



STEVE WILLEY is a senior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

My editors and I have an understanding: They have agreed to continue paying me for writing a weekly column, and I, in turn, have agreed to



JOHN SYPAL/DN

Deep thoughts Bathroom humor defined

"seriously limit" my usage of the phrase "pecker" in said columns. But really, we get along as well as any boss and employee could expect to. I know I push the envelope sometimes, but I don't mean any harm.

a pretty humorous meeting to watch. The conversation usually goes something like this:

Me: "Hey, I was thinking about a column on doo-dooing. Whaddaya think!? I mean, everyone does it, right?"

Editor: "I don't ... (silently counting to 10) ... what about the problems Al Gore has got with campaign spending? (sighing) I mean, don't you want some serious clips for your postgraduation portfolio?"

Me: "Boogers! How about a column on boogers!"

This volley of ideas goes on for about 20 minutes and typically ends with the editor shouting, "You're not human!" — and throwing her computer at me. But later, I always get the same apologetic e-mail. And it always has the same phrase as a salutation: "Just don't make it bathroom humor."

I've heard of "bathroom humor" before; it's not new. But I've never understood exactly what it is and, moreover, why I couldn't use it in my columns. After all, some of the funniest incidents in my life occurred in bathrooms.

For example, there was that time when I got into a long, drawn-out argument with a urinal in a local tavern. The argument quickly escalated into a full-fledged brawl after I interpreted the urinal's silence as an insult directed at my mother. It took three bouncers and a bike cop to get me off that thing. And later, while resting comfortably with seven other drunk people at the County-City Building, I just had to laugh at the situation.

So you see, bathroom humor can be funny, and today, I plan on proving it to my editors.

Perhaps the funniest thing about

bathrooms is their contents. And some contents, obviously, are more important than others. As most college students can attest, toilet paper is by far the most precious of bathroom commodities.

Rolls of toilet paper in my house are used like cigarettes in prison; they are a form of currency. Oftentimes my roommates and I make huge exchanges involving the product. If Wall Street had nothing to do with stocks and bonds, but rather, involved the various international negotiations of toilet paper, I would be the "Big Daddy" of the industry.

I am most proud of once coaxing one of my roommates — who I need not mention was in dire need of T.P. — to totally "cave in" on a T.P. transaction. For five squares of paper, I was able to barter a foot massage, a truck-insurance payment, and an opportunity to witness him singing Debbie Gibson's song, "Lost in Your Eyes" to a total stranger. It's all in the salesmanship.

Roomy: (wincing, and audibly in pain) "Awww man! Steve, where's the toilet paper? There's none in here. You got any?"

Me: "The question, my friend, is not whether or not I possess any paper, but at what price am I willing to part with it? For you see, my friend, in this world ..."

Roomy: "For the love of Noah AND his ark, I'm busting!"

Another interesting aspect of bathroom humor is the theory of reading on the throne. I've always been a reader; I get it from a long line of family members. I've actually witnessed my brother, in obvious

process and subsequently get "banned for life" from a local dentist's office. It is a brutal memory.

I also remember visiting my grandparents' house as a little child and watching in awe as my grandpa entered the bathroom carrying a large novel, such as "War and Peace" or the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Eventually, he would sheepishly emerge days later and utter the same phrase which has now become synonymous with my grandpa's name: "What a great book! Honey, what's the plumber's number?"

But you want to know what the funniest thing I've ever seen in a bathroom is? A telephone. I swear it! I saw one when I was recently at Harveys Casino Hotel in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Now, I don't know about you folks, but who could be so important that he or she would need to be contacted during this — our most sacred of personal struggles?

Personally, I wouldn't care if the pope called to inform me that I, along with Mother Teresa, had been canonized. I'd still tell him to get lost if I were on the pot. But let's face it, those telephones wouldn't be there if people weren't using them. And since telephones are a somewhat anonymous form of communication, you never know where people are calling you from. Think about that the next time you're talking to your sister in Detroit, and you hear what seems to sound like a donkey neighing in the background.

All of this again leads me to the question I asked earlier in the column: Just what is "bathroom humor?" Well, sadly, I'm afraid I still don't have a good definition. But at the very least, I hope I've shown that the subject can be tactfully addressed by a competent journalist.

Just wish he or she would hurry up and write because somebody just threw another computer at me.

Let's talk about sex

For the last time, know your birth control options



DANIEL MUNKSGAARD is a sophomore English and philosophy major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

For those of you who are just joining us, I've been talking about sex for the past two weeks.

Specifically, I made a point a couple of weeks ago that preventing pregnancies goes a long way toward preventing the great debate of our time, abortion. So last week, I offered some basic information on certain forms of birth control. This week, we'll be covering the remaining methods.

After that, no sex columns for at least a month. I promise.

The Male Condom: Everyone pretty much knows what these are — barrier devices, usually made of latex, that are placed over the penis to prevent semen from entering the vagina.

Effectiveness: 88 percent typical use, 97 percent perfect use.

Pros: They're practically the only birth control option available for men, they're cheap (you can get them for 10 cents a piece at the University Health Center), and they're one of the few methods that can actually help prevent most sexually transmitted infections.

