

Episode 2008
Ask the Professor Transcription
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Bell chiming

>> The University Tower chimes ring in another session of Ask the Professor, the show in which you match with University of Detroit Mercy Professors in an unrehearsed session of questions and answers. I'm your host Matt Mio, and let me introduce to you, our panel for today. To my right, from my home department of chemistry and bio-chemistry, its professor Mara Livezey.

>> Hello!

>> You gave another exam today didn't you – laughing –

>> I did give another exam today!

>> Let me tell you, without saying any specific numbers, I come to the building early, although not early enough to beat the custodians, but there were already students in the lobby at 5:45am

>> My students?!

>> Yes!

>> Wow!

>> Getting ready for your exam so. It's pretty shocking it only happens a couple of times a year, but I walk in and theres a "hey". The lights aren't even on in the buildings yet. They don't turn on until 6. So how did it go?

>> I heard it was a little bit shorter and a little bit easier.

>> Ah interesting was that done on purpose?

>> Yes. I listen to feedback and try to honor that feedback.

>> Okay, good. Well, you have a wonderful long fall break, well in 2 days, to finish grading your exams we'll see how that goes. Given an exam yet, Professor Jason Roche from communication studies?

>> I'm preparing to give take home exams in 3 of my classes next week. That way I get next Friday off!

>> Oh nice! We are wired in midterms right now. All the way around the table, but almost back, its professor Dave Chow,

>> Good to be here as always

>> from the Berkley tiki bar

>> haha yeah, pretty much! I don't have to worry about midterms! I love it!

>> Lucky you

>> Well I never did before anyways. I was always like okay guys, its midterms, work harder, goodbye! Don't eat too much!

>> Yeah exactly. Any new episodes of the dead files we should be looking out for?

>> I still have a few more in the hopper.

>> Okay, we'll be looking out for it

>> It's all good. I have a few more goofy projects I'll let you know about

>> Looking forward to the goofiest of them

>> The hungry howie's commercials during the lions game next couple of weeks

>> Yay I cant wait. Is it sort of observed humor?

>> Yes. I'm drawing on children. I'm finding photographic evidence of it

>> Oh my. So are you going to be in the commercial

>> No I'm drawing it

>> Got it okay

>> Is it like tattoos

>> Yes

>> Oh cool

>> Is it like real permanent tattoos on these poor children

>> No

>> Oh my goodness. Those are babies

>> Oh cool! For all of those in radio land, he's holding up a phone with some real photographs of drawing on children

>> This wonderful child was so patient! That's the mom holding the babies. Itll be interesting

>> Just in time the lions heating up for a few more wins, well see this commercial huh?

>> Folks, this is a program where you can send us anything. It's been a while since some hard-core rat trivia thing came across my desk. If you stump our panel you win a prize, if you don't stump our panel you win a prize. You can send the questions to us in a number of ways. You can email us at atp@udmercy.edu. You can reach us on the web at udmercy.edu/atp, find us on Facebook or listen on your favorite smart speaker by asking it to play Ask the Professor at University of Detroit Mercy. It occurs to me that after we added that part to our script, that you really can't submit questions in that way, actually you might make google, or alexa or whatever, really angry if you start barking out questions.

>> -all laughing-

>> Folks, we received a thank you note, notice in the front it says thank you, Matt and panelists, thank you so much for your hospitality in ATP, making me an honorary acting professor. I'm updating my linked in profile. See you next year, Professor Hank Durkin.

>> Awwww!!

>> So that's very, very, nice for Hank to send that to us.

>> Very cool!

>> We fulfilled one of his big dreams and I thought he was joking when he said that but he was actually being truthful.

>> He had some good answers too!

>> He saved our bank several times!

>> He did very well! Absolutely! Alright here are some interesting questions. International superstitions extravaganza. Compiled by Sarah Martin of Carlisle, Ohio for the month of October

>> Does Ohio count as an international destination for Michiganders

>> That's a good point. Did we all see the big joke over the summer where the company's gonna make the candles that smell like the main smell of that state but Ohio was going to be scentless

>> - laughing -

>> Sarah! Please forgive us

>> Just reporting the news! Panelists, hope you enjoy these sometimes-spooky superstitions around the globe as we continue to prepare for Halloween. Don't we all? Ill consider you passing if you can get 20 out of 25. Let's see what we can do here. So, thank you Sarah Martin from Carlisle Ohio for sending in your questions. In Russia, its bad luck to say what phrase before the actual day?

