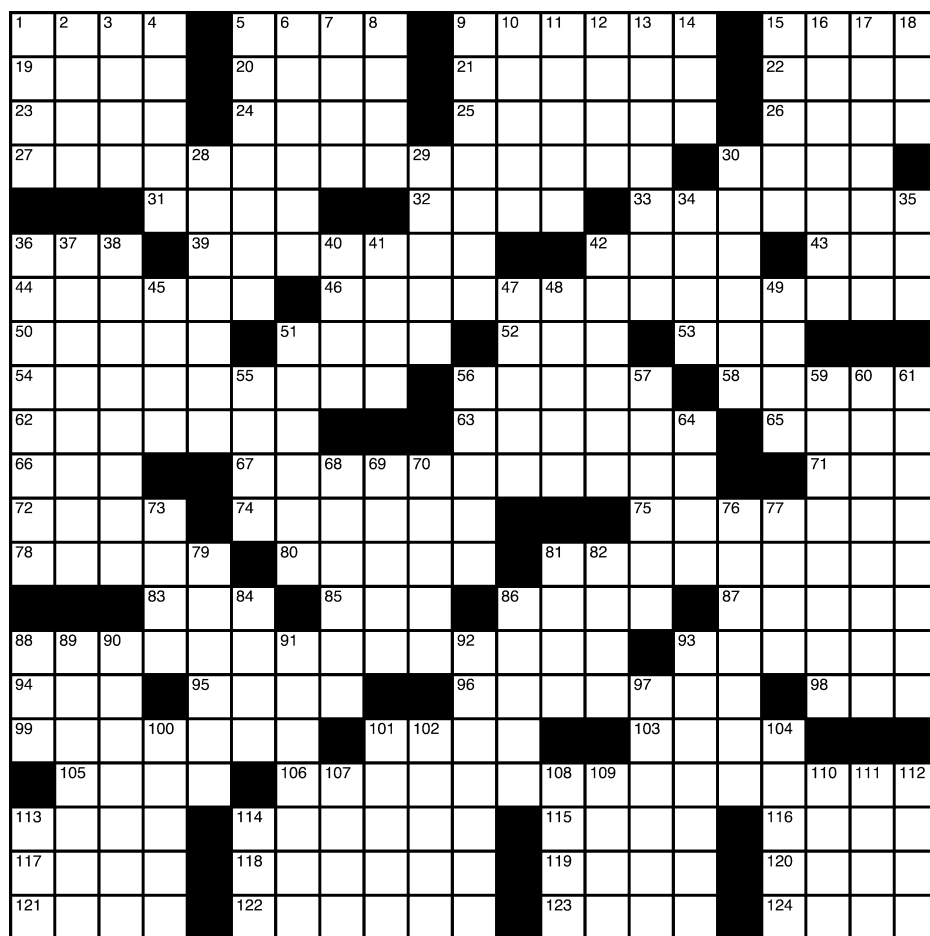
“SOMETHING’S FISHY” By CLIVE PROBERT

ACROSS

- 1 Einstein equation word
- 5 Urges to attack, with “on”
- 9 They may be tied around saddle horns
- 15 Lhasa
- 19 Start of a plan
- 20 Workplace regulator: Abbr.
- 21 Carpet installer’s step one
- 22 Surgeon general under Reagan
- 23 First name in game shows
- 24 “SpaghettiOs!”: Campbell’s slogan
- 25 It may call for an R rating
- 26 \_\_\_ the finish
- 27 “Me, blab to flatfish? No way!”
- 30 Memo starter
- 31 Spelling song
- 32 Hosp. area
- 33 Relief, spelled out?
- 36 Mumbai hrs.
- 39 NYSE valuation measure
- 42 Oscar Renta
- 43 Smile middle
- 44 They often affect performance
- 46 “Take whichever one you want for your fish and chips?”
- 50 Glasses problem
- 51 Nonsharing word
- 52 Antioxidant food preservative
- 53 Bus sign word
- 54 Fish playing on keys?
- 56 French four-time Formula One champ Prost
- 58 One in a black suit
- 62 Apprentices
- 63 Mercury’s Greek counterpart
- 65 Pool activity
- 66 Louis XIV, par exemple
- 67 Fish on stage?
- 71 Telepathy, e.g.
- 72 More
- 74 Furtive graffiti guy

