

动力英语

AMBITION ENGLISH

英语学习系列读物 ■ 面向职场的全新英语丛书
2004年第6辑 定价: 4.50元

Feature Article 特别关注

And Speaking of Small Talk...

闲聊有益

Opinion 个人观点

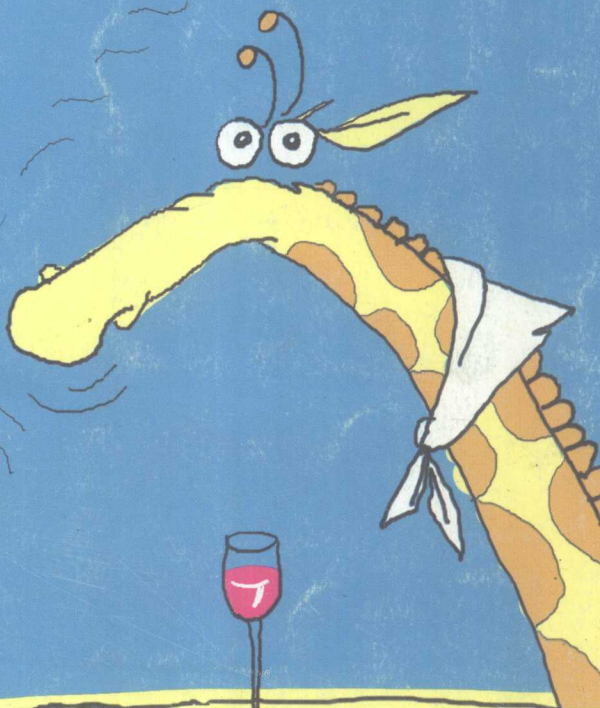
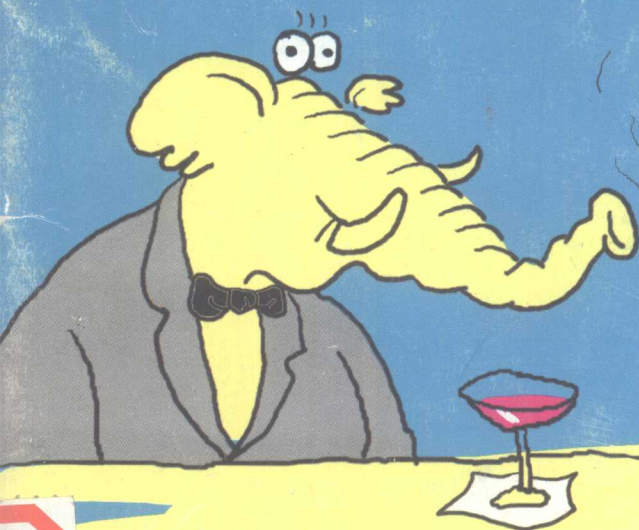
The New New Workforce
为“新新人类”叫好

Ways of Life 生活方式

Working Hard to Travel Well
生活在别处

Happy Hour 快乐酒吧

How to Chuck a Sickie
病假攻略





Charlize Theron — The Rising Star from South Africa

"At first I found it really hard using three different English accents: South African, faking the American, faking the accent required by the job. I decided to make it easier for myself and just do one. I haven't lost my culture, just my accent."

— Charlize Theron



2004年奥斯卡最佳女主角
查理兹·塞隆的星路历程
(详见内文 P21)

查理兹·塞隆 ——从南非兴起的明星



Mountain Biking — Sport of Concentration



山地自行车——专心致志的运动



The challenge of mountain biking is part of the sport's appeal. This isn't a leisurely coast down the street on your little three-speed bike.

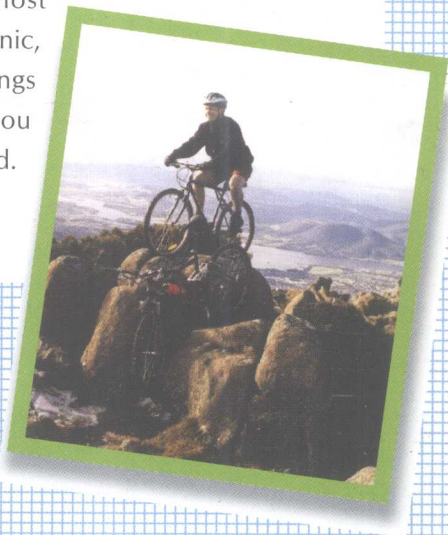
Try sharp turns that test your arms and steep climbs that test your legs. Try your butt ([俚]臀; 屁股) getting sore as you bounce up and down on rocky, dirt trails through deep woods and dry river beds.

Try picking yourself up after falling over your handlebars when your tires spin out in a mud patch.

Have a need for speed? This sport probably isn't for you. You could spend a few hours mountain biking and only go a few miles.

