

...What? This again?

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Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-Treasurer, fellow presenter, guests at the table

Ladies and gentlemen,

As I begin my 17th presentation to this learned society, I have concluded that nothing that is worth hearing is not worth hearing again. Therefore, I begin with a double disclaimer.

Nothing you are about to hear is in any way original or the product of advanced research. For the better part of the last half century Richard Lederer has been writing and lecturing about the intricacies and confusions of that medium of communication called the English language.

For virtually all that time, I have been attempting to promote the study of history. Happily, those two diverse pursuits have a way of co-mingling as we present a brief history of the world through student papers. For those who were with us in May of 1992, my apologies. There are some revisions and additions, but none worth mentioning. I ask your strict attention to pronunciation.

I give you a reprise of the history of the world, abridged and reconstructed through student papers.

The inhabitants of Egypt were called mummies. They lived in the Sarah Dessert and traveled by Camelot. The climate of the Sarah is such that the inhabitants have to live elsewhere, so certain areas of the dessert are cultivated by irritation. The Egyptians built the Pyramids in the shape of a huge triangular cube.

The Pramids are a range of mountains between France and Spain. The Bible is full of interesting caricatures. In the first book of the Bible, Guinnesses, Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. One of their children, Cain, asked "Am I my brother's son?" God asked Abraham to sacrifice Issac on Mount Montezuma. Jacob, son of Issac, stole his brother's birthmark. Jacob was a partiarich who brought up his twelve sons to be partiarchs, but they did not take to it. One of Jacob's sons, Joseph, gave refuse to the Israelites.

Pharaoh forced the Hebrew slaves to make bread without straw. Moses led them to the Red Sea, where they made unleavened bread, which is bread made without any ingredients. Afterwards, Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten commandments. David was a Hebrew king skilled at playing the liar. He fought with the Philatelists, a race of people who lived in Biblical times.

Solomon, one of David's sons, had 500 wives and 500 porcupines. Without the Greeks, we wouldn't have history. The Greeks invented three kinds of columns - Corinthian, Doric and Ionic. They also had myths. A myth is a female moth. One myth says that the mother of Achilles dipped him in the River Stynx until he became intolerable.

Achilles appears in "The Illiad", by Homer. Homer also wrote the "Oddity", in which Penelope was the last hardship that Ulysses endured on his journey. Actually, Homer was not written

by Homer but by another man of that name.

Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed him.

His actual cause of death was an overdose of wedlock.

In the Olympic Games, Greeks ran races, jumped, hurled the biscuits, and threw the java. The reward to the victor was a coral wreath. The government of Athen was democratic because the people took the law into their own hands.

There were no wars in Greece, as the mountains were so high that they couldn't climb over them to see what their neighbors were doing. When they fought the Parisians, the Greeks were outnumbered because the Persians had more men.

Eventually, the Ramons conquered the Geeks. History calls these people Romans because they never stayed in one place for very long. At Roman banquets, the guests wore garlic in their hair. Roman girls who did not marry could become Vestigal Virgins, a group of women who were dedicated to burning the internal flame.

Julius Caesar extinguished himself on the battlefields of Gaul. The Ides of March killed him because they thought he was going to be made king.

Nero was a cruel tyranny who would torture his poor subjects by playing the fiddle to them.

Christianity was just another mystery cult until Jesus was born. The mother of Jesus was Mary, who was different from other women because of her immaculate contraption.

While we're on the matter of religion, Zorroastrologism was founded by Zorro. This was a duelist religion.

Then came the Middle Ages. King Alfred conquered the Dames, King Arthur lived in the Age of Shivery, King Harlod mustarded his troops before the Battle of Hastings. Joan of Arc was cannonized by George Bernard Shaw, and the victims of the Black Death grew boobs on their necks.

Finally, the Magna Carta provided that no free man should be hanged twice for the same offense.

Literacy, of course, is the ability to read and right. R I G H T
But, in midevil times most of the people were alliterate.

The greatest writer of the time was Chaucer, who wrote many poems and verse and also wrote literature. Another tale tells of William Tell, who shot an arrow through an apple while standing on his son's head.

The Renaissance was an age in which more individuals felt the value of their human being. Martin Luther was nailed to the church door at Wittenberg for selling papal indulgences. He died a horrible death, being excommunicated by a bull.

It was the painter Donatello's interest in the female nude that made him the father of the Renaissance. It was an age of great inventions and discoveries. Gutenberg invented the Bible. Sir Walter Raleigh is a historical figure because he invented cigarettes. Another important invention was the circulation of blood.

Sir Francis Drake circumcised the world--- with a 117-foot clipper.

The government of England was a limited mockery. Henry VIII found walking difficult because he had an abcess on his knee. Queen Elizabeth was the "Virgin Queen." As a queen she was a success. When Elizabeth exposed herself before her troops, they all shouted "hurrah." Then her navy went out and defeated the Spanish Armadillo.

