

## Kid Krap

Remember the first time you heard about Lake Titicaca? Probably in fourth grade geography. Remember how you laughed so hard you almost wet your pants? Somewhere around seventh grade social studies, you were rewarded by the main city in Thailand. Say after me: “Bang”-“Cock”. Don’t tell me you didn’t laugh.

Body parts always get a laugh out of kids. I tell the following joke to toddlers sometimes. “Once there was a little boy who had a silver screw in his navel. One day he asked his father what it was for. He said, “It’s just your belly button, but never...EVER...mess with it.” Years later he noticed, while taking a shower at school, other boys didn’t have a silver screw. He asked his coach how come he had one. The coach looked at him sternly. “It’s just your belly button, but never...EVER...mess with.” One day he went up to the attic with a screw driver, closed and locked the door after him, and began to unscrew his silver screw. Do you know what happened?”

When the child doesn’t know the answer, I say, “His butt fell off.” I can tell you it never...EVER...fails to get a laugh. Well, it never fails to get a laugh from five year-olds.

The greatest living example of body part and undergarment humor was my youngest daughter, Leslie. Already an active fan of the famous lake in Peru, she would double over in laughter if anyone whispered the word “girdle.” I still don’t know why that particular apparatus was so funny, but it was. She had a friend, Barbra Dickenson. Her articulation was always on the wrong syllable. Deliberately. I might say, “When are you going to invite your best friend to stay over?” She would say, “You mean, “barBRA DICKenson?” the accent always on the wrong syllables. The humor, of course, was in the juxtaposition of female underwear and a male body part linked in the same name. A double whammy, so to speak.

One day we were walking together in the evening. I decided she needed to know the “proper” names for body parts so that she would not articulate vulgarisms accidentally and be punished by teachers or berated by parents of her friends. So I went through a litany of items. “Pee-pee” was “urine,” “butt” was “anus” and so on.

At the end of our anatomical lesson, I asked her, “Do you know the ‘proper’ name for what you call a boy’s ‘willie?’” “Yes,” she said emphatically. I was taken aback, but didn’t sound surprised. “What is it?” I asked.

“William,” she said triumphantly.

As my children grew older, they all learned the “Two Irishmen” song of my youth. It started with:

“Two Irishmen, two Irishmen, were digging in a ditch.  
One called the other one a dirty, son of a....  
Peter Murphy, had a dog, a very fine dog was he;  
He gave it to his lady friend to keep her company,  
She fed it, she taught it, she taught it how to jump,  
It jumped right up her petty coat and bit her on the...

Country boy, country boy sitting on a rock  
Along came a bumble bee and stung him in the....  
Cocktail, ginger ale, five cents a glass;  
If you don’t like it, you can shove up your....  
Ask me no questions, I’ll tell you no lies,  
If you get hit with a bag of shit, be sure to close your eyes.”

And so on. Never a bad word, but always suggestive of bad words. Perfect Kid Krap material, more or less fifth grade humor.

Well time marches on. One wonders where Leslie might have obtained this fine repertoire of Kid Krap. Look no further. I specialize in puns, a paronomasiac according to Webster’s. This fine humorous contrivance, a rhetorical trope of the highest order, denigrated by an authority no less than the inventor of the first English dictionary, Samuel Johnson, as the “lowest form of humor,” is addictive and evidently genetically transmitted to offspring. Johnson, as fine a literary person as he was, is, in this instance, full of Krap. Puns, if well constructed, are nevertheless hilarious to the punster if no one else. Take, for example, the truism that Atheism is a non-prophet organization and the question, “What do you get if you throw a hand grenade into a French kitchen?” Answer: “Linoleum Blown Apart.”

But many can involve definitions similar to Leslie’s Kid Krap. For example, “rubber band” can also mean a collection of musicians promoting condoms. “Ratchet” is also rodent feces. “Homogeneous” is a brilliant gay person.

“Rectangle” is a colon unit of measure. “Woodpecker?” Pinocchio had one. “Circumnavigate?” A Jewish GPS. And so on. Now you know why Leslie was infected.

Oh. Was?

The other day, I told new friend whom we had invited to dinner, to whisper “girdle” to Leslie just before leaving. She looked at this stranger, tried mightily maintain some semblance of dignity, then doubled over in laughter.

Kid Krap rocks at any age.