A durable bike is a must, because it's going to take a pounding. Compared to street riding, there's a lot more demands on the bike. You need good brakes, good gearing.

It's also an activity almost exclusively done by adults. Ironical, considering you're doing things with your bike people told you not to do when you were a kid.



Mountain Biking

编辑手记

10

我很想将这篇编辑手记命名为“写在黎明之前”。按照惯例，开始构思编辑手记的时候，本辑《动力英语》已经完成了诸多环节，这篇文字出来，就大功告成，可以小小地松一口气。

不过写编辑手记真是很让人犯难的事，本来就不是文思敏捷的人，还要在短短时间内炮制一篇文字出来，耗费了无数脑细胞，“灵感”这个捉摸不定的家伙却总是不光顾。

对着电脑发呆，安慰自己“Working Hard to Travel Well”，虽然到目前为止还只是在working hard，不知道哪天能travel well，也只能看看《生活在别处》来过过瘾了。这里的《生活在别处》非指米兰·昆德拉的大作，而是本辑“生活方式”带来的普通家庭的旅行体验：辞掉工作、抛开家当，带着孩子和宠物踏上旅途。够洒脱，我辈俗人，却只能在心底羡慕了。

孔子曾说过“君子欲讷于言而敏于行”，但是在现代社会中，“敏于言”与“敏于行”同样重要。与人交流是现代入必须具备的最重要的技能之一。本期“特别关注”便探讨了这个话题，告诉你“闲聊有益”，没准与你聊得投机的那个人会是你下一个老板，谁知道呢？

“生于80年代”现在似乎已经成为一个标签，这一代人也被冠以the Y generation——新新人类的称号。关于新新人类的种种争论一直没有止歇，有人对他们的一些行为大摇其头，也有人盛赞他们的活力与冲劲。现在，“新新人类”也开始踏入职场，成为The New New Workforce，他们会有怎样的表现，又将获得怎样的评价？本辑“个色观点”中《为新新人类叫好》一文的作者也对新新人类作出了自己的评价。

终于磕磕绊绊地完成了这篇文字，希望不至于令读者太失望。好在对本辑《动力英语》的内容还有些信心。回头看看，每次写编辑手记都免不了对本辑内的文章评点一番，但篇幅所限，不能把所有的精彩文章一一道来，只好留待读者自己去发现了。

责任编辑：

賀丹

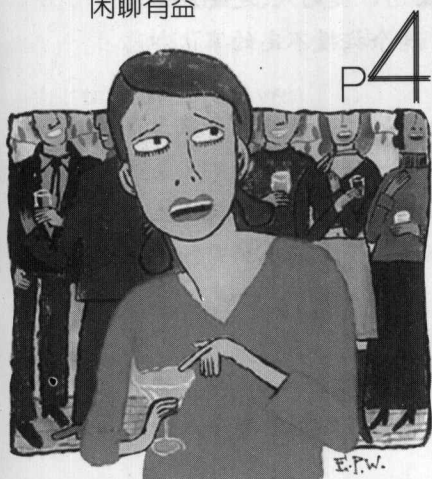
CONTENTS

—— 动力英语 · 2004 年 · 第6辑 ——

Feature Article

特别关注

- 4 And Speaking of Small Talk...
闲聊有益



Opinion

个色观点

- 8 The New New Workforce
为“新新人类”叫好
- 12 Method
小玩意，大智慧
- 15 Blasting Your Own Big Bang
“引爆”你的智慧

Big Shots & Small Potatoes

大人物·小人物

- 18 The Founder of the IKEA Empire
宜家王国的缔造者

Color Spots

调色板

- 21 Charlize Theron—The Rising Star from South Africa
查理兹·塞隆
——从南非兴起的明星



Ways of Life

生活方式

- 24 Working Hard to Travel Well
生活在别处
- 28 Some Creative Ways to Say 'I Love You'
找个机会说“我爱你”
- 31 Entertaining Without Stress
有享受，没压力



H319.4
H394/2

Jean's Column

生活在纽约

- 33 Learning Hindi—Much Harder than Learning Chinese
学习语言的经历

Business News Replay

商讯回放

- 36 Shell—Green or Mean
壳牌石油——环保还是节俭

Business English

Coaching

商务英语辅导

- 38 怎样做好BEC中级写作题(一)

Happy Hour

快乐酒吧

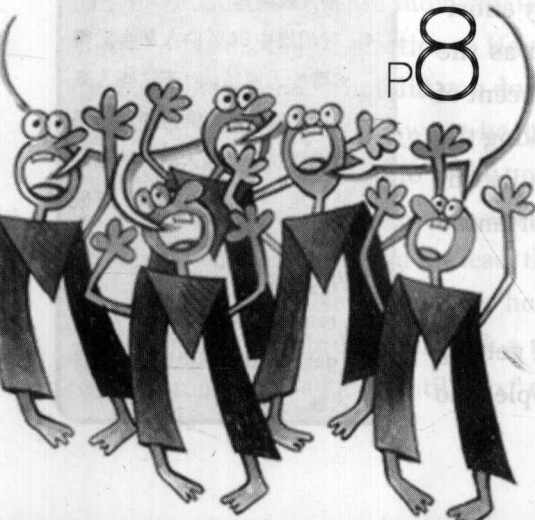
- 42 How to Chuck a Sickie
病假攻略
- 44 Fun with Cars
戏说汽车品牌
- 46 Olympic Events For Around The Home
奥林匹克无处不在

