

Voices in my Head: I Whistle While I Work

By P.J. O'Leary

I whistle while I work. Anyone who's ever seen me delivering the mail has caught me whistling at one time or another. It's just something I do. When Christmas is over, Feliz Navidad and Jingle Bell Rock are gently guided back into their cerebral compartments and replaced by my standard repertoire. Show tunes, TV theme songs and commercial jingles once again creep in, sometimes taking me completely by surprise. Resistance is futile.

Today, from left field (and please feel free to explain the origin of that expression for me), the Armour Hot Dog jingle came out. The melody is simple enough, but today for some reason which I cannot explain, I started thinking about the words. If you're too young to remember the Slinky, this may not resonate with you. Here are the words of the Armour Hot Dog commercial.

HOT DOGS, ARMOUR HOT DOGS,
WHAT KIND OF KIDS EAT ARMOUR
HOT DOGS?
FAT KIDS, SKINNY KIDS,
KIDS WHO CLIMB ON ROCKS,
TOUGH KIDS, SISSY KIDS,
EVEN KIDS WITH CHICKEN POX.

Okay, so I'm breaking this down in my head now. It's 1965 and we are decades removed from any accepted idea of sensitivity to marginalized members of our society. Here's the conversation at the Armour home office

Marketing Department.

Lou (Marketing Director): "Benny! Our market share is sliding; we need one of them TV jingles.

Benny: "I'm on it Boss, and I'm so close. What's a good rhyme for Polio? Wait, how about Chicken Pox? That's a good disease. Just tossing this out there-kids who knit their socks?"

Lou: "God no. That's something sissy fat kids would do."

Benny: "All good stuff! How about kids who chew on rocks? Your boy Tommy does that, doesn't he?"

Lou: "Did! He did do that for Chrissakes! He's 22 now. He's got a girlfriend-a Dental Hygienist."

Benny: "Hey, how about kids who climb on rocks?"

Lou: "Yeah, yeah that could happen."

End scene and segue to the Oscar Mayer Headquarters. Company President Bill stares blankly from the window of his second floor corner office, barely noticing the Cedar Rapids skyline and the hum of the four cars which bustle by on any given day.

Sid: (Marketing Director and childhood friend): "Hey Bill. What gives? You look like you lost your best friend."

Bill turns and looks directly at Sid. Sid, expecting the playful chatter which had become a staple of their relationship, sees a glare which makes him step back.

Bill: "We need to crush Armour Sid.

They're drawing a 41% share pushing an inferior product. They don't even add brain. What do we say here Sid?"

Sid: "No brain, no gain."

Bill: "That's right Sid. Now give me something we can use in a commercial to get our market share back."

Sid: "Yeah, so I've been looking at this metaphysical kind of approach, where you don't just like eating wieners, but actually wish that you were one."

Bill turns back to the window, his vacuous gaze embracing all of western Cedar Rapids.

Bill: "You mean like 'I wish I were an Oscar Mayer Weiner? Something like that? Yeah, so give me a jingle. Give me a jingle about a boy who is so lonely and desperately alienated that he'd rather be cured and processed than spend one more day in Mrs. Schmidlap's fourth grade class with Lucy Bailey who thinks she's too good for you and the rest of the world."

Sid approaches and places a gentle hand on Bill's shoulder.

Sid: "This isn't just about the wieners, is it Bill?"

Bill pulls away, sits in his oversized Corinthian leather executive chair and puts his head in his hands.

Bill: "Just have that on my desk by Tuesday Sid."

So where was I? Oh yeah, I whistle while I work, like those Disney Dwarves. They're kind of creepy.

Indoor Clean Air Act Expansion

Beginning January 1, 2016 people may not smoke, aerosolize or vaporize any inhalant in workplaces, restaurants, bars, and other indoor public spaces in Oregon. The Indoor Clean Air Act (ICAA) law also prohibits smoking and the use of inhalant delivery systems within ten feet of doors, accessibility ramps, windows that open, and air intake vents. While ten feet is the minimum required no-smoking setback, an employer may voluntarily choose to increase the amount of property where smoking is prohibited, or to designate the entire premises as smoke or tobacco-free.

In 2015, the Oregon legislature passed a law that expanded the ICAA to include the use of "inhalant delivery systems." Inhalant delivery systems are devices that can be used to deliver nicotine and other substances in the form of a vapor or aerosol. These include e-cigarettes, vape pens, e-hookah and

other devices.

With a few easy steps, businesses can comply with the new law by:

- Talking with your customers and employees about the law
- Providing training to employees on how to ask visitors and patrons not to smoke or vape within ten feet of all entrances, exits, accessibility ramps, windows, and air-intake vents
- Replacing existing "No Smoking within 10 feet" signs with signs that include "No Vaping" at all building entrances and exits. Signs can be downloaded at: <http://healthoregon.org/morefreshair>.

In Columbia County the toll of tobacco is devastating. 1,891 people suffer from a serious illness caused by tobacco and 97 people in the county die every year. 24% of Columbia County 11th graders use non-cigarette tobacco products. Non-cigarette tobacco use

includes cigars, pipe tobacco, hookah tobacco, chewing tobacco, dissolvable tobacco, and electronic cigarettes. Non-cigarette tobacco use among 11th graders is 50% higher than cigarette smoking rate.

In an assessment of Columbia County retailers who sell tobacco, results show that 60% of stores sold e-cigarettes. Among the same stores, 46% sold candy or fruit flavored e-cigarettes. Lastly, 44% had tobacco products at children's eye level (about 3 feet) inside the store.

If you or someone you care about is interested in quitting, contact the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line toll-free: QUIT LINE at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or go to www.quitnow.net/oregon/.

For more information on the ICAA law expansion, for assistance in adopting a tobacco-free property policy, or to sign

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up for the tobacco cessation workshop,
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