

The Last Word™

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People keep bunkerooing at our national parks

These days, news travels fast—especially when it's about flatulence!

When you and I were kiddos, if you heard or smelled a bunker blast when you were on a vacation trip, you'd have to wait until you got home to excitedly tell your friends. But now the future is here! Today, if someone cracks a rock snake, you can almost always whip out a smartphone and let all your pals know in an instant!

This often works even when somebody disrespects America's conservation heritage by releasing a trouser sneeze at one of our many fine national parks.

From October 20 to 28, I went on a camping trip that centered on the breathtaking Zion National Park in Utah. ("But something something ruining money.") Celebrity look-alikes were seen. We saw a waitress who resembled Loretta Lynn in Watkins, Colorado. Across the state in Durango, a David Spade look-alike was seen toiling as a motel clerk. At a gas station in Boonville, Missouri, I saw a David Crosby double.

And air biscuits twice lurked. At Arches National Park, an old man ripped a loud-and-proud bunker blast as he was heading onto a trail. (The parks on this trip were full of hiking trails, which kept me largely sidelined. As you know, my health is not the best, and I don't have the energy to complete a trail that's longer than about 10 feet.) At Zion, another LAP was detected, this one from a man standing outside the restroom at the campground.

This trip also featured a healthy diet of dirty bathrooms. Just outside Denver, we encountered a ridiculously overpriced gas station that was in a shopping center a half-mile off the freeway, forcing us to negotiate a maze of roadways just to get there. The hallway to the restroom at this business stunk of bodily waste and was a mess. The mirror in the men's room at the campground had a booger wiped on it. A lavatory at a Texas Roadhouse restaurant in Topeka, Kansas, had pee everywhere. A toilet bowl at the aforementioned Missouri gas station was filled to the brim with poo water, rendering it unusable.

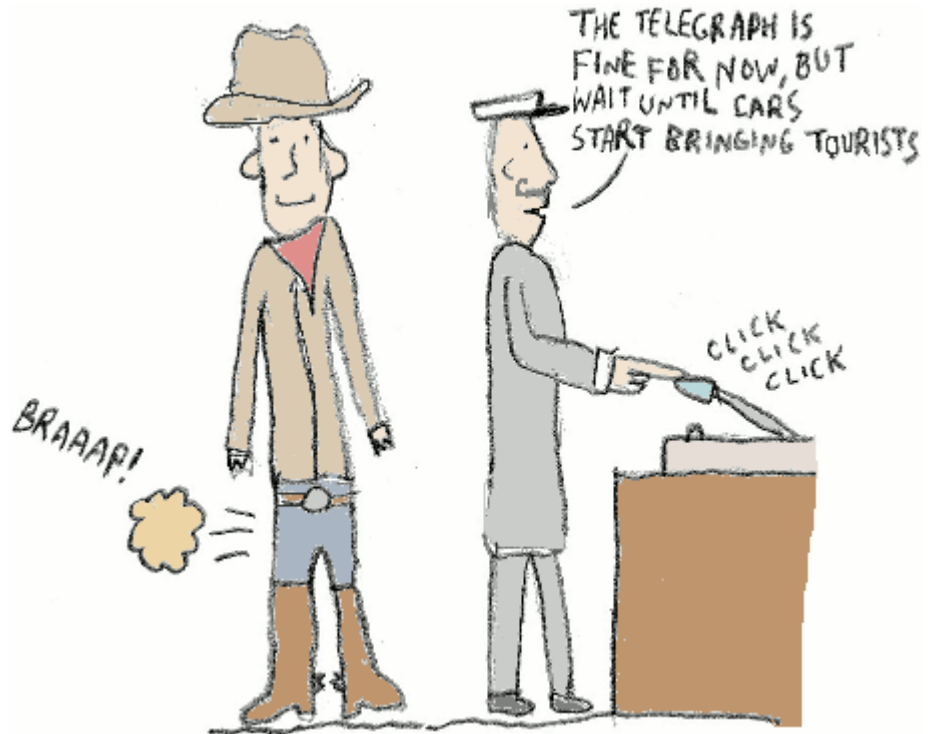
The campground restroom is also where a man dumped rotting macaroni and cheese into a toilet. It is believed that he was also whistling the theme music from the ABC movies of the late 1970s (yes, the music that was accompanied by a fancy marquee flying towards the viewer).