48 Brainy Quote

智者说

Color Spots

调色板



英语学习 系列读物

动力英语

AMBITION ENGLISH

英语学习系列读物 面向职场的全新英语丛书

(京)新登字155号

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

动力英语. 2004年. 第6辑=Ambition English/《英语学习》编辑部编. —北京: 外语教学与研究出版社, 2004 (英语学习系列读物)

ISBN 7-5600-4118-3

I. 动… II. 英… III. 英语—语言读物. 经济
IV. H319.4:F

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2004)第034892号

动力英语

主编 侯毅凌
副主编 龚雁 李家真
编辑 丁飞 孟颖 贺丹
责任编辑 贺丹
封面设计 张薇薇
版式设计 吕茜

出版发行 外语教学与研究出版社 期刊部

社址

网址

电话

E-mail

印刷 北京联华印刷厂

成品尺寸 257x172 1/16

印张 3

版次 2004年6月第1版 2004年6月第1次印刷

书号 ISBN 7-5600-4118-3/H.2008

定价 4.50元

邮购业务:

汇款地址: 北京市西三环北路19号期刊部(100089)

收款人: 柳立婷

注意事项: 请在汇款附言栏内注明购书人姓名、地址、邮编及所购书名、期次。

如有印刷、装订质量问题出版社负责调换

制售盗版必究 举报查实奖励

版权保护办公室举报电话: (010) 88817519

And Speaking of Small Talk¹...



闲聊有益

The art and beauty of
making light conversation

■ By Sally Abrahms

■ 阿奎 选注

别小看了酒会上你身边那个其貌不扬、滔滔不绝的家伙，说不定他就是你正在应聘的那家公司的人事经理，与他的一番天南地北的神侃没准儿能使你明天的面试“一路绿灯”。

Your holiday party schedule is sobering²! You've got two company shindigs — yours and your spouse's³ — and five more invitations from friends.

If you're a smooth talker, you'll find it equally effortless to chat up the CEO standing beside you as the stranger waiting in line at the bar. For the 80 percent of us who find small talk awkward, however, breaking the ice, keeping the conversation going, and tactfully unloading a bore can be tough stuff.⁴ But it's important.

Talking up small talk

Small talk reaps⁵ big benefits. "So much of getting ahead⁶ is about building relationships with people who

1. small talk: 闲谈，聊天。

2. sobering: 令人清醒的。

3. shindig: <美口>盛大社交聚会，盛大舞会；spouse: 配偶（指夫或妻）。

4. 我们当中80%的人都会觉得闲聊令人尴尬，对于这些人来说，打破沉默、维持谈话和巧妙地摆脱一个烦人的家伙也许很困难。break the ice: 打破沉默，活跃气氛；bore: 讨厌的人（或事）。

5. reap: 获得，得到。

6. get ahead: 获得成功，取得进展。

matter, and small talk can accomplish that better than anything," maintains communication expert Jill Bremer. "Ambition and expertise will only get you so far. Charm may be the one quality that gets you ahead."⁷

Whether it's an elevator ride with your boss or a sit down dinner party, social encounters offer great personal and professional opportunities. They can lead to networking, promotions, new jobs and friends. That's because people feel comfortable doing business with people they like and trust. Building a rapport⁸ begins with small talk.

Recent research conducted at Stanford and Harvard Universities found the top skill for the twentieth century is the ability to talk to others.



So, can we talk?

All well and good⁹, you might say. But how does one do it? Smile, be friendly, make direct eye contact, look interested, and you'll be approachable¹⁰ and inviting. Also be an equal opportunity talker. "The smart person treats the spouse with the same warmth and interest as the boss," suggests Mr. Bremer.

A little flattery, unless it's flagrantly phony, can also ingratiate you instantly.¹¹ It could be something as simple as "I love your sweater! Did you knit it?" or "great tie!"

What's the best way to engage someone? Take holiday parties again. Try, "What are your plans for the holidays? Have you seen any good movies lately? I'm looking for a book to read. Any suggestions? Have you tried any good restaurants lately? What did you do before you came here today? or How do you know the hostess?"

Experts instruct clients to "build on what people are interested in. One conversation leads to another and that third chat may be the one that gets you the lead, the sale, the interview."

