

COMMENTARY

Help for guys in a gifting predicament



by 600 years of male know-it-alls who seconded his opinion later — that what women really want is control. Or put differently, what they really want is exactly what they want.

Which may not be true of men.

If a man declares that he wants to be a corporate president or climb to the summit of Mt. Everest, don't take him too seriously. That's probably not what he wants at all, not when he sees what's required to get there.

Does a man want to be famous or wealthy? Many say they do.

But if a woman wants it, she really wants it, although she might not say so to a man.

So let's be specific: What do our women want... for the holidays?

Good luck figuring out that one, pal. I have no idea. And I can't tell you what I'm giving the RAWs in my life, because then they'd have a denuded surprise. Women DO NOT want a denuded surprise, unless it's love in the raw. But let's not go there today.

Instead, why not offer your ambitious career woman a foot in the door? For a mere \$8.95, you can get her a black or red high-heeled shoe that's really a doorstop, from www.baronbob.com.

Or more perversely from baronbob.com, give your RAW "The Winerack." It's described as "a very comfortable sports bra in versatile black; polyurethane bladder holds 750 mm or 25 ounces of your favorite beverage; drinking tube long enough to route as you wish."

The unenlightened seller even recommends wearing "The Winerack" loaded

with alcohol not only to sporting events, where "every guy will want a sip from your rack" (thereby insuring her control over at least some knucklehead men), but to PTA meetings, which is probably illegal. Price: \$29.95.

For those less inclined to bacchanalian frivolity, consider an "intellectual" gift from www.wackyplanet.com — something like a Jane Austen action figure, perhaps (reduced to \$9.95), a Leonardo da Vinci reverse motion watch (\$32.95) or a T-shirt that says, "1-20-09, Good Rid-dance (George W. Bush)" (quite a statement for \$12.95).

For something more suggestive, try www.uncommongoods.com. These uninhibited purveyors of useful nonsense offer \$25 his-and-hers key holders (the key hangs from the location of a reproductive organ on the human-shaped key holder), or the \$100 "couple-between-a-rock-and-a-soft-place" clock.

With all due apologies for the pinched economy this year, here are some more expensive options.

You can find a purse resembling a three-scoop banana split or the Eiffel tower (about \$450), from www.timmywoods.com.

Or you can take it deep and let your RAW swim with the sharks. At www.excitations.com, you can arrange to have her lowered into a shark tank at an aquarium in Washington, D.C., New York or Philadelphia (\$195; bad-economy option: Let her walk the streets in those cities and meet the sharks for free).

Or you can surprise your RAW with a dive among great white sharks a few miles

off the coast of San Francisco (\$895), also from excitations.com (travel not included). The 2.5-hour trip by boat includes breakfast and a "hearty lunch." With any luck your RAW will eat the lunch, not be the lunch, after she's lowered into the cold waters of the Pacific, thoughtfully chummed by the dive crew, no doubt.

At the height of ridiculous excess, you can have your RAW's dream car delivered to her door for a single day of driving (beginning at \$1,175). What kind of car? Ferrari, Bentley... that kind of thing, according to the ad (yes, at www.excitations.com). Just don't break it, because you might have to buy it.

Better than all those, morally speaking, are gifts that do good.

Locally, on her behalf, you might donate to The Conservancy of Southwest Florida or The Bob Rauschenberg Center for Living (formerly known as the AIDS Treatment Center), among many other deserving organizations in Collier and Lee counties.

Or you can Google such vetted do-gooders as Greater Good Network, The Parks Company, the Women's Bean Project or Women for Women (all mentioned on MSNBC), where your purchase of a lovely gift will insure money to help somebody or something nationally or internationally.

In my opinion, however, all that pales beside the one gift that requires real effort. Let me quote from a column titled "For the Ladies" (*Florida Weekly*, Nov. 29, 2007).

"Finally, the ultimate gift, from your very own Sweet-Strong Self: LOVE. Show your RAW, or anyone else, that getting it means giving it. Cost: Heart and Soul, High or Low, Good or Bad, Happy or Sad."

And listen, pal. Happy holidays, ok? ■



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