

The Style Invitational

Week CXXXIX: Water Stupid Idea



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

"Remember, using an adult diaper not only conserves water—you'll also never miss another important moment of televised football."

"Lower your shower head two inches. Those two inches, over the course of an entire shower, amounts to a lot of water saved!"

"When drowning puppies, use the toilet rather than the bathtub."

This Week's Contest was suggested by Brian Broodius of Charlottesville: bad ideas for saving water in the continuing drought. First-prize winner gets a Battle Mountain, Nev., "Armpit of America" T-shirt. First runner-up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312, or by e-mail to losers@washpost.com. U.S. mail entries are no longer accepted due to rabid, spit-flying fanaticism. Deadline is Monday, Sept. 30. All

entries must include the week number of the contest and your name, postal address and 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. *Entries may be edited 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. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. The revised title for next week's contest is by Seth Brown of Williamstown, Mass.*

Report from Week CXXXV, in which we asked you to come up with, and define, a new word crafted from a well-known prefix and a well-known "ism."

◆ Fifth Runner-Up—**Gyno-evangelism**: An attempt by women to "flip" gay men. (Bird Waring, New York)

◆ Fourth Runner-Up—**Eco-alcoholism**: You puke into your compost heap. (Steve Fahey, Kensington)

◆ Third Runner-up—**Meta-pessimism**: The belief that pessimism is a hopeless philosophy that will never work. (Seth Brown, Williamstown, Mass.)

◆ Second Runner-Up—**Judeo-cannibalism**: Eating human flesh is okay, but not with milk. (Greg Krakower, New York)

◆ First Runner-Up—**Osteo-witticism**: A humerus play on words; a bone mot. (Chris Doyle, Burke)

◆ And the winner of the "Master of Disguise" promotional kit: **Bi-jingoism**: The feeling of revelatory elation that comes with the sudden slap-to-the-forehead realization that the thing to do is to attack both Iraq and Iran. (Paul A. Stone, Silver Spring)

◆ Honorable Mention:

Sub-minimalism: The daily output of work by a member of Mayor Williams's petition committee. (Brooks E. Bowers, Damascus)

Geo-Prizm: The act of buying a car you know full well will be sporting the bumper sticker "My other car is..." (Michael Clem, McLean)

Cardio-authoritarianism: Extremely compassionate conservatism. (Stu Gallant, Little Rock)

Pseudo-Zoroastrianism: A belief that the world is a never-ending struggle between the forces of light and of darkness for the grace of the supreme deity Ormazd insofar as it gets that cute little Zoroastrian from the gym to go out with you Saturday. (Greg Krakower, New York)

Lipo-synergism: How 10 grams of fat, consumed over three meals, can add two pounds of fat and a half-inch to one's hips. (Walt Johnston, Woodstock, Md.)

Poly-materialism: A preference for man-made fabrics. (Mitch Mularz, Aberdeen, Wash.)

Crypto-cannibalism: ISU. (Scott Watson, Jemez Springs, N.M.)

Anti-antidiseestablishmentarianism: Opposition to the assertion that "antidiseestablishmentarianism" is the longest word in the English language, such opposition being the central tenet of the philosophy known as anti-antidiseestablishmentarianism-ism. (Richard Marcus, Gaithersburg)

Auto-masochism: A cross-country family vacation. (Bird Waring, New York)

Infanti-populism: A childish urge to play with that plastic bubble-wrap stuff. (Dylan Presman, Rockville)

Retro-defeatism: The practice of finding fault with past successes. Very popular with liberals. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Litho-anthropomorphism: The strategy employed by Al Gore's campaign advisers. (Walt Johnston, Woodstock, Md.)

Ex-humanism: Digging up people, particularly Renaissance philosophers. (Paul A. Stone, Silver Spring)

Extra-cubism: Thinking outside the box. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

Eco-lesbianism: A tactic used by women whose goal is preventing global overpopulation. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Nano-onanism: The premature completion of a palindrome. The complete term is msinano-onanism. (J.F. Martin, Talkeetna, Alaska)

Litho-defeatism: Perpetual feeling of being caught between a rock and a hard place. (Cecil J. Clark, Arlington)

Pre-anachronism: Feeling old before your time. (Max Sudol, Richmond, Australia)

Quasi-feminism: Seething when guys talk to your chest, while allowing some poor schlep to pay for dinner, hold open doors and send you expensive gifts he can't afford. (Roger and Pam Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.; Angie Krause, Annandale)

Pyro-Marxism: The widespread belief that there was another Marx Brother, Zippo, who invented the hotfoot. (Chris Doyle, Burke)

Homo-anthropomorphism: The optimistic attribution of human traits to people. (Mike Genz, La Plata)

Gluco-capitalism: Belief in the "treacle down" theory. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Seismo-romanticism: The notion that sexual fulfillment requires the Earth to move. (Chris Doyle, Burke)

Di-realism: The increasingly prevalent worldview that the death of the Princess of Wales was, in the end, no biggie. (Frank Mullen III, Aledo, Ill.)

Pseudo-eroticism: Hotel room porn. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Auto-cubism: A genre of compact industrial art emerging from the scrap metal industry. (Walt Johnston, Woodstock, Md.)