DOWN

- 1 “La Bohème” soprano
- 2 Yemen’s Gulf of
- 3 Dried-up
- 4 Astute
- 5 They may be anonymous
- 6 Beatty/Hoffman menu
- 7 Half a tot’s train?
- 8 Humorist Mort
- 9 Go wild
- 10 Occupied
- 11 Passion
- 12 Work hard
- 13 Like a dress back from the tailor
- 14 Crafty
- 15 Alphabetically first dog in the AKC’s Working Group
- 16 Grand Prix, e.g.
- 17 Stinker
- 18 Choose
- 28 \_\_\_ penguin
- 29 Flight maintenance word
- 30 Singer
- 34 King Harald’s father
- 35 Down
- 36 Uplifted
- 37 Florida tribe
- 38 Dissertation
- 40 Could hear \_\_\_ drop
- 41 Weymouth of Talking Heads
- 42 Serve a sentence
- 45 Windmill part
- 47 More competent
- 48 Third time, proverbially
- 49 Jabbers
- 51 Fabric from Iraq
- 55 Toll rd.
- 56 Ship-to-ship greetings
- 57 “You \_\_\_ bother”
- 59 Last Sunday, this Sunday
- 60 Credit card introduced by Sears
- 61 Least meaningful, as compliments
- 64 Skirt feature
- 68 Big Island greetings
- 69 It can come before a sentence
- 70 Defensive structures
- 73 Word processing menu
- 76 Dissipated
- 77 Lustful look
- 79 Easy to get into
- 81 Scuttlebutt
- 82 Kentucky \_\_\_ event before the Derby
- 84 \_\_\_-Aid
- 86 Flora partner
- 88 Work unit
- 89 Deserved
- 90 Oval-shaped instrument
- 91 \_\_\_ Gorge, near Buffalo
- 92 Big shots
- 93 Windfall
- 97 Arrogance
- 100 Stylish in dress
- 101 Gets buff, with “up”
- 102 Online social arrangement
- 104 Rugby formation
- 107 Burden
- 108 Reprimand, with “out”
- 109 Peel
- 110 Prefix with dynamic
- 111 Great American Ball Park team
- 112 Math sign
- 113 Use a 112-Down
- 114 Cleveland \_\_\_ OH



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Answers to last week’s puzzle below.

Grandma wants to see her grandsons

**Ask Amy:** I have four adult children and three grandchildren.

They all live 2½ hours away and have very successful lives. My husband and I couldn’t be prouder. The problem is our daughter-in-law, who wants nothing to do with us. She is the mother of our only grandchildren. She refuses to visit, especially on the holidays. When we visit, she is pleasant but seems to barely tolerate us.

We want to see more of our grandsons, but we are not permitted to babysit. If I ask to take them to the park, etc., she ignores me, hoping I will let it go (which I do to keep the peace). I have spent many a sleepless night trying to figure out what I have done to her and cannot think of a thing.

Honestly, in the 10 years they have been married, I have never said a mean word or offered advice, even with new babies.

I say nothing to my son. I know he sees her treatment of us and feels guilty, but fighting about it isn’t worth it to him.

I agree that his wife has to come first, but we’re not sure if our other three children plan on having kids, so these may be our only grandchildren.

The boys love to see us, and I have heard the oldest asking if he can go home with Grandma and Grandpa. Mom always says no!

We just came home from a visit, and it was worse than ever. I am depressed over the situation and do not know what to do.

Anxious Grandma

**Anxious Grandma:** You have kept silent to keep the peace, but this doesn’t really seem like peace so much as a cold war. You have nothing to lose at this point, and so I hope you and your husband will be brave enough to have a conversation with your son and daughter-in-law, respectfully asking them whether there is a specific reason they seem so hesitant to let you play a larger role in the lives of their children.