Other national parks on this trip included Bryce Canyon and Great Sand Dunes. Wikitravel says of the former, "Outside of the park is a mind-numbing array of shops catering to tourists and offering treasures ranging from pop-tarts to bumper stickers." Pop-Tarts are a treasure? Who knew?

There was even an incident in which we stormed out of a restaurant! On the way home, we stopped at a Pizza Hut in Oakley, Kansas. The restaurant refused to seat our counterculture caravan. So a customer who was leaving told us to just take some menus and seat ourselves. We were still denied service. It clearly wasn't because the restaurant was too busy—for there was only one other group of customers there. So we left our menus on the table and walked out!

In the meantime, toilets.

These signs were posted in the men's room at the overpriced Colorado filling station...





I love how the sign on the bottom blames the customer if the toilet clogs.

This sign—titled “Keep This Toilet Clean”—was seen at Arches National Park and gives detailed instructions on how to go to the bathroom...



My favorite rule is, “DO NOT use the floor. Use the toilet.”

Such curious devices tinkleteriums are.

Also, one of the best trails at Zion National Park closes only once a year to clean the outhouses. It just so happened that—instead of closing the trail in winter when nobody would use it—they closed it the week we were there. Smooth move, Trump. (But like I said, this trail would have been much too long for me anyway.)

A person tried to modify a Speak & Spell and ruined it

“Zero correct, 10 wrong!”

Unless you know exactly what you’re doing—like E.T.—don’t try to modify a Texas Instruments Speak & Spell.

Circuit bending is the practice of modifying electronic toys and games to change the voice or produce new sounds for creative effect. People sometimes do this with a Speak & Spell—a 1970s educational toy. If you ever had this toy, you may be able to envision how this might work by recalling the strange sounds or higher voice that your Speak & Spell exhibited when the batteries got low. Circuit benders have shown their craft on YouTube that involves adding knobs and switches to Speak & Spells.

But one circuit bender reports destructing a perfectly good Speak & Spell while modifying it. They posted on a website, “I’ve wanted to do one of these ever since I discovered circuit-bending. I attempted one, and ruined it, as my third or fourth project.”

The magic word! That’s right, comrades! A Speak & Spell got ru!

Conversely, someone claims to have purchased 2 broken Speak & Spells off eBay and scraped together the parts to make one working Speak & Spell. As one door closes, another opens!



Rachael Ray doesn’t know how to bubble

I remember the first time I ever heard of Rachael Ray.

Rachael Ray hosts a TV talk show that’s often part of a daytime lineup with other talk shows. It seems to be mostly a cooking show. I’ve never actually seen it used to promote teen residential programs, like the idiotic *Dr. Phil* does, but then again, I’m not a regular viewer. (Why would a cooking show promote that?)

I first saw ol’ Rachael one day when I was at home during the George W. Bush recession and turned on the TV. This was probably when I had the monstrosity of a TV set that didn’t work worth shit or the ancient used set I got to replace it (which actually worked). I was flipping through the channels and stumbled upon Rachael’s show. And wouldn’t ya know it, she was talking about bubble gum!

She had beegee blowing champ Chad Fell as a guest on the show. And dammit, they were gonna bubble!

Rachael provided the studio audience with pink bubble gum, and folks in the audience were seen bubbling some mean bubbles. Rachael announced her intent to bubble, but warned that the beegee might dislodge her delicate crowns and send them flying into the audience.

She then appeared to be pursing her lips as if she was about to bubble. But bubble she couldn’t. She stuck out her tongue but was unable to blow a bubble. The studio audience burst out laughing.

