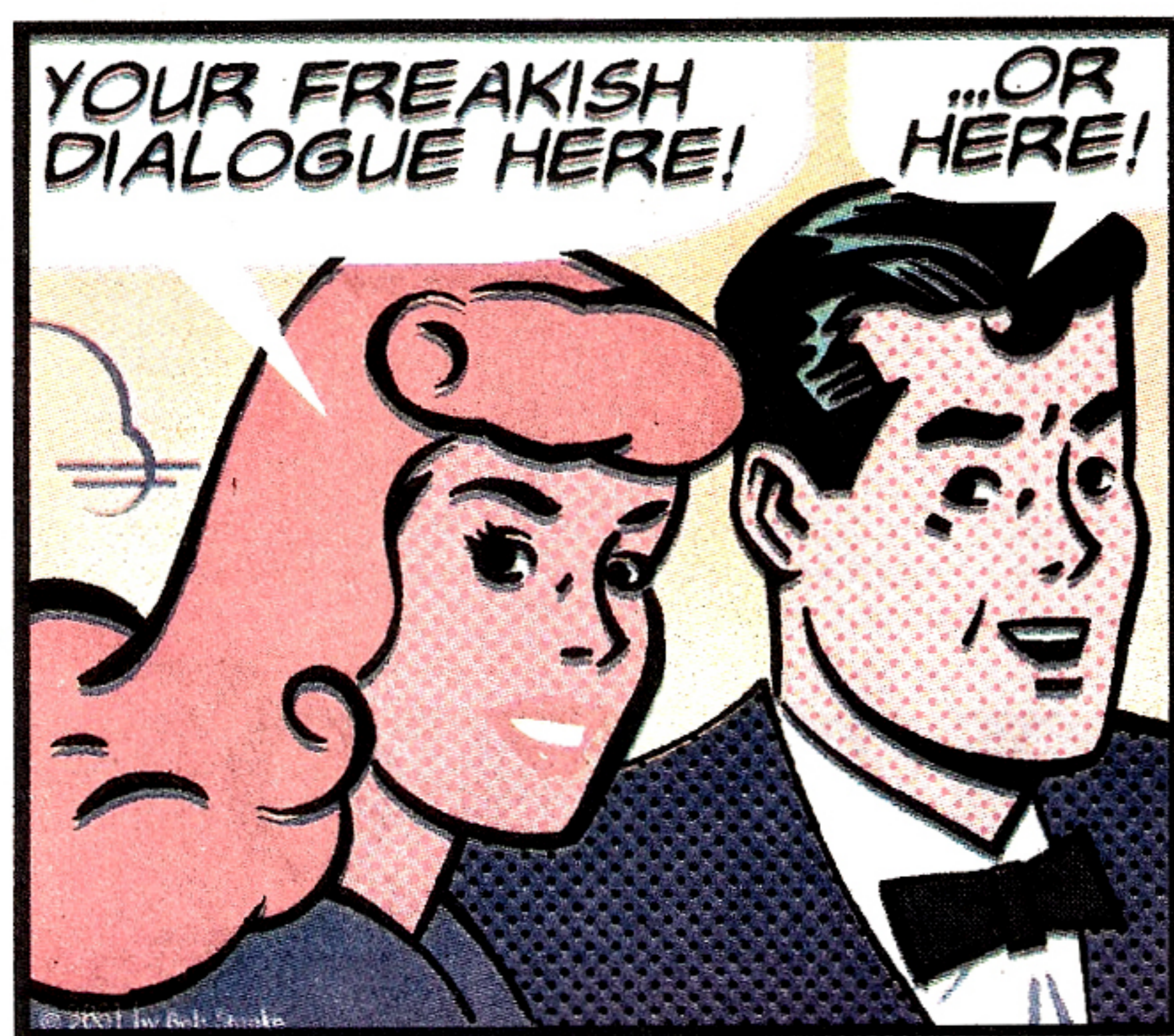


The Style Invitational

Week LIX: Everyone's a Comic



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

This week's contest: Choose any panel of any comic strip in today's Washington Post and improve it by replacing the original speech and thought balloons with your own. This ain't an art contest: Don't send us drawings. Just refer to the panel you choose (for example: Dilbert, third panel from left) and be sure to identify which character is thinking or speaking. You may also add those little rectangular boxes at the top of comic strip panels in which an omniscient narrator comments on the action, as in: **Little did Dilbert know that Catbert, the evil human resources department head, had used his pillow for a litter box. . .**

First prize winner gets a genuine ceramic sperm bank—that is a piggy bank in the shape of a giant sperm cell, as imagined by Walt Disney.)

First runner-up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. The Uncle's Pick wins the shockingly ugly "The Uncle Loves Me" T-shirt. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312; by e-mail to losers@washpost.com; or by U.S. mail to The Style Invitational, Week LIX, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Monday, March 19. All entries must include the week number of the contest

and your name, postal address and a daytime or evening telephone number. E-mail entries must include the week number in the subject field. Contests will be judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Editors reserve the right to edit entries for taste or content. Results will be published in four weeks. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK LV,

in which we asked for creative advertising pitches to help get rid of 50,000 units of some product:

◆ Third runner-up: **Nine-volt batteries: Oogly Eyes Rectangular Man action figure! Coming Saturday mornings on UPN!** (Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

◆ Second runner-up: **Blank cassette tapes: The Sound of Silence, for whenever you want to spend some quiet time alone or with a loved one. Recorded on both sides for convenience—no need to rewind! Only \$14.95 if you order now!** (Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

◆ First runner-up: **Old telephone directories: The names, addresses and phone numbers of thousands of women in your area!** (Greg Arnold, Herndon)

◆ And the winner of the serving bowl made from a partially melted Julie London LP: **Forks: Not sure God is hearing you? Hold your Prayer Antenna between your folded hands so that God can hear your supplications loud and clear!** (Mike Genz, La Plata)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

Q-tips: If you want to proceed cautiously into a weightlifting program . . . (Art Cencetti, Levittown, Pa.)