Barbara Lee of New York, who hosts and attends many cocktail parties, finds small talk a snap. "I try to find a connection and keep at it until I do," she says. "I don't start

7. 雄心壮志和专业技能只能让你走到此种地步，而魅力或许才是让你继续前进的品质。

8. rapport: 融洽(关系), 和谐。

9. all well and good: [表示讥讽或不无勉强地赞同]也好，也行。

10. approachable: 平易近人的，亲切的。

11. 一点点恭维都可以让你一下子讨得欢心，除非是非常明显的虚伪之辞。flagrantly: 极端明显地；phony: 虚伪的；ingratiate: 使得到……的欢心。

Feature Article

off talking about myself. I ask questions because people love to talk about themselves."

"I think of myself as a reporter who is trying to get to know the person and discover where our lives might intersect," Lee explains. "The minute I find that intersection it becomes the connection upon which I build. Then when I see the person again, I can say, 'I remember you were telling me about your son's summer camp. What happened? Or I loved hearing about your vacation to the Rome. Are you going back?' Then when I see them again there's an instant rapport."

The real art in small talk is how you keep the conversation flowing. Good conversationalists don't monopolize the conversation, they orchestrate it.¹² That means they talk less and listen more. If they're in a small group, they make sure everyone is included, drawing in¹³ those who may have just walked up. They ask a question and listen actively to the response. They elaborate on¹⁴ what was just said with comments from their own experience and then — here comes the really important part — they ask another question! The Q & A format is what keeps the flow going.

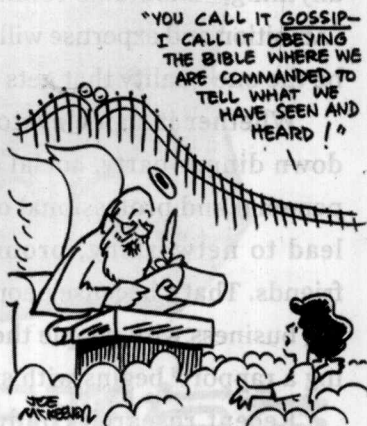
Straight talk

If you're cursed with cement mouth, you don't have to be stuck.¹⁵ Small talk is a skill that can be cultivated. Being informed on local and world events and industry news gives you infinite subjects to discuss. One way to keep current is to read the newspaper and a newsmagazine the day of the event. Some smooth talkers head to the newsstand or online to peruse periodicals so they can interject fascinating or offbeat factoids into a conversation.¹⁶

It's hard to believe, but if all else fails, the weather will work for starting a conversation, especially if it's been unbearably hot or particularly rainy or raw¹⁷.

You don't say!

Off-limit chitchat includes love affair, gossip ("Penny



12. 善谈的人不会一个人说个不停，而是精心地组织谈话。
monopolize: 完全控制，独占；orchestrate: <主美>精心编制，安排，这里指精心组织谈话。
13. draw in: (诱)使……进入(或参加)。
14. elaborate on: 详细说明，详述。
15. 就算你天生拙嘴笨舌，也不必觉得难堪。be cursed with: 受……之苦(害)；stick: 使窘困，使迷惑。
16. 有些健谈者会到报摊或上网阅读杂志，这样他们就能在谈话中加入引人入胜或别具一格的谈资。peruse: 细读，以极其细致的方式阅读或查阅；offbeat: 非正统的，非常规的；factoid: (仅因出现在出版物上而被信以为真的)仿真陈述，这里指引用报纸上的一些消息作为谈资。
17. raw: 湿冷的。

put on so much weight, is she pregnant?"), money problems, marital spats, and depressing issues.¹⁸ Swearing and complaining are also no-no's. Who wants to converse with a whiner?¹⁹

Bag²⁰ the heavy topics, unless it's politics, and then know your audience. If your crowd is conservative, save discussion about the recent release of the abortion pill for your intimate book club. If you're with a group of hunters and bring up the virtues of gun control, you're likely to trigger bad feeling rather than pleasant talk.²¹

If you bring up work, keep it light. Making a business plug at a social event is a faux pas.²² If, for instance, a guest is telling you about his interest in e-books, offering your opinion on copyright and ownership are appropriate. But if you launch into a discussion about how he should upgrade to software you sell, it's not a conversation, it's a tacky pitch.²³

You snooze²⁴, you lose

Okay, you've tried. The weather isn't changing the dull conversational climate nor is the other person's reflections on rare birds in Sri Lanka. If a person is boring, you just haven't found the topic that gets them jazzed²⁵. That may be, but when you're ready to move on, it's important to be gracious. That boring person you rudely leave could be next year's billionaire who could have hired you!

End game²⁶

It's time to circulate.²⁷ Excuse yourself and tell the person you hope to see him again (okay, so it's a white lie²⁸!). Or offer your hand, which signals your departure and say, "I hope you enjoy the rest of the conference (party, meeting)" and move to another group or area.

