

## DOGGING THE WAG More Amusing Bloopers and Puckish Retorts

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Last fall, a weekly e-zine published by someone I know—I'll omit identifying information here—ran this announcement:

“Novelist Ford Madox Ford once said that you can ‘open the book to page 99 and the quality of the whole will be revealed to you.’ He’s now putting his idea to the test by launching <http://www.page99test.com> in a few weeks. This new site will allow any authors (or aspiring authors) to upload the 99th page of their books and allow readers to comment on whether they would buy or like to read the rest of their books.”

Does anyone doubt that older people are eager to embrace new technology? If Mr. Ford (1873-1939) were still around, he would be 138.

Below, a new collection of media errors and oddities, accompanied by the usual snappy comebacks:

*The Wall Street Journal*, letter to the editor, September 27, 2010:

“We don’t need think-tank ideas to better our schools, We need to return to our roots success in successful the past.”

▶ **On the other hand, let’s take all the help we can get.**

*Chelsea Now*, a Manhattan community weekly, May 20, 2010:

“The Fashion Institute of Technology office at 227 W. 27th St. told police on Wed., May 5 that someone had fraudulently cashed a school check at a Chase Bank branch on Lexington Ave. at 69th St. made out to Tiffany Mohammad, a fake name.”

▶ **This just in: All-points bulletin for her accomplice, Buffy Buddha.**

*The New York Times*, Corrections, November 15, 2010:

“An article last Saturday about a Census Bureau report that for the first time measured the percentage of unmarried mothers who were not living alone misstated, in some copies, the name of a university in Baltimore where Andrew Cherlin is a demographer. He is at Johns Hopkins, not John Hopkins.”

▶ **But it’s still proud of its reputation as a singular university.**

MarketWatch, online, May 24, 2006:

“On television shows like ‘CSI’ and ‘Law and Order,’ autopsies seem like everyday occurrences. But outside of criminal investigations, hospitals’ use of the autopsy . . . has been on the wane for decades, experts say. A growing number of private companies is sprouting up to fill the gap and answer what they say is increasing demand from baby boomers.”

▶ **Investor alert: This market is growing like autopsy!**

*The New York Times*, October 29, 2010:

“‘Titian must have been close to 70 when he painted this,’ said Alexander Bell, head of Sotheby’s old master painting department in London. ‘It’s a very grand, very monumental painting, yet at the same time it’s quite tender. The Madonna has a very material expression.’”

▶ **Aren’t you thinking of the *other* Madonna?**

*The Wall Street Journal*, March 30, 2010:

“Billionaire David H. Koch is planning a ‘spectacular’ remake of the fountains at the entrance to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. . . . Mr. Koch said he was inspired to spearhead the effort to renovate the outdoor space after seeing the new Lincoln Center fountain, which opened in October and features ‘choreographed’ water effects. ‘They had water shooting 50 feet in the air, flooding the plaza,’ he said, recalling that fountain’s unveiling. ‘I was mesmerized.’”

▶ **Also wet.**

*Nature News*, online, January 30, 2008:

“A peer reviewer for *The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)* broke confidentiality and leaked a damaging report about the blockbuster diabetes drug Avandia to the drug’s manufacturer weeks ahead of publication, *Nature* has learned. . . . The reviewer, diabetes researcher Steven Haffner of the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, had faxed his copy of the article to Alexander Cobitz, a GSK [GlaxoSmithKline] employee whom Haffner knew from working on an earlier clinical trial of the drug. ‘Why I sent it is a mystery,’ Haffner told *Nature*. ‘I don’t really understand it. I wasn’t feeling well.’”

▶ **Take a pill for that.**

*The New York Times*, adjacent TV listings, October 5, 2010:

“4 P.M. (ABC) THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW Martha Stewart prepares gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches.

“8 P.M. (Fox) GLEE Finn (Cory Monteith) sees the face of Jesus in a grilled cheese sandwich. . . .”

▶ **He might ask Martha if he can borrow her Miracle Whip.**