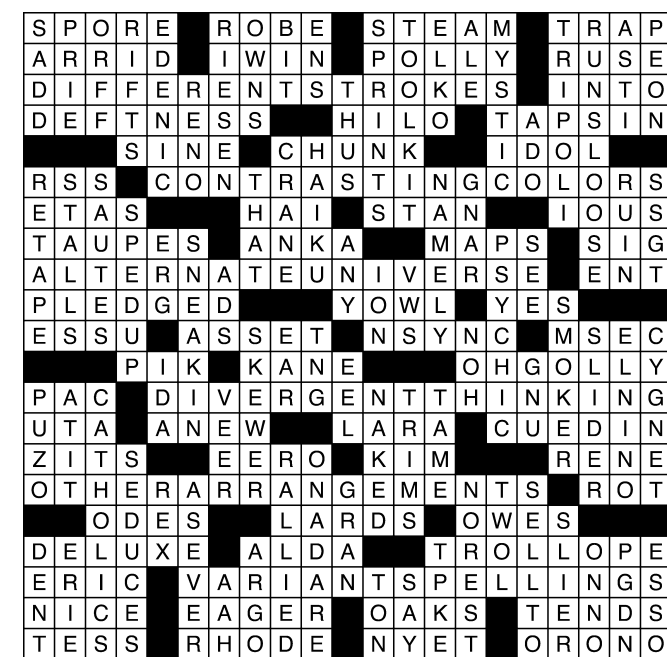
You might want to draft an email where you say, “We notice that when it comes to the kids, you seem hesitant about letting us spend very much alone time

with them. We’d love to be more involved in their lives and hope you can help us to find ways to do that. If there is something you think we need to do differently, please let us know. We are absolutely bananas about the boys and want to be closer to all of you.”  
You are trying. Good for you.

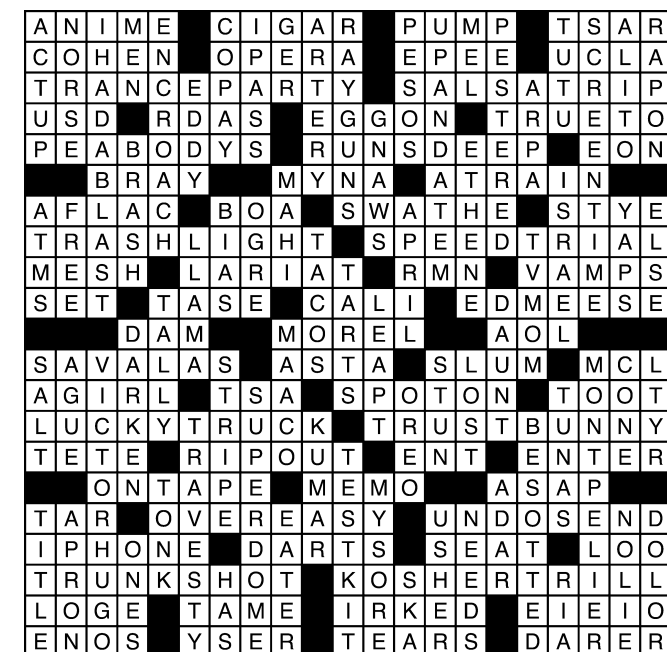
Amy’s column appears seven days a week at [washingtonpost.com/advice](http://washingtonpost.com/advice). Write to [askamy@amydickinson.com](mailto:askamy@amydickinson.com) or Amy Dickinson, Tribune Content Agency, 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, Tex. 75001. You can also follow her @askingamy.

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The answer key to the July 23 puzzle, in the July 30 edition, was incorrect. The correct July 23 answers are reprinted below along with the answers to the July 30 puzzle. We apologize for any inconvenience. For horoscopes see Page E14.



7/23/17



7/30/17