But—as the creepy music played—Chad bubbled a bubble bigger than his head! Rachael tried measuring it with a metal ruler, but the ruler burst it.

So you see, Rachael Ray is eminently incapable of bubbling. If you happen to see her at the store, feed her some gum and ask her to bubble. She will try with all her might, but she will come up short.

Racist board game rips off antique collectors

Racism is one of the worst stains on America’s history—in any era. Sadly, racist themes have all too often appeared in popular culture.

Board and card games are not immune. Recently, I was thinking about the cards of an old game that rested on the edge of my memory span. A family member said the cards contained offensive caricatures, but I can hardly find anything about it on the Internet. But I’ve learned there were board games whose very premise was racist.

One of these games was not only racist. It was also a con job.

I’m not going to mention the game’s name here, since it’s beneath the dignity of this publication. But it

was mentioned on several websites as an example of racist games from 100 years ago. Well, apparently, a collector was able to purchase a copy of this game. After they acquired this tasteless game, they got suspicious.

At first glance, it appeared as if the game was published way back in 1935. But someone replied that it was actually a modern reprint of an old game. Everyone got even more suspicious when they found out the game publisher's address wasn't even a real street. It appears as if the street never even existed.

As it turns out, the board was just a Chutes and Ladders board redrawn with racist imagery. The pieces were made out of types of clay and paint that weren't available until fairly recently. The box art was found to have been printed using modern graphics software.

An antique expert said the game couldn't be any more than a few years old.

In other words, the game is a racist fraud. It means somebody just a few years ago actually went through the trouble of designing a racist game—and trying to get rich off of it by selling it as if it was some antique that collectors would be interested in. I'm not quite sure why a collector would want it, but some might consider it an item to be studied like a museum piece, not something to reflect their own views. Personally, however, I'd feel uneasy about buying a game like this even for that reason.

Making a counterfeit game like this is actually even worse than if the game had been made in 1935, because it shows that someone in the modern world was greedy enough and racist enough to make this game and sell it to collectors who thought it was an antique. But even by 1935 standards, the game would be racist.

Then again, since the United States has allowed several fascists in the White House in my adult life, maybe there's a new market for bigoted crap like this.



People bubbled at Cline

Donald E. Cline Middle School was the site of My Very First Expulsion. That went on my permanent record! But now, the school is Cline Elementary.

And last year—at the start of the school year—Cline Elementary actually encouraged students to bubble.

I stumbled upon the school's online newsletter touting what a flying start the school year had. A bit of background: When I went to Cline, the school had a rule against chewing gum. Reportedly, it was because of the carpeting that probably hadn't been replaced since the school was built. Kids often got away with gumming—even bubbling—in full view of teachers, but occasionally, they got skeeped at. Once in 6th grade, I overheard my literature teacher lecturing the class that someone was “popping bubble gum”, and I had to hold in my laughter.

One time in the cafeteria, I got up from my seat, and the knee of my pants got mired in a wad of fluorescent green beegee that some unthinking moron had stuck under the table.

Anybip, back to last year. The newsletter said the school had a gargantuan celebration to mark the beginning of the school year. It said that as part of the festivities, “we went outside and chewed bubble gum and blew bubbles.”

You read it right, folks. It sounds like bubbling was not only encouraged but *required*! I'm sure the school made exemptions for students with various conditions. For example, about 1 in 20 people have ankyloglossia, which results in a very short tongue. People with ankyloglossia have expressed fear that their short tongue will impede bubbling. (One in 20 is also about the same number who have strabismus—a cool eye disorder that I have. If left untreated, strabismus is not expected to ruin your life. It will only enhance it!)

Best all, the newsletter said, “Our theme will continue throughout the year. You are encouraged to discuss this at home as well.” That's right. A whole year of beegee busting! And they even encouraged parents to talk

about it at home!

If this had taken place when I was in elementary school, I would have laughed so hard it would have broken my hip bone! A tutor who came to my school did feed us bubble gum once, but the school didn't force us to chomp it.

