

# Be a riddler

Game offers creative, abstract lesson



**K.B. Masterpiece**  
with  
Karen  
Brown

**Jack and Jill are lying dead on a bed. There is broken glass and a puddle of water at the foot of the bed. What happened?**

Minneapolis, I so recently discovered, has many things to offer. The most delightful would have to be my friend Leatha, who had to move away because of the restraining order.

That's beside the point. After all, she did let me go up and see her, even though I had to be escorted by her sister Ixchel, her friend Katie Svoboda and 15 heavily armed cops. But it was fun anyhow.

We just got the cops drunk and left 'em cold and crying at the rest stop. Suckas!

Unfortunately, the cops are not the issue at hand. The fact that I learned how to think outside of the box is the issue at hand.

These three ladies taught me a

most important lesson, a lesson that disrupts everything I unconsciously know about mental constraints. A lesson that solidified the fact that we are all machines of stereotypes, vicious or not.

This sounds like a pretty important lesson, huh?

Maybe you won't get the same impression because the lesson is in the form of a game. A seemingly simple trivia game that many of you may find as boring as a cardboard box.

Well, for those of you out there who can take that cardboard box and turn it into a time machine using only your imagination and a magic marker (to draw on the necessary time-machine dials), listen up.

This game, which is sort of a verbal chess game, is what I will call "Figure out the scenario, yo."

I will give you a sentence or two concerning a situation, then you must figure out what has happened.

Now, look at the riddle at the top of the page.

Through a series of yes/no questions, you can try to figure out what happened.

The person (me) who knows the answer can't give you any clues; you simply have to keep asking questions, any questions.

"Was the water dripping from the ceiling?" - No.

Trust me, some riddles take well over an hour.

"Was the glass from a broken window?" - No.

Don't feel stupid. No question is a bad question. You need to ask obvious questions to rule them out and start thinking beyond.

"Are Jack and Jill naked?" - Yes.

"Were Jack and Jill lovers?" -

No.

Naked, but not lovers ... what the heck is going on here? Sounds twisted to me.

Put yourself in the situation, but at the same time, draw yourself completely away.

Ask absurd questions. Absurd things happen every day, we just don't think to expect them. I suppose this is why they're absurd.

Trust me, these situations are all perfectly feasible. There are no supernatural elements going on, no "X-Files" crap in the house.

"Were Jack and Jill heroin addicts?" - It doesn't matter.

You can steer the contestant away from frivolous questions, not obvious ones.

"Were Jack and Jill human?" -

No.

The answer to this puzzling rid-

dle-like conundrum is that Jack and Jill are fish and their tank has broken. It seems obvious once we know the answer, because this is a perfectly plausible situation.

That's what I love about this game: It brings you to the brink of terminal frustration. The smug riddle master who already knows the answer, can't help you. You have to break through to the truth on your own.

Here are more that Katie, Leatha and Ixchel bestowed upon me:

1. A man is dead in an alley surrounded by 52 bicycles.

2. A man goes into a restaurant and orders albatross soup. When the waiter brings it out, the man dies immediately.

3. A man walks into a bar and orders a glass of water. The bartender pulls a gun on him. The man says "Thank you" and walks out.

4. A bell rings, a boy dies, a bell rings.

5. A man has just stolen something and is scared to run home because of the man in the mask.

6. A hiker comes across a cabin in the woods. There are people dead inside, and the doors are locked from the inside.

7. A naked man is lying face down in the desert with only one-half

“It seems obvious once we know the answer ...”

of a match beside him.

8. A man walks home from work and as soon as he sees his apartment building he knows his wife is dead.

9. A man has murdered his neighbor. The judge will absolutely not give him the death penalty. Why?

10. A man in a suit is dead in the middle of a forest.

Sorry if you know how to play this game already, but I know at least that the last one is new to all of you, because I made it up after watching the news.

Of course most of them are dark and deal with death, but hey, it makes life more interesting to sit and think of how many ways you could possibly die.

I am the gatekeeper to these riddles and your minds are at my fingertips (WOW), so if you want the answers or to play the game if you know any more, please e-mail me at 00219538@bigred.unl.edu.

Happy playing!

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# Be a man

Disquieting, wussy trend is spreading throughout society



Wussification: the disease spreading among young males

I think it was Brad Pitt wearing a dress that did it.