Some expert advise people who want to penetrate a group to stand close by while they're talking, wait for the right moment, and then ask a question.

What do you think of that idea?

18. 聊天中的禁忌话题包括风流韵事、流言蜚语(“彭妮胖了那么多,她是不是怀孕了?”)、经济问题、夫妇之间的口角以及令人不快的事情。off-limit: 禁止使用的,与下文中的no-no's同义;chitchat: 聊天,闲谈;spat: 口角,争执。

19. 诅咒和抱怨也是要不得的。谁想和一个牢骚满腹的人聊天呢?swear: 诅咒,咒骂;whiner: 悲啼者,哀诉者。

20. bag: 把……装进袋子,此处指“不提及”。

21. 如果你和一些猎人在一起却提及禁枪的好处,就可能引发不快,而不会是愉快的交谈。

22. 在社交场合为自己的生意做广告是很失礼的做法。plug: 推销广告;faux pas: 失礼,失态。

23. tacky: 缺乏教养或风度的,俗气的;pitch: 商品宣传或广告。

24. snooze: 打盹,(尤指在白天)小睡。

25. jazz: 使活泼热烈,使兴奋。

26. end game: 指“结束交谈”。

27. circulate: 流通,循环。此句意思是说:应该跟不同的人交流,发展新的谈话圈子,不能从头到尾只与一个(或一群)人交谈。

28. white lie: 小的、无害的或善意的谎言。

The New New Workforce

为“新新人类”

有人说“Y一代”只懂快餐、流行音乐和电脑游戏，有人说“新新人类”冷血、消极、自以为是，而本文的作者却有不同见解。

■ By Louis Stevenson

■ 风吟 选注

好

It's gratifying¹ to know that other people find my children as fascinating as I do.

Born between 1982 and the new millennium, my three sons are part of the "Y," "Net," or "Millennium" generation—the age cohort that seems to be on every marketer's mind these days.² These up-and-coming³ consumers—approximately 60 to 80 million—are the current focus of many studies and several books.

Having detected some difficulty in marketing various ideas of my own to my recently teen-aged eldest, I undertook a brief review of the literature to see what the pundits could tell me about these strangers in our midst.⁴ Here's what I've learned so far.

They're competent

The experts seem to agree on two central phenomena that shaped the Millennium Generation into their collectively

unique selves⁵: personal computers and working mothers.

In his book *Growing Up Digital*, author Don Scott makes much of the fact

1. gratifying: 令人快意的，予人满足的。

2. 我的三个儿子出生在1980至2000年之间，分别属于“Y一代”，“网络一代”和“千禧一代”——似乎每个商人都在他们这个年龄的人身上动脑筋。
the "Y," "Net," or "Millennium" generation: 分别译作“Y一代”、“网络一代”和“千禧一代”（这三个称呼均指20世纪70年代末、80年代初以后出生的人，在时间上略有细分，以“Y一代”最早，而“千禧一代”最晚）；cohort: （从人口统计角度看）有共同点的一组人（如同年出生等）；on every marketer's mind: 指商人们都在想办法向这一代年轻人推销商品，因为他们是当前市场消费的主力。

3. up-and-coming: <口>日见重要的。

4. 在我刚刚十几岁的长子“推销”我的多种想法屡受挫后，我简单地查了一下资料，想看看专家是如何描述我们中的这些陌生人的。literature: （关于某一学科或专题的）文献，图书资料；pundit: 专家，学者。

5. selves: self的复数，本质，个性。

that members of the "Net Generation," as he calls it, never knew life without digital technology. ("That's not a mouse," my input-device-wielding toddler once told me when I showed him a picture of the rodent.⁶)

Their life-long relationship with digital equipment has given these young people an unusual sense of competence. There really is no historical precedent for this generation's capacity to outshine adults in the form of retrieving files from Mom's crashed disk or programming the VCR to tape Dad's game.⁷

The generational trait for self-sufficiency has been nurtured in households headed by dual-earner or single parents. With 60 percent of mothers of children under six years of age working outside the home, these kids became proficient microwavers at an early age. And they have spent substantially more time than their parents' generations did performing tasks — cooking, cleaning, child care —

6. 有一次当我给孩子看一张啮齿动物(指老鼠)的图片时,那正操纵着输入装置(指鼠标)、还在蹒跚学步的孩子说:"那不是鼠标。" toddler: 学步的儿童; rodent: 啮齿目动物。英文中“老鼠”与“鼠标”是同一个词(mouse),其实“我”向孩子展示的是老鼠的图片,而孩子只见过鼠标,没见过老鼠,所以会说图片上的“不是mouse(鼠标)”。
7. 在恢复妈妈坏了的磁盘里的文件或调好录像机为爸爸的比赛录像这些方面来说,这一代人的能力的确是史无前例地胜过成年人。outshine: (在优点、机智等)胜过,比……更出色; VCR: 即 Video Cassette Recorder, 录像机。
8. 他们花在做饭、打扫、照顾小孩上的时间比父母那代人多得多,而从前这些都是待在家里的妈妈们的活儿。relegate: 交付,托付。
9. Diablo II: “暗黑破坏神2”,一个著名网络游戏的名称。