People wadded up paper and wasted it

Paper got wosted in the decade of incoherence!

About 25 years ago, I goed to an important family gathering, where a family member lamented the wastage of valuable paper. It seems someone bought a big pack of paper for the tiny tots. And they were big sheets! I'm talking easel sized!

Now, the thing is, this was the '90s, so the tiny tots weren't tiny tots anymore. They were teenagers—or close to it. But immaturity was increasingly the rule. So instead of using the paper to make something long-lasting and cool-blasting, they just made a little scribble on each sheet, crumpled it up, and threw it away.

And there was no paper recycling program yet, so when paper got wasted, it got wasted.

Right now, you're laughing. Admit it. You're trying to hold it in, because you know deep down that it isn't funny. I'm a guy who cries when perfectly good paper is wasted. But the laughter keeps escaping in little Ernie-like spurts as you hold your hand in front of your mouth.

This isn't the only time kids wasted paper. Just a few years ago, there was a thread about wastage on a parenting website. A woman posted that her 9-year-old stepdaughter wasted water by flushing the toilet just for fun and used half a bottle of shampoo to play in the sink. This post said she "continues to waste, waste, waste whatever she can" and even took pamphlets at stores that she had no use for. Someone replied saying their 9-year-old daughter also took pamphlets she couldn't use. Someone suggested fining the children 25 cents each time they wasted a pamphlet.

Years ago, my neighbors in the same building consisted of a woman and her son, who was elementary school age. A man—who I assume was the woman's boyfriend—frequently visited. One day—a rare weekday when I didn't have school or work—the woman went to work and let the man watch the youngster. I heard the boy throw a brand new toy down the steps with all his might. It sounded like it broke into a fillion pieces. Then the man angrily yelled something like, **"WHAT THE HELL DID YOU DO THAT FOR?!?!?!"**

I overheard the man calling the woman at work to express his dismay. He started talking about a different brand new toy that the kid had destroyed. Regarding the parts of the toy, he said something to the effect of, "He has every single one of them already ruined!" Yes, he did use the magic word!

And then there's this classic story someone posted on the Internet...

"Today, my Grandma was showing me an ancient family letter. It was apparently written by someone historically famous. She was going on about how important it was, in such good condition too, worth a lot. I dropped my glass of juice. It spilt all over it."

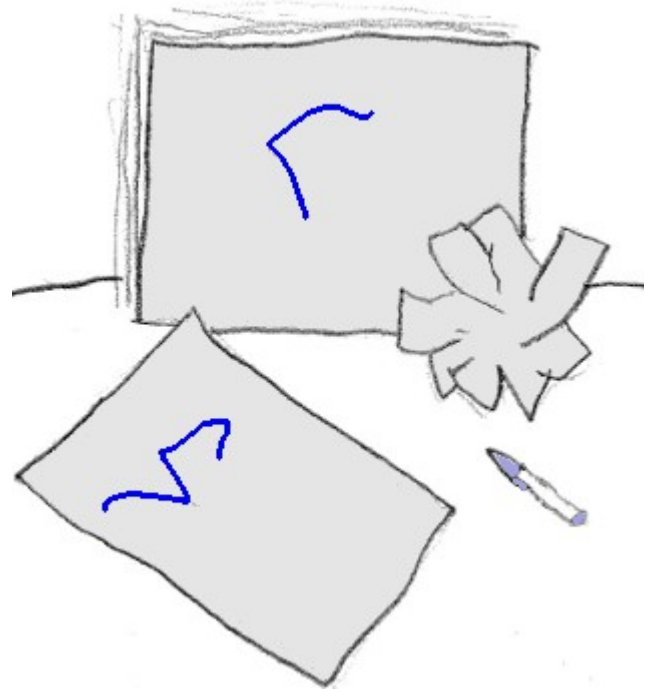
Four years later, people were still replying, "Wow you are really an idiot."

Wosted, ru, or destructamundo, it mostly means the same to coolsters like me!