>> I know, Sarah Palin

>> Its Happy Birthday. You're not allowed to say it until it's the actual day. Bad luck

>> You're never allowed to say those words

>> Yeah seriously

>> Oh, okay

>> In Japan, its unlucky to put your chopsticks point down into your food, why is this? This is a tough one

>> Because it gets soggy

>> I'll give you partial credit, but it's not what they're looking for

>> will it splashes you

>> You won't be able to catch the fly with chopsticks later?

>> No, no not like that. It makes a shape in the food of a character from the Japanese language

>> Oh, that means the devil or something

>> Getting closer. Not the devil

>> Like ultra-man, Johnny Socko, what? Godzilla

>> I think it's like ...

>> The emperors alter ego

>> ...character as in a letter

>> Yes that's what I mean

>> - all laughing -

>> Ohh!

>> Not like BATMAN. -laughing- There is uh, I don't know how much deeper we can go. Well you got close Mara. So, the character for the number 4 which is the most unlucky number in Japanese, is pronounced, it's a homophone, with the word death, so bonus trivia in china even they will skip #4 on apartments and skip 4th floors entirely

>> That's true. I remember that for my cousins wedding my aunt wouldn't stay on the 4th floor. She made us change rooms for her. She just wouldn't.

>> See bad luck. Well not just bad luck, but death. That's different than bad luck

>> - al laughing –

>> In the US it's the 13th floor. I've never seen a building with a 666th floor.

>> Yes. Not yet. I will point out. The next Simpsons Halloween episode is the 666th episode this year. In Spain you should eat 12 of these 1 after the other on new year's eve for good luck for the next year

>> Grapes

>> Grapes. Are you just doing context clues or did you know the grapes Mara

>> I had hear that before

>> Oh okay

>> eat grapes

>> Who wouldn't eat grapes seriously. In the Philippines, you shouldn't do this specific thing right after you've been to a funeral. This is a long shot but anyone who's a Disney fan knows one of the central conceits is that something might happen to you at the end of the ride. It's the same thing were trying to avoid here

>> The ghost might sit next to you

>> Right so you can't go home because a bad spirit might follow you there so you have to stop somewhere first on the way back from a funeral.

>> the dry cleaner

>> - laughing – the 4th floor

>> The dry cleaners counts.

>> Leave your evil spirit at the dry cleaners and then go home. They want to get the stains out of their sheets or something I don't know. Ghosts and things. Yeah tradition says an evil spirit will follow you home. It's kind of morbid. In Lithuania, you shouldn't do this inside your house, because it might invite a demon inside the house. Do not do this everyday thing that I do pretty much every day in the hallways of the building. Mara knows what I do, well she will when I say it. I do this in route from my lab office to the main office of the building

>> Removing your lab coat

>> No

>> Mara what does he do

>> I don't know!

>> I know its kind of –

>> I feel like I should know

>> Because of where your office is located you might not hear me doing this

>> whistle

>> Yes whistling. You should not whistle inside your house or you could invite a demon into your home. But only in Lithuania, across the border, good luck!

>> In Germany what does it mean if you cheer with water? You're not supposed to make a toast with water or something bad would happen whats it going to be

>> someone will water down your beer

>> no you're wishing something upon all the people with whom you do this because some people do it for spite

>> you need a bath –laughing–

>> you're wishing for a year of bad health

>> Ill give it to you. You're wishing they'll all drop dead.

>> I was an exchange student in Germany in high school we did much toasting but never with water.

>> In Japan you shouldn't sleep with you head pointing in this compass direction.

>> West

>> Incorrect

>> Towards Mount Fuji

>> South

>> Its north. Do you know why? It's very cultural

>> Was it fung shei for a cold draft

>> close its fung shei for corpses they are always buried with their heads pointed north. So you don't want to do that while youre sleeping because otherwise youll be a corpse. Worms crawl in worms crawl out

>> Im pretty sure I sleep with my head pointing north

>> But you aren't in japan

>> In some part of Africa you're not supposed to sleep with your head in this other direction for the exact same reason

>> For the love of god! – laughing –

>> We know it's not north

>> don't think too hard, it's a pretty harsh climate anywhere in Africa so what way would be bad if not north

>> south

>> it's definitely west. The sun rises on the east and that's rebirth and then ends it sets in the west

>> everything the light touches

>> this is odd though, I definitely am not thinking 3D enough, bonus trivia. This is why the pyramids are facing east and west. So those are squares and they're pointing everywhere

>> they're pointing up

>> exactly they point up. Do not bury the dead up

>> and towards the sky

>> maybe there's a line of pyramids that go east and west. It's kind of weird. In England, you shouldn't put new shoes on the table. Why?

>> germs

>> Yeah...but that's not what it says...they're new shoes though. This is a sign you'd see at a wake

>> dead people?

