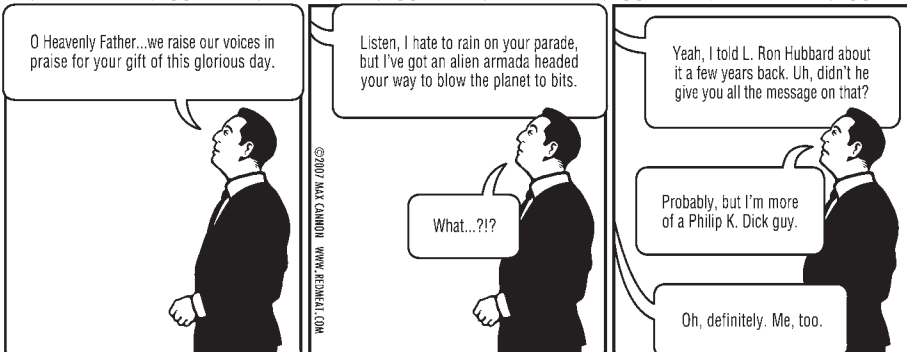


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THE ACADEMY for Alternative Journalism, established by papers like this one to promote diversity in the alternative press, seeks talented journalists and students (college seniors and up) for a paid summer writing program at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. The eight-week program (June 22 - August 17, 2008) aims to recruit talented candidates from diverse backgrounds and train them in alt-weekly style feature writing. Ten participants will be chosen and paid \$3,000 plus housing and travel allowances. For information and an application visit <http://aaj.aan.org>. You may also email us at altacademy@northwestern.edu. Applications must be postmarked by February 8, 2008. Northwestern University is an equal opportunity educator and employer. (AAN CAN)

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Career Training

WRITERS WANTED The Academy for Alternative Journalism, established by papers like this one to promote diversity in the alternative press, seeks talented journalists and students (college seniors and up) for a paid summer writing program at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. The eight-week program (June 22 - August 17, 2008) aims to recruit talented candidates from diverse backgrounds and train them in alt-weekly style feature writing. Ten participants will be chosen and paid \$3,000 plus housing and travel allowances. For information and an application visit aaj.aan.org. You may also email us at altacademy@northwestern.edu. Applications must be postmarked by February 8, 2008. Northwestern University is an equal opportunity educator and employer.(AAN CAN)

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iASK A MEXICAN!

BY GUSTAVO ARELLANO

Dear Mexican: What is it about the word "illegal" that Mexicans don't understand? - Mondo Minuteman

Dear Gabacho: Take your pick, Mondo. Mexicans don't understand the word "illegal" because: (A) when paying their gardeners, nannies, bus-boys and factory workers in cash (and forgetting to withhold payroll taxes), U.S. employers don't seem to understand the word "illegal," so why should Mexicans? (B) The Anglo-American trappers and traders whom you and I were taught to admire as tough, self-sufficient




frontiersmen and pioneers were among the American Southwest's first illegals. Who are you calling illegal, gabacho? (C) Presidente Bush's proposal to offer amnesty and a guest-worker program to all illegal immigrants — a move designed to appease his supporters in the business community — means even Republicans don't understand the word. (D) Whether they buy a fake passport or take a citizenship oath, Mexicans will never be more than wet-

backs in the eyes of many Americans, so why bother applying for residency? (E) The stylebook for daily newspapers reportedly requires reporters to describe as "undocumented workers" the men and women you call "illegal." (F) Little-known fact: The fragment of poetry on the Statue of Liberty ("Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," etc.) does not, because of a French engraver's error, include Emma Lazarus' rarely cited footnote: "No Mexicans, please." Fucking French. But the real answer is the word itself. "Illegal" is an English word; Mexicans speak Spanish — yet you never hear Mexicans whine that their bosses don't understand such easy Spanish phrases as "pinche puto pen-dejo baboso," do you?

Why do Mexicans love public restrooms so much? It seems like any one you visit has a minivan-load of Mexicans waiting to get into it. Also, why do Mexicans wipe after a No. 2 and then throw the crappy toilet paper into the trash can rather than flushing it away? So gross! Let's try to put an end to that madness. - Flushed Out

Dear Gabacho: ¡Felicidades! You have just stumbled upon the most surefire way to tell if a Mexican is fresh from the border — or, as Mexicans who have lived in this country for years like to describe them, "Si tienen un nopal en la frente" ("If they have a cactus growing from their forehead")! See, flushing toilets remain a novelty in rural Mexico, so Mexicans new to this country treat public restrooms with the same anticipatory awe Japanese tourists save for Disneyland — hence, the long lines. Regarding the popó-gunked Charmin: Those precious few ranchos that do have indoor plumbing suffer from inferior pipes installed on the cheap by Mexico's government. Anything heavier than last night's menudo would rupture the sewage system and ruin the rancho's water supply, so used toilet paper must go in the wastebasket. Nopal-wearing Mexicans keep this tradition long after emigrating here, though . . . can you do me a favor, gabacho, and tell nopaleros that here in los Estados Unidos, we're much more sophisticated with our No. 2 — we flush it into the ocean.

Got a spicy question about Mexicans? Ask the Mexican at themexican@askmexican.net. And those of you who do submit questions: Include a hilarious pseudonym, por favor, or we'll make one up for you!



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