Mayo Clinic says bubble gum helps you poo!

You'd think that something called the Mayo Clinic would recommend mayo. But instead of telling folks to break out the Hellmann's, the Mayo Clinic is encouraging you to masticate a big mound of bubble gum—and maybe even blow some mean bubbles! The Mayo Clinic should be renamed to the Gum Clinic!

This video from the Mayo Clinic—a healthcare nonprofit—says you should gnash some beegee after surgery...



That video depicts several people bubbling. Some of them are bespectacled, but unfortunately, the bubble does not burst on their glasses. Nonetheless, a Mayo gastroenterologist says that not only does gumming fight bad breath, but it's a must-have after surgery. It speeds recovery—especially after colorectal surgery—by relieving constipation.

In other words, bubble gum helps you poo! Who can ask for more?

What a real made-up story sounds like

A few critics have expressed skepticism at some of the stories in this fanzine of fun. “How did an entire dumpster in a parking lot burn?” they ask. Because garbage burns, perhaps?

To quiet these criticisms, I'm going to make up a story out of whole cloth. Don't believe a word I'm about to say, because this stupid story is completely fictional. Here it comes...

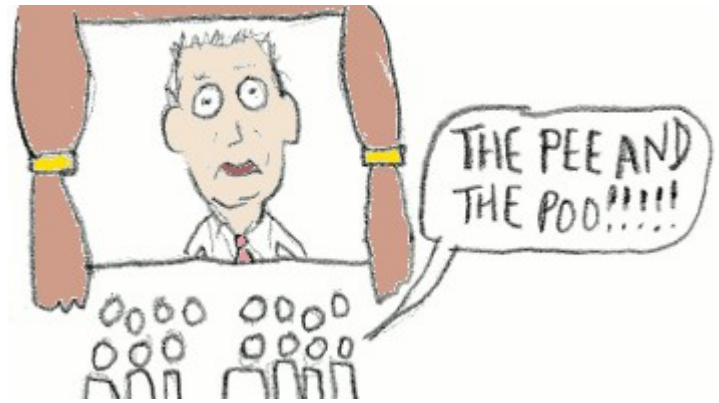
One weekend in my early teens, I went to see a movie with my family. I think it was a Rodney Dangerfield comedy.

Just as the film reached its suspenseful climax, another teenager in the audience suddenly yelled at the top of his lungs, “**THE PEE AND THE POO!!!!**”

As we were leaving the theater, I overheard a woman saying to her husband, “That was the same loudmouth who yelled, ‘The pee and the poo!’ at the Eddie Money laser light show last Saturday.”

Now you see why I'm a nonfiction writer.

None of that actually happened! Get a grip!



A person farted at school 31 years ago and it's still hilarious

Sacrilege!

That's the word that comes to mind when a student rips a bunker blast during a standardized test in Kentucky—where standardized testing is the state religion. It's even more irreverent than bubbling in church!

But it happened 31 years ago when I was a freshman at the far-right Bishop Brossart High School.

For days, we were required to waste valuable (?) class time taking the Kentucky Essential Skills Test. According to news accounts, the test was made mandatory in Kentucky for all grade levels starting in the 1984-85 school year. The Really Serious People didn't dare suggest abolishing this test—unless it was to be replaced with something equally useless.

So people farted during it.

I detested Brossart, but it wasn't just an ordinary case of a teenager not liking school. That school was, uh, different. Because of the way Brossart treated me, I held an all-consuming disgust for the school that never diminished. During my freshman year, the Kentucky Essential Skills Test was administered in our homerooms. It was grueling.

As part of my seemingly bottomless losing streak of that era, my seat was near the front of the classroom. But, on one of the days lost to this standardized test, it happened. Just when I least expected it. Yes, a trouser sneeze. At Brossart, you could *almost always* expect it. But I didn't expect it that time, because standardized tests were sacrosanct.