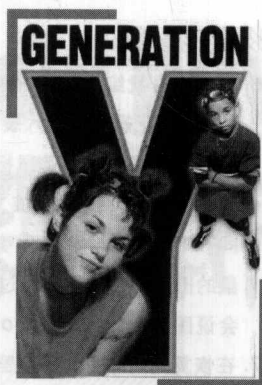
previously relegated to stay-at-home moms.⁸

They're diverse

In 1976, 85 percent of the U.S. teen-age population was white; today that figure has shrunk to 67 percent. In a recent poll, three-quarters of the children surveyed reported friendships with people of different ethnic origins than their own. This, along with Internet access that allows them to play Diablo II⁹ with peers in Sweden and Brazil, has made these kids generally more tolerant of racial and cultural differences than were their elders.

Their tastes and ideas are equally diverse. "In the 1970s there seemed to be two types of teenagers: hippies and





traditionalists¹⁰," explains Mr. Scott. "Now you can find 10 or 20 different factions on every issue. Choice is like oxygen to them."

They're interactive

They're interactive

When I took my boys to a special exhibit at a local museum recently, a well-meaning docent¹¹ attempted to guide their tour of the show. While Dylan, 13, managed to hide his impatience under a polite veneer of ohs and uh-huhs, Eliot, 7, simply turned on his heel and walked away.¹² "Not interactive enough," Dylan explained later.

I don't think the word "interactive" was

part of my vocabulary until I was well into my 30s, but the Nintendo¹³ Generation expects mutual interchange in every aspect of life. In contrast to the relatively passive entertainments of their elders — sitcoms, Monday Night Football — they participate in role-playing games where they direct the story line and in computer and video simulation games in which they run their own cities and assemble their own professional ball teams.¹⁴ Educational computer programs let them choose their own learning paths and provide immediate feedback on their progress.

"We Boomers¹⁵ turned away from our parents, who were unable to give us advice or gave us advice that didn't work," says a demographer. "But our children will have lifestyles that are much more similar to ours. So we'll be able to help them. They'll want to belong to us."

They're going to change the work culture

Although the oldest members of the

10. hippie: 嬉皮士 (青年颓废派, 对社会现实不满, 信奉非暴力和神秘主义, 实行群居, 穿奇装异服); traditionalist: 传统主义者。

11. well-meaning: 善意的, 好心的; docent: 讲解员, 讲师。

12. 13岁的Dylan勉强将他的不耐烦藏在客气的“哦”和“啊哈”之下, 而7岁的Eliot则掉头走开了。veneer: 外表, 虚饰; turn on one's heel: 转身离去。

13. Nintendo: “任天堂”, 日本一家著名的电脑游戏软件、游戏机生产公司。Nintendo Generation指玩着“任天堂”公司推出的游戏长大的一代人。

14. 和父辈们相对被动的娱乐方式——电视连续剧、星期一晚上的橄榄球赛——不同, 他们参加角色扮演游戏, 自己控制情节发展, 在电脑和视频仿真游戏中, 他们管理自己的城市, 组建自己的职业球队。sitcom: situation comedy, 连续剧; Monday Night Football: 美国职业橄榄球赛季中通常每星期只打一场, 比赛多在星期日晚上举行, 美国人常说的“Monday Night Football”就是指星期日晚上的橄榄球赛; story line: (小说、剧本等的) 故事情节。

15. boomer: 即 baby boomer, 生育高峰期 (美国二战后 1947-1961 年间) 出生的人。

Millennium Generation are only now embarking on their careers, they are well acquainted with work.¹⁶ A new study by the International Labor Organization found 53 percent of American teenagers aged 16-19 working any given week. First-hand experience, greater involvement in household chores, and exposure to home-working, self-employed or telecommuting adults have combined to strongly influence this generation's attitudes about work.


The study showed that more than two-thirds of young people aged 18-24 are concerned about finding a good job in the future. They don't worry about being able to find work; they worry about finding too much of it. In a tight labor market, companies push workers—especially energetic, eager-to-prove-themselves younger workers—capacities to the limits.¹⁷

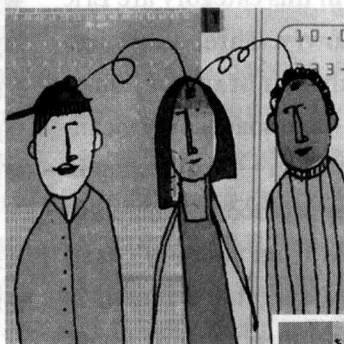
There is also another point: an AFL¹⁸ survey of young workers found them expressing a desire to have more time to spend with their families and supporting government intervention to require employers to provide benefits that would ease the load on working parents.