>> it's definitely dead people. It's a signal that someone's passed away in the house to put new shoes on the table. That's an English-speaking country so it feels like why didn't we adopt that weird tradition

>> We don't drive on the left or play cricket either

>> That's very true. Student made fun of my cricket wind up yesterday because I did it more like a baseball swing, and he got behind me like he was giving me a golf lesson I was like geez

>> And then he lost his wallet after that

>> - laughing – yeah while we find my wallet, lets take a break

>> - music- its an ask the professor flash back. – bell rings-

>> Ah the University Tower chimes, ringing in another session of Ask the Professor, the show in which you match with University of Detroit Mercy Professors in an unrehearsed session of questions and answers. I'm your host Edwan Duwant, and today we have our regular panel with us and on my right, from department of religious studies, Professor George Pickering

>> A pleasure to be here as always, it truly is!

>> Pleasure to have you

>> On his right from the department of English, professor Claire Crabtree

>> It's an honor to be here. I'm going to go on and make a speech

>> Are you through? Claire's right, from the department of theater, Professor Arthur Beer

>> Hello Edwan

>> - laughing –

>> On our last program we were near the end of a set of questions from Bertie Bates, from Granule Iowa, she was asking us questions about movie stars. This woman was a night club hostess in later years, but when young made a short subject doing lightning fast trick riding

>> Annie Oakley

>> No. Her first name was the name of a great southern state

>> Texas Guinan.

>> That's right

>> Who's that?

>> Texas Guinan used to run a speakeasy in New York she was famous for saying Welcome Suckers when people came in

>> - music plays-

>> And we are back passing through China Grove on our way to some international superstitious extravaganza questions, sent in from Sarah Martin from Carlisle Ohio, thank you Sarah. We have a few more to go here, and they only get weirder. I don't know what else to say, they only get weirder. In France, its considered good luck if you step in this, but not so much in the US

>> Poop

>> Bull Dung

>> Its definitely dog poo. But only if your left foot steps in it. The left foot is the big deal

>> What

>> there's weirder things. Like in Russia, if this lands on you it means you will receive wealth soon

>> Bird poop

>> Bird poop

>> what's up with all the poop questions all of a sudden

>> Yeah, where did that come from? That's out of the ordinary

>> They all seem like bad luck though

>> I'm trying to think of something we can add here for our international listeners. These things seem odd to us, but what are some classic American or western good luck bad luck thing that they might weird people out

>> A rabbit foot?

>> yeah that's kind of weird

>> salt over the shoulder

>> yeah that's kind of weird

>> Can't think about that without thinking of dumb and dumber

>> Of course.

>> In Egypt if you see or hear this animal, terrible news will be coming your way. I remember hearing about this

>> A crow a raven, a camel

>> No

>> Definitely not a camel

>> It's a bird though

>> A vulture circling over head

>> yeah that would be bad but no

>> a sparrow

>> I had a picture of this bird in my lab, advising my students to wear their safety goggles, to be wise.

>> A owl

>> Yes, an Owl. A student pulled me aside and said Prof Mio, just so you know, the equivalent bird in western culture to what we think of Owls would be a Turkey. So, imagine the stupidest animal telling you be wise wear goggles, and I took the poster down

>> Okay

>> Yeah. Owls are bad news in the middle east. In Italy, bonus trivia, if an owl comes to your house it means someone living there will die soon. So that's not cool

>> not cool at all! I haven't had any owls invited to my house. In Iceland why shouldn't you knit on your porch?

>> It's cold?

>> I'm giving you 95 out of 100 because it means the cold weather will stick around longer, you're just daring it

>> Ohhhh

>> In 1933, Syria banned these toys for superstitious fear they would bring great drought to the country

>> Barbie dolls

>> Good guess not correct

>> Slinky's

>> it's a little more toy-ish. A la 1933

>> cars

>> Nope. Classic toy only 1 purpose of being a toy

>> Dolls

>> No not a doll. No one uses them anymore. They go up and down... the answer is a Yoyo. The yoyo would bring great drought. Sarah observes, unsure if fidget spinners would do the same.

>> Now what's the connection between a yoyo and a drought?

>> I don't know. But they thought the yoyos would bring a great drought. In Russia if you bring these flowers to somebody, you're wishing infidelity upon them

>> Lilacs

>> No

>> a certain rose?