It was a loud-and-proud! And it didn't have the same tone that bunker blasts usually have. Most LAP air biscuits have a rising pitch—as if it's a question or a frustrated lament. But this one had a flatter tone—like a command. And bunkeroos like that are uncommon. They do happen, but not every day. And their rarity adds to the humor.

I looked behind me towards the origin of this loominsky. The student sitting behind the farter was silently laughing and waving his arm to dissipate the inevitable stinkage.

The teacher admonished, “Come on, boys, that bathroom humor is just for little kids.”

These days—31 years later—whenever I hear a surprise LAP with a flat, command-like tone, it takes me back to that event!

During sophomore year, the Kentucky Essential Skills Test was administered in the school's gigantic bingo hall. This time, the LAP rock snakes were unceasing. The guidance counselor—an aging nun—got up in front of the entire room full of students and warned that whoever was releasing all that roo gas was going to have to be “isolated.” (The school had only about 3 computers, but an enormous bingo hall. That's the room where the

battle cry “G! Gum!” originated. That happened during freshman year when the school made us move tables around and someone found gum stuck under a table.)

Feel the power!

Froot Loops sock offer somewhat fuzzy

Recently, I went to Kroger. Imagine that! Me going to the friendly commune Krogie-Wogie!

I wanted to know what sort of offers lurk in cereal boxes these days. In my day, cereal often included goodies like felt-tip pens, cardboard records, toy license plates, or even free bubble gum. I visited the cereal aisle to see what offers accompany cereal now, and suffice it to say, the only offer I noticed is not something you can write with, play on your record player, attach to your bike—or bubble with. That’s because it’s a pair of socks.

I saw a shelf full of specially marked Froot Loops boxes that offered folks a pair of multicolored socks. I didn’t lollygag in the cereal aisle to investigate the details. I don’t know if the socks are actually in the cereal box—which would cause the cereal to be covered with fuzzes, and the socks to be covered with Froot Loops crumbs. It might be something you have to send away for after collecting a certain number of box tops (not the Box Tops, but box tops).

I also don’t know whether the socks are a children’s or adult size. There may be some parent out there right now forcing their kid to wear these socks in a stupid YouTube video because they think they look “sharp.” If there is, I bet there’s more than one, because all the families in those videos all do the exact same things.

Follow your nose!

What? GOP not really the people’s party? Imagine that!

Lately, the Republican Right has resorted to calling their opponents a “mob”—which only proves they’ve lost in the court of public opinion.

I’ve never thought of the Republicans as the people’s party, but now they’ve let the mask slip. Don’t get me wrong: They were once a credible party. They even had a few public figures in recent memory who were occasionally believable. But now the GOP’s dwindling base is made up primarily of sneering, hateful whiners who are mad because everyone else is sick of hearing them complain about how tough it is to be rich and privileged. As you know, I *love* hearing people complain—but not when it’s about a fake persecution complex.

The modern Republican Right has often bragged of support from “the people.” Clearly, their definition of “the people” doesn’t include a majority of people who you actually know. Now, by calling dissenters a “mob”, they seem to have abandoned their phony populism—at least for the Time Being.

I will call the Far Right elitist, because they are. I will call them authoritarian, because they are. I’ve called them out in terms that accurately describe their philosophies—even though today, they twist these terms to tar opponents and rally supporters. At the very least, America’s Far Right public figures do not care about making the nation a better place or about national interests. (Who offshored all those factory jobs?) I will not allow my tone to be policed by anybody except myself. The buck stops here.

Since there’s more of us than them, how do we deal with their arrogance as they continue to try to impose their will on us because they think they’re “better” than everyone else?

I always knew the Republican Right was made up of elitist snobs. Thanks for confirming it, righties.

Gum bursts sleep apnea’s bubble!

Why must your life be filled with sorrow?

It doesn’t have to be! Bubble gum isn’t just a candy that doubles as a toy. It also soothes many ailments. As you know, it can relieve TMJ disorder, constipation, motion sickness, and the heartburn and indigestion associated with acid reflux. Has a more versatile substance ever been concocted?