As a working mother of sons, I am especially gratified to note the generational sea change¹⁹ that has occurred among the males of the species in this study: only 67 percent of men in their 40s listed "having a work schedule which allows me to spend time with my family" as an important component of a job. For men in their 20s, that

figure rises to 82 percent (compared to 83 percent for women in their 20s and 82 percent for women in their 40s).

And, in an extremely recent poll, three out of three boys say that spending time with your kids is more important than earning enough money to buy them a Playstation 2²⁰.

The kids are alright. 



16. embark on: 着手, 从事; be acquainted with: 对……熟悉。

17. 在供不应求的劳动力市场, 公司总是迫使员工最大限度地发挥才能——尤其是那些精力充沛、渴望证明自己的年轻员工。tight: (市场) 供不应求的, (商品) 紧缺的。

18. AFL: American Federation of Labor, 美国劳工联合会。

19. sea change: 突变, 突发性彻底转变。

20. 这句是作者的幽默, "an extremely recent poll" 实际上指“我”对三个儿子的“民意调查”。“调查”结果表明三个孩子都认为父母多抽时间陪他们比赚钱给他们买游戏机更重要。Playstation 2: 一种家庭用游戏机, 日本索尼公司生产。

你有没有想过，原来洗涤灵的包装也可以做得这么好看呢？

If you have never given much thought to the aesthetic qualities of your dish soap, you are not alone. What's a little more surprising is that a person who has given a lot of thought to this subject would not be alone, either. Two people in this category are Eric Ryan and Adam Lowry. Three years ago they launched Method, a brand of home-cleaning products—dish soap, spray cleaners, hand wash and so on—in one shop in San Francisco. Today Method is available in thousands of stores from coast to coast, including the chains Target and Linens 'n Things.¹ The most noticeable thing about Method products, and their chief selling point, is that they look really cool.

Who cares, right? It's dish soap, for crying out loud²—it gets stuffed under the sink between the rusty Brillo pads and the boric acid.

That defeatist attitude is exactly what Ryan and Lowry set out to change. Ryan,

如果你从没仔细想过洗涤灵的美学属性，那像你这样的人并不是独一无二。让人更为惊讶的是，为这个问题（洗涤灵的美学属性问题）大伤脑筋的人也不只一个。埃里克·赖安和亚当·罗里就是其中的两个。三年前在旧金山的一家店铺里，他们推出了一个日用清洁产品品牌——Method，其产品包括洗涤灵、喷雾清洁剂、洗手液等等。如今Method产品在全美数千家商店都有销售，包括Target和Linens 'n Things连锁店。Method产品最引人注目的地方，也是它们的主要卖点，就是外观很酷。

谁在乎这个呢？这可是洗涤灵，我的天——洗涤灵是要被塞到洗涤槽底下，放在锈迹斑斑的Brillo牌清洁块和硼酸中间的。

这种失败主义的态度正是赖安和罗里试图改变的。31岁的赖安过去做过市场推广，曾经为Gap、Saturn和

1. from coast to coast: 〈美〉从大西洋岸到太平洋岸，在（美国）全国；Target和Linens 'n Things均为美国知名的连锁店。
2. for crying out loud: 〈口〉[用来表示惊奇、愤怒或强烈的请求]我的天啊，岂有此理，求求你。

Method

■ By Rob Walker

■ 慕蕾 选译

小玩意，大智慧

who is 31 and a former marketer who had done work for the Gap, Saturn and other brands, was appalled at the mundane state of home-care products in general. We obviously take a great interest in the places we live, he says, and yet, "When you walk down the aisle dedicated to products to take care of your home, it's one of the most low-interest categories in the world."

True enough, and perhaps a powerful cue to toss a Palmolive³ in the shopping cart and get on with your life, but Ryan saw an opportunity. What if you could do something different with home-care products? Soon he was working with his friend Lowry, 29, a chemical engineer, creating sprays and soaps that were environmentally safe, smelled good and — crucially — came in packaging that looked so striking it practically demanded to be left out in the open. Before making the leap to national stores, they brought in the celebrated designer Karim Rashid, who among other things had created a hit trash can sold at Target. Rashid came up with a design for a dish-soap container that squirts from the bottom through a clever nonleaking spout. Clear, filled with different, colorful soaps and shaped like an hourglass, the bottle looks like a sculpture and won a design-distinction award from the magazine *I.D.*⁴ It also looks disconcertingly large, underscoring its status as a proud object to be admired, not shamefully hidden away.