The greatest writer of the Renaissance was William Shakespear. Shakespear never made much money and is famous only because of his plays. He ived in Windsor with his merry wives, writing tragedies, comedies and errors. In one of Shakespear's famous plays, Hamlet rations out his situation by relieving himself in a long soliloquy. In another, Lady Macbeth tries to convince Macbeth to kill the King by attacking his manhood. Romeo and Juliet are an example of an heroic couplet. Writing at the same time as Shakespear was Miquel Cervantes. He wrote "Donkey Hote". The next great author was John Milton. Milton wrote "Paradise Lost." Then his wife died, and he wrote "Paradise Regained."

In 1588, the British defeated the Spanish Armidillo.

During the Renaissance America began. Christopher Columbus was a great navigator who discovered America while cursing about the Atlantic. His ships were called the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Fe. Later the Pilgrims crossed the Ocean, and this was called the Pilgrim's Progress. When they landed at Plymouth Rock, they were greeted by Indians, who came down the hill rolling their war hoops before them. The Indian squabs carried porposies on their back. Many of the Indian heroes were killed, along with their cabooses, which proved very fatal to them. The winter of 1620 was a hard one for the settlers. Many people died and many babies were born. Captain John Smith was responsible for all this.

Quickly on to the 18th century.

Americans . . . wanted no involvement in the French and Indian War because they did not want to fight in India.

One of the causes of the Revolutionary Wars was the English put tacks in their tea. The Boston Tea Party was held at Pearl Harbor.

Also, the colonists would send their parcels through the post without stamps. During the War, Red Coats and Paul Revere was throwing balls over stone walls. The dogs were barking and the peacocks crowing. Finally, the colonists won the War and no longer had to pay for taxes.

Delegates from the original thirteen states formed the Continental Congress. Thomas Jefferson, a Virginian, and Benjamin Franklin were two signers of the Declaration of Independence. Franklin had gone to Boston carrying all his clothes in his pocket and a loaf of bread under each arm. He invented electricity by rubbing cats backwards and declared "a horse divided against itself cannot stand." Franklin died in 1790 and is still dead.

George Washington married Martha Curtis and in due time became the Father of Our Country. Then the Constitution of the United States was adopted to secure domestic hostility. Under the Constitution the people enjoyed the right to keep bare arms.

Abraham Lincoln became America's greatest Precedent. Lincoln's mother died in infancy, and he was born in a log cabin which he built with his own hands. When Lincoln was President, he wore only a tall silk hat. He said, "In onion there is strength." Abraham Lincoln wrote the Gettysburg address while traveling from Washington to Gettysburg on the back of an envelope.

He also signed the Emancipation Proclamation, On the night of April 14, 1865, Lincoln went to the theater and got shot in his seat by one of the actors in a moving picture show. The believed assassin was John Wilkes Booth, a supposedly insane actor. This ruined Booth's career. The Fourteenth Amendment gave the ex-Negroes citizenship. But the Klux Klan would torch and lynch other innocent victims

Meanwhile in Europe, the enlightenment was a reasonable time. Voltaire invented electricity and also wrote a book called "Candy". Gravity was invented by Issac Walton. It is chiefly noticeable in the Autumn, when the apples are falling off the trees.

Bach was the most famous composer in the world, and so was Handel. Handel was half German, half Italian and half English. He was very large. Bach died from 1750 to the present. Beethoven wrote music even though he was deaf. He was so deaf he wrote loud music. He took long walks in the forest even when everyone was calling for him. Beethoven expired in 1827 and later died for this.

France was in a very serious state. The French Revolution was accomplished before it happened. The Marseillaise was the theme song of the French Revolution, and it catapulted into Napoleon. During the Napoleonic Wars, the crowned heads of Europe were trembling in their shoes. Then the Spanish gorrilas came down from the hills and nipped at Napoleon's flanks. Napoleon became ill with bladder problems and was very tense and unrestrained. He

wanted an heir to inherit his power, but since Josephine was a baroness, she couldn't bear him any children.

The sun never set on the British Empire because the British Empire is in the East and the sun sets in the West. Queen Victoria sat on a thorn for 63 years. Her reclining years and finally the end of her life were exemplary of a great personality. Her death was the final event which ended her reign.

The nineteenth century was a time of many great inventions and thoughts. The invention of the steamboat caused a network of rivers to spring up. Cyrus McCormick invented the McCormick Reaper, which did the work of a hundred men.

Samuel Morse invented a code for telegraphy. Louis Pasteur discovered a cure for rabies. Charles Darwin was a naturalist who wrote the "Origin of the Species". Madame Curie discovered radium. And Karl Marx became one of the Marx Brothers while they were inventing and flying the first airplane at Kitty Hawk.

The First World War, caused by the assassination of the Arch-Duke by a serf, ushered in a new era in the annals of human history.

The rest of the 20th century was merely a prelude to the sympathy of the great depression and the rise of the dictators. Where...

Hitler's instrumentality of terror was, of course, the Gestapo.