Now I’ve stumbled upon a website that says sleep apnea can be treated not only by chewing this zesty viand but also by blowing bubbles with it. Sleep apnea is a serious sleep disorder that features potentially dangerous pauses in breathing. It can be caused by Ritalin. Loud snoring is a common symptom. Sleep apnea can even afflict us cool people.

How can you stop this crap from hap? By bubbling, of course—at least according to one website. Granted, I’m not a doctor, so I can’t judge the site’s medical validity. But the site considers bubbling an important exercise to treat sleep apnea.

The site says chewing gum is “simple and enjoyable.” That paragraph urges, “Practice blowing bubbles.”

It appears that this activity isn’t just something you should do before beddy-bye each night—but several



times throughout each day! You're gonna love that site forever because it recommends blowing bubbles with bubble gum to treat a medical condition! If only it recommended that you let the bubble burst and stick to your face—like what cool people do—it would be complete. Or maybe you *won't* love that site—if you're one of these coolsters who does the precise opposite of what you're medically advised to do.

On another site, a doctor admits she chews gum to fight sleep apnea—but says nothing about bubbling.

Strabismus glasses!

I'm a funny guy, but let's get serious for a moment.

One of the Chance cards in the board game Monopoly had something called a poor tax. The card had a drawing of the mustachioed Monopoly man displaying his empty pockets. I remember seeing this around the age of 12 and thinking it must be a tax that funded assistance for the poor. That's because there was almost universal agreement at the time that fighting poverty was one of government's most basic charges (as this was before The Media started yipping that it wasn't). The purpose of government was not to trample civil liberties or give handouts to private schools and Big Business but to ensure economic security for the people. This was around the time someone explained Reaganomics to me, and I thought it was laughable that the President expected handouts for corporations and the 1% to “trickle down” to the 99%.

Later, I discovered a poor tax was actually a tax levied *against* the poor—just for being poor. Such a tax would be unconstitutional and unethical in real life—but it fit Monopoly, because the game developed from The Landlord's Game, which was designed to be a criticism of backwards economic policies like that.

This settled the ambiguity about whether a poor tax was a tax *for* the poor or *against* the poor. But what about my latest idea: strabismus glasses? Are these eyeglasses that *cure* strabismus or *cause* strabismus?

Why, my proposed invention would cause it, of course.

Some years back, there was a short-lived TV series called *American Inventor*. Real people would appear on the show touting some invention or concept they came up with. They competed for up to \$1 million worth of funding and prize money. Viewers could vote by phone for the winner. It would have been cool to make strabismus glasses and have people model these stylish specs on the show—as they enjoy being introduced to the world of strabismus!

These innovative glasses wouldn't necessarily look exactly like regular gafas, which don't fit every head shape. They could have darker lenses—like sunglasses—or perhaps lenses with fun colors to show your school spirit (as if you'd want to)! You could even mix and match!

Strabismus glasses. Try them!



Why Papa Roach fans keep seeing cosmetic dentistry ads

Over the past couple years, YouTube seems to have targeted me for ads for cosmetic dentists—as if I hate my life or something. I've finally figured out why I've been targeted.

In late 2016, the band Papa Roach released a new song called “Crooked Teeth.” It was the title track of a then-forthcoming album. My peeps kept talking about how great this song was, so I looked for it on YouTube to see if I wanted to go out and buy a 45 RPM single of it.

The song should have been a chart-topping smash! This was especially true considering the lack of decent competition on the music chart. But—shockingly—it failed to crack *Billboard's* Hot 100, the most authoritative chart in the beeswax.

It was after I looked for this song that YouTube began recommending cosmetic dentistry ads in Ernest. If you're a diehard Papa Roach fan, not just someone who occasionally buys the band's big hits, odds are you've been targeted by these ads too—all because you looked for a song titled “Crooked Teeth”! Get it?

In addition to strabismus glasses, there ought to be reverse cosmetic dentists—lest your chompers aren't jagged enough for you to be a cool person.