Oto-eroticism: Whispering sweet nothings in the ear. (Chris Doyle, Burke)

Counter-egotism: A compulsion to boast that your kitchen surfaces are Italian marble. (Sue Lin Chong, Washington)

Tele-anachronism: Saying a telephone is "ringing" when it is in fact beeping or tweeting or playing "Ode to Joy." (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

Pre-cynicism: Optimism. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Contra-dadaism: Maimaism. (Mike Genz, La Plata)

Next Week: **Resident Alias**



TELL ME ABOUT IT

TELL ME, From F1

didn't—then be honest about your mistake, ask if he'd be willing to rewind for a wild experiment in getting to know each other with clothes on, too, and see if he can accept that. Tell him the sex was good, but you're looking for something more.

Dear Ms. Max:

I am a young physician-in-training. People don't seem to mind telling me that doctors are scamps; in it for the money; colluding with insurance companies; jetting off to Hawaii for industry-sponsored conferences; drug-happy, forcing medication down their patients' throats; nurse-hating, woman-hating, minority-hating; and too "technical." Moreover, I am constantly bombarded by people with the "facts" regarding "complementary medicine" and that my medicines are poisonous. I feel a need to defend myself.

What does one say when attacked in this way by well-meaning but out-of-line cohorts who denigrate my profession, or any profession for that matter?

—Washington, D.C.

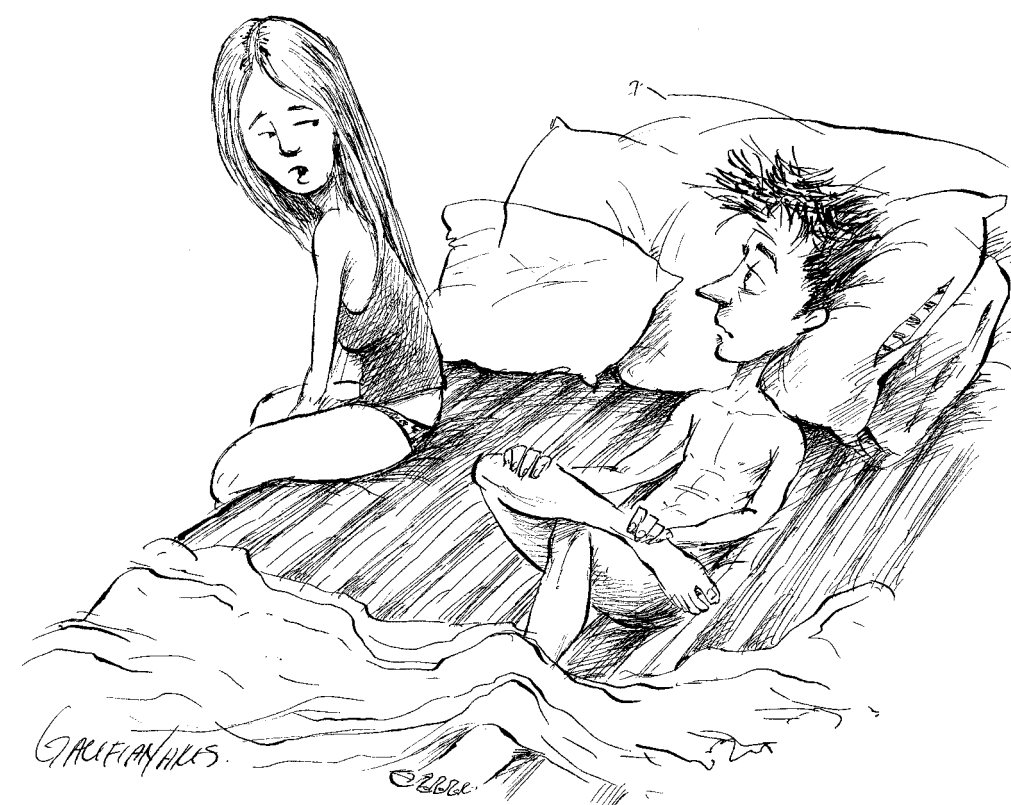
I guess the sense of humor isn't covered till next year.

No, humankind is not at its best when people mindlessly slam the education to which you've chosen to give 10 years of your life and maybe an additional 20-plus of your solvency. But if they were to walk up and say to you, "You're ugly and your mother dresses you funny," would you defend your clothes and patiently explain that you actually chose them yourself?

Lighten up. The proper response to an ad hominem attack is to recognize it as such and not to dignify it with a defense.

Smile and say, oh well you guess you won't give them your card now, thank them and declare that you're dropping out of med school tomorrow, tell a really good lawyer joke. (If you don't know any, ask a lawyer—their are always the best.) And from now on use "doctor." You'll sound like less of a stiff.

Write to Tell Me About It, Style, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071 or tellme@washpost.com, and join Carolyn's live discussion at noon Fridays at [washingtonpost.com/liveonline](http://www.washingtonpost.com/liveonline)



I LIKE YOU, BUT I THINK I'M READY FOR A DIFFERENT KIND OF MISTAKE.

BY NICK GALIFIANAKIS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Hey Kids! Join Us for the 3rd Marine Corps Marathon™ Healthy Kids Fun Run A Mile of Smiles!

Saturday, October 26 10:00 a.m.

Start/Finish Line Iwo Jima Monument Grounds



Kids between the ages of 7 & 12 are invited to run, walk, skip or jog in the Healthy Kids Fun Run, a one-mile run, and help the U.S. Marine Corp Reserve collect toys for this year's Toys for Tots Program. Space is limited. Applicants are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

For additional information call (703) 784-2225/6, extension 299

* Neither Federal nor Marine Corps endorsement of sponsors is implied.
** The U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program annually collects new, unwrapped toys to distribute during the holidays to the needy children in our community.
*** All applications must have a parent or guardian's signature before they can be processed.



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