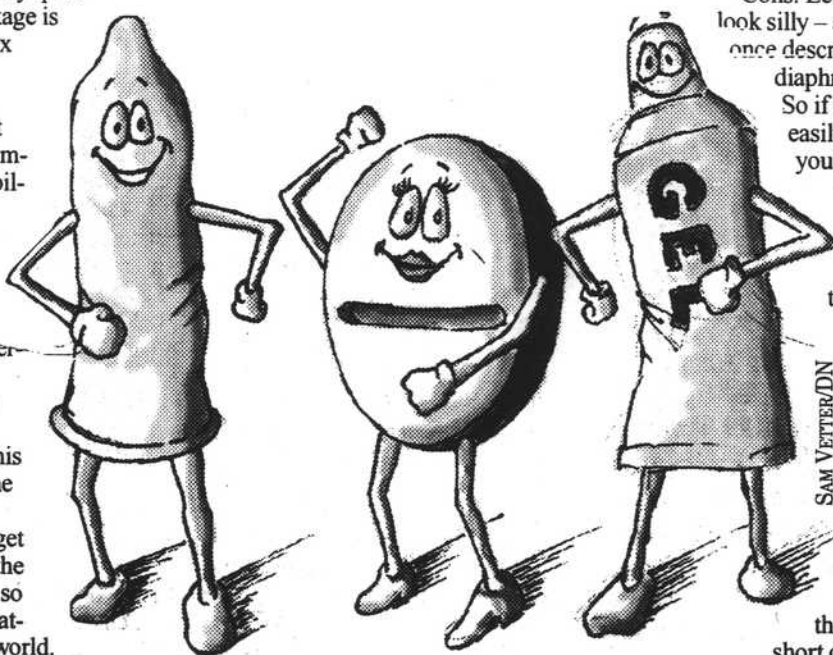
Also, contrary to what most abstinence-only advocates will tell you,

condoms are actually quite durable, and breakage is rare. A typical latex condom can be stretched over an entire arm without breaking (not recommended as a durability test, but this makes for a rather tasteless party trick). Many come pre-lubricated with spermicides, which increase the effectiveness.

Cons: While this is getting better, the biggest problem remains trying to get some guys to use the damn things. OK, so they're not the greatest turn-on in the world. But it doesn't matter how much he complains; when it comes right down to it, the vast majority of guys will take sex with a condom over no sex at all.

Of course, both the man and the woman can have a reasonable complaint: latex allergies. Fortunately, there are other options available: lambskins (which can prevent pregnancy, but do little in the way of sexually transmitted infection prevention) and the new plastic condom (These are thinner, conduct heat better, are stronger than latex, and can be used with oil-based lubricants. You can find them at Walgreen's under the name Avanti, and they usually run \$11 for six condoms).

Of course, they can break or slip



SAM VETTER/DN

Cons: Let's face it, it does look silly — a friend of mine once described it as "a diaphragm with a tail." So if either of you is easily distracted, you're probably better off with the male variety.

Here's a hint: Don't use the female and male condom at the same time. The two materials don't mix.

Injections and Implants: These are hormone-based options, and are the most long-term,

especially if they're not used properly (READ THE DIRECTIONS AND PRACTICE, DAMMIT!).

The Female Condom: Also called "Reality," this is a soft, loose-fitting plastic pouch with rings at both ends; it lines the vagina and prevents direct genital-to-genital contact during intercourse.

Effectiveness: 79 percent typical use, 95 percent perfect use.

Pros: These can be inserted several hours before intercourse, so they're a good option for couples who hate "breaking the mood." Also, like male condoms, they prevent both pregnancy and STIs. This is yet another way of dealing with uncooperative partners; however, see the Cons section.

off, injection, Depo-provera, involves a series of progestin shots, and prevents pregnancy for three months. The current implant option, Norplant, involves six match-sized, progestin-releasing tubes, which are inserted under the skin on a woman's upper arm and lasts five years.

Effectiveness: Depo-provera is 99.7 percent effective, and Norplant is 99.8 percent.

Pros: The main advantage is long-term, hassle-free birth control. These are options best taken by women who really don't want to have children any time in the near future, but are unwilling to take the rather drastic step of surgery.

Cons: These can come with a lot of side effects. They should probably

not be used by women with depression, severe asthma or any unusual breast problems. Also, Norplant users occasionally suffer complications during removal after the five-year period. Usually this amounts to minor scarring, but a few cases have been much more serious. These are options that should be taken only after careful consultation with your health-care provider.

The Morning After Pill: This is pregnancy prevention for emergency situations, such as a condom breaking or slipping off, or rape. If you go to the health center (which, thanks to its flashy new signs, now looks like your typical Taco Bell), you will be given either emergency contraceptive pills or progestin-only mini-pills. The former can be used within 72 hours after unprotected intercourse, the latter within 48 hours. Both flood your body with hormones, and will make many users violently ill, so don't view it as a regular form of birth control.

Please note: This is not the RU-486 abortion pill! The morning after pill prevents a fertilized egg from attaching to the uterine wall, thereby preventing it from dividing. Unless you believe that a single egg possessing no more sentience than a blood cell is a baby, this is not abortion.

So ends our little lecture. I could end with a plug for abstinence, but that's really up for each individual to decide, and I'm not going to moralize. Sure, it's the only 100 percent safe and effective method of birth control/STI prevention out there, but that's besides the point, right?

Read the sarcasm, folks.