Towels: Ladies, don't pass up the chance to own this cordless, environmentally friendly, whisper-quiet hair dryer! (Cindi Rae Caron, Lenoir, N.C.)

Kites: Blackouts! They happened in California. They could happen here. Are you prepared? (Holly Hacker, St. Louis)

Buggy whips: Ever had a geezer call you a whippersnapper? Now you can just smile and show the old goat one of the very last buggy whips! He'll be speechless! (Joel Knanishu, Rock Island, Ill.)

Balloons: With these air storage devices, you'll be sure you'll never run out! Lightweight design makes them perfect for backpacking trips! (Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

Paper clips: Take your place in the Guinness Book of World Records! The world's longest paper clip chain is an achievable record with minimal skill required. Note: Our last customer ordered 5,000 cases; to avoid disappointment, we suggest a minimum order of 8,000 cases. (Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

Combs: The Philatelist's Helper Mini Drying Rack lets you safely air-dry each stamp separately after soaking it and removing it from the envelope. Only \$9.95! (Mike Genz, La Plata)

Oregano: It's not just a myth, kids; it's true: Smoking pot really does make you stupid! So take advantage of that fact—bring a few baggies of Fantastic Shamarijuana to the nearest college campus or the next rock concert and make big money off those wasted potheads! (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

Flypaper: Order our new Home Bikini Wax Kit now! (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Fishing lures: Tired of plain old metal nipple rings? (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Shoehorns: Hey, coke-heads, those spoons are never big enough, huh? Get bigger and better snorts with the Horn-o-Plenty! (John O'Byrne, Dublin, Ireland)

Mr. Potato Heads: Small-town police departments, do we have a deal for you! Instead of an expensive sketch artist on your payroll, get your wanted fliers out fast with this versatile yet inexpensive product! (Roger and Pam Dalrymple, Potomac Falls)

Toothpicks: Make sure your vote counts! Banish pregnant, dimpled and hanging chads today with the surgically crafted Chad-B-Gon Vote Assurance Tool! (Mike Genz, La Plata)

Cigarettes: If the nicotine patch doesn't do the trick for you, try the revolutionary new NicoSticks! Just light up a NicoStick every time you get the craving and you'll never have to use the patch again. Just \$40 for a course of 20. (Rod Ewing, York, England)

Ceiling fans: Budget too tight for wallpaper? Can't afford those expensive toys for the kids? Solve both those worries at once! The amazing new room-size Twirl-a-Paint will provide hours of redecorating fun for the whole family! (John Kammer, Herndon)

Super Glue: Stick to your diet with the latest in weight-loss technology! No willpower required! Just apply like lip gloss, press lips together and watch the pounds melt away! (Cindi Rae Caron, Lenoir, N.C.)

Defective condoms: A vacationing gardener's dream! These slo-release drippers water your plants for days! Only \$8.99 for a pack of three—available in decorator colors and a variety of sizes! (Kate Barnett, Newnan, Ga.)

Tickle Me Elmo dolls: If you have unsightly and dangerous fireplace soot in your home, you need the Tickle Me Elmo chimney mop! Just skewer the giggling red Muppet on the special telescoping handle, shove him up your flue, and listen to him talk and laugh as you twist him around, scraping the crud out of your fireplace! (Phyllis Kepner, Columbia)

One-a-Day Vitamins: New Ten-a-Day Vitamins! Only 5,000 bottles available! (Russell Beland, Springfield)

Wite-Out: Is your aluminum siding looking dull and dreary? Spruce it up and get plenty of exercise, too! (Bruse W. Alter, Fairfax Station)

LP records: A pizza platter and pizza slicer in one matching, easy-to-store set! (Bob Kopac, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.)

Buddha statuettes: A must for the desktop of every political appointee: a tasteful scale rendering of Vice President Cheney at the beach. (Chris Hill, Santa Fe, N.M.)

Old-style sanitary napkins: Modess Operandi Maxi Furnace Filters, as thick as a submarine sandwich to totally absorb the flow of dust and pollutants in your home. (Phyllis Kepner, Columbia)

Scatological jokes made obsolete by The Czar's temporary departure: Now you can enjoy 137 poop jokes a day for a whole year! (Russell Beland, Springfield)

◆ The Uncle's Pick: **The Uncle Loves Me T-shirts: Into '60s memorabilia like the Who's classic "Tommy"? A must for collectors, this limited-edition T-shirt commemorates that "special" relationship between a boy and his uncle. . . .** (Cindi Rae Caron, Lenoir, N.C.)

The Uncle Explains: **There is still a place in our hearts for those cherished old-time values, and I am honored that my prize can help remind our readers.**

Next Week: Operation Overkill