>> Yes a certain rose associated with Texas

>> Yellow

>> It's a yellow rose to wish infidelity upon them. In Ireland bride would wear these to ward out evil spirits wishing their marriage harm. This is actually a very well known one, especially European, for some reason the Irish have one foot in modern day one foot 300 years ago. So they were these on their bridal gown to ward off evil spirits

>> garlic

>> it's actually a device

>> a knife

>> good guess. In Irish history leprechauns were actually like 10 or 20 feet tall but something shrunk them and it was the coming of Christianity, so that's your last hint

>> the cross

>> not the cross, it makes noise actually

>> bells

>> yes bells, church bells shrunk the leprechaun. Full credit

>> I find it interesting because the western tradition something borrowed something blue, we put bells on cat collars.

>> In Rowanda women will sometimes avoid eating goat for what reason

>> its too tough

>> theyre afraid itll do something to them

>> make them infertile

>> no something not socially acceptable

>> stds?

>> - all laughing-

>> they're afraid it'll prompt facial hair growth. So, I don't know if you've ever eaten goat. I have

>> of course!

>> goat diet

>> in Korean women should avoid eating what while pregnant fearing their babies will be ugly

>> Kimchi

>> Not kimchi

>> Goat

>> I heard this before we have a great number, of Korean students doing our dental program and it has to do with the shape of their food

>> is it in good shape or bad shape

>> it depends

>> is it seafood

>> it says here if they eat anything asymmetric your baby will be asymmetric

>> what?

>> you mean like flounder? How many asymmetric animals are out there

>> it's a piece of food

>> oh!

>> so if chicken nuggets are cut into squares they're good

>> Yeah, I guess. Hey I crack research team found a news article from September 7 2013, yoyo banned in Syria. Blamed for drought by Muslims in Beirut. Drought and severe cold have been disastrously affecting cattle in Syria and Muslim chiefs in Damascus have attributed the wrath of the heavens from the introduction of the yoyo.

>> Who needs bombs lets just drop yoyos.

>> Oh my gosh. I don't know what brings drought to America but it ain't yoyos. It's something else. From when and why did the superstition of not walking under a ladder come out, in general?

>> painters, roofers, dropping things

>> no its very ancient

>> someone pushes the ladder you die

>> something would happen when the ladder was around

>> the gallows

>> Yeah, the gallows. It means someone will get hanged. So, don't do that. In Italy, you say the same word at the same time with a friend it means you will never get married. How do you reverse that?

>> By saying jinx?

>> It's their version of it. I had heard this from my Italian family. They mention there's a popular culture way you do something to make something bad coming your way go away

>> Yelling pizza?

>> You touch the tip of your nose and it reverse it and it goes away. Sarah observes touching your nose not buying a coke. Then you go jinx. In the Netherlands what should you never do whilst eating dinner?

>> Sneeze

>> No you can sneeze but you cant do this

>> blow your nose

>> this act makes sound

>> burp?

>> No you're not supposed to sing. It means making communication with the devil. The devil has his hands in everything. He owes me 20 bucks. In the phillipeans its believed you should never do this in a rain storm. You will attract lightning if you do this.

>> stand under a tree

>> no it has something to do with your apparel

>> Build a lightning rod

>> never wear a jacket

>> no not the type of clothing you wear, but the color

>> Oh it is the color. Never wear black

>> its red. Never wear red in the Philippines in a lightning storm. In English and north American tradition, what should be the first words you say each month for good luck?

>> Okay?

>> happy new moon

>> no 3 words same word, so this animal, it's believed this animal communicates with the underworld because it lives underground

>> mole mole mole

>> no

>> rabbit rabbit rabbit

>> yes. In japan what should you hide if you walk through a graveyard?

>> uhh

>> so the word for this part of your body translates to the word meaning parent. So hiding this part of the body saves your parent from death

>> tummy

>> its your thumbs so you're supposed to hide your thumbs in a grave yard so your parents don't die.

>> Okay

>> I have to say we did not do very well... we did... We got 5 incorrect so actually we got 20 out of 25 oh that's pretty good. They were tough! Very interesting. Thank you Sarah! Those were great questions!

>> Absolutely fantastic

>> Unfortunately, it's time for us to say goodbye. Until next time, Professor Chow

>> see ya

>> professor roach

>> see ya

>> professor livesy

>> rabbit, rabbit, rabbit

>> and these words...

>> You can email Ask the Professor at atp@udmercy.edu, tweet to us on twitter @asktheprofessor, or using #asktheprofessorudm or visit Ask the Professor facebook page.

>> Ask the professor was transcribed at the facilities of the Briggs building at the department of communication studies in the college of liberal's arts and education at university of Detroit mercy's McNichols campus. Ask the professor is produced and directed today by Michael Jason and our executive produce is Professor Jason Roach. Until next week, I'm your host, Matt Mio.

>> – music-