As soon as I saw pretty boy Pitt donning a skirt on the cover the latest issue of Rolling Stone, I realized that something must be done, that something must be said.

Pitt's gender-bending photo shoot is a not-so-subtle example of a rather disturbing trend I've noticed lately.

"What trend?" you ask.

Well, let me tell you. This off-putting trend, my friend, is something I like to call the wussification of the American male.

"What are you talking about?" you ask.

Hear me out.

Take a minute and think about popular culture today. The signs of male wussification are all around you:

Young American males are slowly but surely allowing themselves to be transformed from young men into whiny, little schoolgirls.

Don't believe me?

Well then, let's briefly examine three of the main facets of popular culture, and I'll give you some reasons I feel the way I do.

## Film

All right, think of some of the leading men of yesteryear. Who comes to mind? Humphrey Bogart, Gregory Peck, Jimmy Stewart, John Wayne, George C. Scott, Charlton Heston. These were real men. Tough yet admirable, gruff yet honorable.

And not a one of 'em would have

ever considered playing dress up in a broad's clothes.

"Duke" slipping into a miniskirt? Not a chance in hell, Pilgrim.

Now think of some of today's leading men on the silver screen.

Leonardo DiCaprio, Hugh Grant, Matthew Perry.

Pansies, pansies, pansies.

There's been talk of a fourth Godfather movie featuring DiCaprio as a young Sonny Corleone.

Could they slap James Caan in the face any harder? No.

Of course, we still have tough guys like De Niro, Pacino and Eastwood around, but they're a dying breed. We have to ask ourselves - do we want these legends to be replaced by schmucks like Christian Slater, Keanu Reeves and Brad Pitt?

## Music

The music industry offers some of the most dramatic examples of wussification.

Back in the day it was the Rat Pack. Frank, Sammy and Dean. Each in an Italian suit. Each smoking, drinking and crooning. Each doing it his own way.

Now, we have the Backstreet Boys, N-Sync and a plethora of two-bit boy bands. Each singing dopey songs to junior high girls across the nation. Each in matching sweater vests.

Even country music, which really ought to be a safe-haven for tough, manly guys, has seen the effects of wussification.

Country music used to be solid. Hank Williams Sr., Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings, Merle Haggard, Charlie Pride and George Jones. Good ol' country boys singing about the problems of good ol' country boy life.

Now you have sissy wannabe-cowboy bands with sissy names like Diamond Rio and Lonestar. Garth Brooks is singing pop. Alabama is covering N-Sync songs. Just what in the Sam Hill is going on here?

I reckon old Hank and Charlie are turning over in their graves.

## Sports

The wild, wild world of sports. The last bastion of masculinity.

The ugly hand of wussification cannot reach into this mighty realm, right?

Wrong. It can, and it already has.

Once more, rewind a few decades and conjure up images of sports stars from the past. Football alone supplies numerous examples.

Dick Butkus, Larry Csonka, "Mean" Joe Green, Jim Brown and Earl Campbell.

Real ball players. Real men. Guys who went out and played their hearts out, left it on the field and played even harder the next Sunday.

The game today has become all about flashiness and showboating. We've got guys like Deion Sanders, Michael Irvin and plenty of others putting more effort into their end-zone dances than their games.

Sports heroes used to be just that. Heroes. Great athletes who played their game well and got the job done without talking smack and calling attention to themselves. Legends like Willie Mays, Lou Gehrig, Mickey Mantle, Johnny Unitas, Stan Musial and Roberto Clemente. Men

who acted like men on and off the field.

Now it seems like professional sports have been infiltrated by cry babies, braggarts and thugs.

I guess Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel probably put it best: "Where have you gone Joe DiMaggio? A nation turns its lonely eyes to

you."

Joltin' Joe has left and gone away So we might as well just face it. Masculinity is under attack. Pop culture is doing its part to deconstruct the image we used to hold of what a man should be.

What is the cause of this? Why are we allowing ourselves to grow soft?

There's a number of theories out there. We've had no war to fight, no depression to struggle through. We've experienced no great conflict to shape our character, to force us to act like men.

More sons are being raised by single moms, their fathers leaving them without a male role model.

Political correctness has taken its toll in inhibiting expressions of masculinity.

I think all of these things have contributed in this unfortunate wussification.