Form preceded function. "Design is a fast way to make these products more high interest," Ryan says, to the target



其他一些品牌工作过。他对日用品总体上的单调状况感到惊讶。他说，我们显然非常在意我们生活的地方，但是“当你走过商店卖日用品的过道时，那简直是世界上最无趣的地方之一。”

确实如此，也许这还是把Palmolive扔进购物筐然后就继续过日子的充分暗示，但赖安看到了机会。如果你能在日用品上弄出点新花样会怎样呢？很快他就和自己的朋友、29岁的化学工程师罗里一起开发了环保、芳香的喷雾剂和洗涤剂，而且——最重要的是——它的包装非常引人注目，实在是需要摆在外面。在大规模推向全国的商店之前，他们让知名设计师加林·雷西德加入进来。除了其他作品，雷西德曾经设计了一个在Target连锁店热销的风行一时的垃圾桶。雷西德想出了一个洗涤剂包装的设计：液体通过一个精巧的不渗漏的喷嘴从瓶子底部挤出，瓶子是透明的，状如沙漏，装着不同的各种颜色的液体，看起来像个雕塑作品。这个瓶子还为此赢得了《国际设计杂志》的突出设计大奖。它还大得突出，强调了它是个令人骄傲的东西，应该（摆在外面）受人崇敬而不该让人觉得丢脸而将它藏起来。

形式重于功用。赖安说，对于其目标顾客群“先进的持家者”而言，“设计能更快地让这些产品引起人们更强烈的兴趣”。环保是“目标”，听起来他仍然为竟然达到了这个目标而惊讶。但形式才是让这个东西每年的

3. Palmolive: 指 Colgate-Palmolive 高露洁 - 棕榄公司，专门生产家庭护理用品，这里用来指代该类产品。

4. *I.D.*: *International Design Magazine*，《国际设计杂志》。

audience of "progressive domestics." Environmental safety was "a goal," one that he still sounds almost surprised to have achieved. But form is what really sells some \$10 million of the stuff annually. Much of the feedback from enthusiastic customers boils down to⁵: "I kind of thought it wouldn't work, but at least I'll have this cool container left over. Then I got it home and used it, and I'm shocked at how well it actually works."

One reaction to this is to wonder why somebody would buy a cleaning product that they were frankly skeptical about simply because of its container.

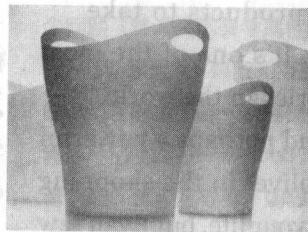
Perhaps this is more evidence of the endless craving for status symbols, or of how cunning design seduces and manipulates us. But those explanations seem too easy. Virginia Postrel, an economics writer, does not address Method specifically in her recent book *The Substance of Style*, but her thesis provides useful context. Praising aesthetic pleasure as a legitimate value, she observes that the more we see style, the more we recognize it and want it in our lives. Ugliness stands out, she writes, so "we demand better design."

It's the responsibility bit that gives you pause⁶. Method products raise the possibility that, stylistically speaking, your dish liquid is not measuring up⁷. Which is, frankly, annoying: must even the most mundane household object rise up and join the tyranny of Good Design? Ryan seems puzzled by this line of questioning. "It just makes you get enjoyment out of an object that you never expected to get enjoyment from, because it makes you smile when you look at it, or it's fun to touch," he says politely. "So it's not that it just looks beautiful, but when you actually interact with it, it makes a chore a little less of a chore. Who wouldn't want that?"

销售额达到1千万美元的根源所在。从狂热的顾客们那里得到的大部分回馈可以归结为：“我在想这不会好用，但至少我能剩下这个很酷的瓶子。然后我就买回家用，我很惊讶它原来那么好用。”

对这种情形的一个反应就是，人们为

什么会仅仅因为一个瓶子而去买一种他们其实并不信任的清洁产品。也许这更加印证了人们对身份象征的无限渴望，或精巧设计是如何诱导和操



纵我们的。但是这些解释似乎过于简单。经济学作家维吉尼亚·波斯托在新书《潮流的实质》中并没有明确谈及 Method，但她的观点为我们提供了有用的依据。她赞扬美学享受是合理的价值观，评论说我们对潮流了解越多，在生活中就越能识别并且希望得到它。她写道，丑陋很惹眼，所以“我们需要更好的设计。”

责任的部分会让你犹豫。Method 产品提高了你的洗涤灵从形式上无法与之相比的可能性。坦率地讲，这让人讨厌：难道最普通的日用品也必须提高并加入好设计的圈子里吗？赖安似乎对这种问题摸不着头脑。“这只是让你从一个你从没期望得到享受的东西上得到享受，因为当你看到它的时候，它让你微笑，或者触摸的时候感到很有趣，”他礼貌地说。“所以它不只是看起来漂亮，当你使用它的时候，它还让单调的家务变得轻松一点了。谁不希望得到这样的东西呢？”

5. boil down to: 表明是，归结为。

6. give pause: 使犹豫。

7. measure up: 合格，符合标准。