So what can we do to combat it?

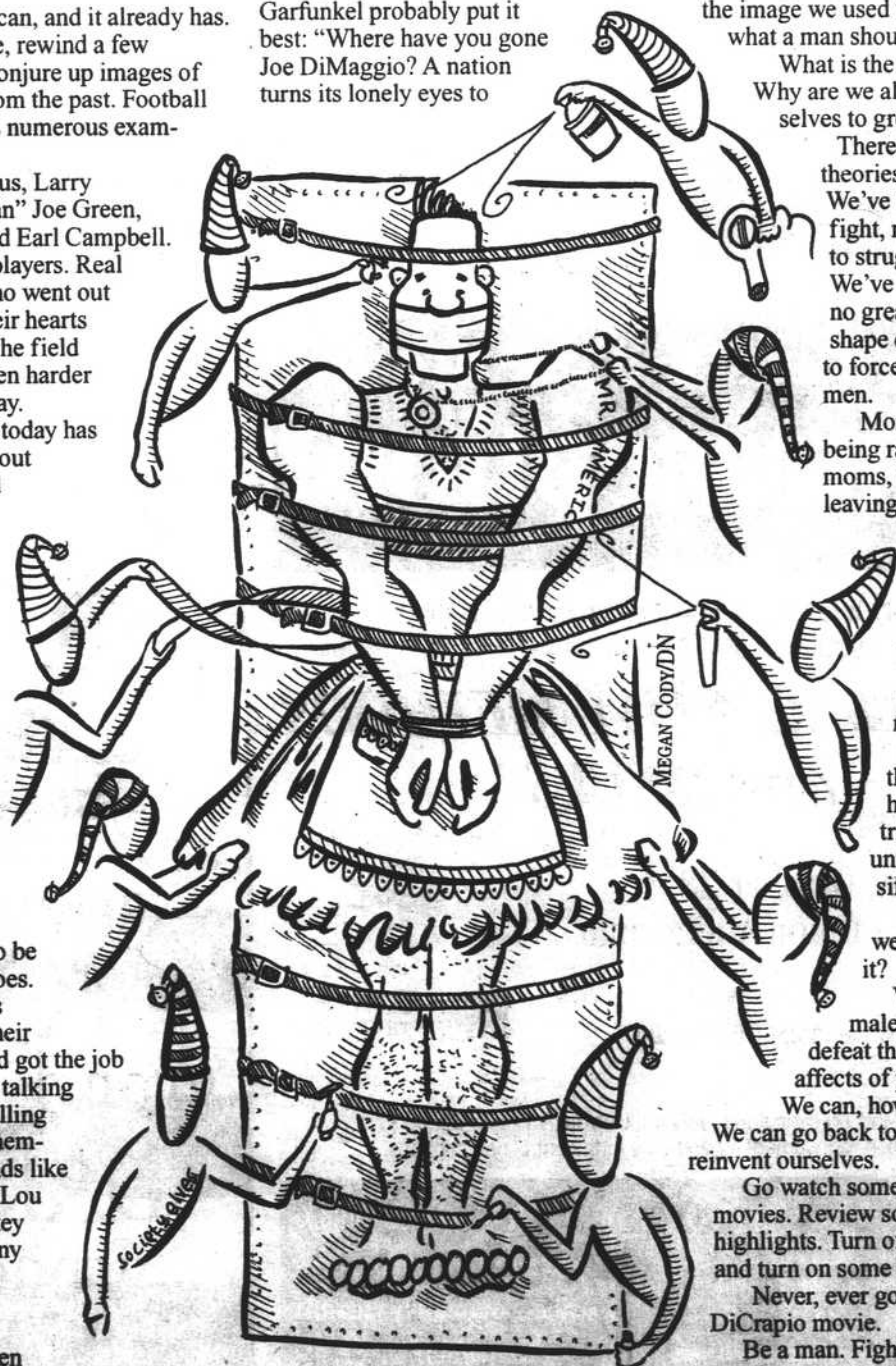
We, as young males, cannot defeat the softening affects of pop culture.

We can, however, reject it. We can go back to basics. We can reinvent ourselves.

Go watch some John Wayne movies. Review some old NFL highlights. Turn off the Top 40 and turn on some Sinatra.

Never, ever go see another DiCaprio movie.

Be a man. Fight wussification.



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