

Negotiating home decor

If your somewhat aged lawnmower still cuts the grass, is it necessary to buy a new one? I think not.

If your VCR still plays and records, should you trade it in simply because it is a few years old? Don't be silly.

I apply the same theory to home decorating, where, apparently in our house, I hold the minority opinion (How can a house with two people have a minority?) that redecorating is fine as long as it's done once every quarter century.

Perhaps it's because I'm (a) lazy (b) useless around the house (c) cheap or (d) all of the above, but I cringe when wifey gets that "let's redecorate" look in her eye—the look she had this past weekend.

In one breath, wifey suggested she would like to see a new kitchen floor, drapes for the living room, dining room and bedroom, new china cabinet, curio, couch, loveseat and new wallpaper for at least three rooms. It was at this point I reminded her my Super 7 lottery ticket was a LOSING ticket.

I suggested we negotiate the redecorating issue and find some common ground. I admitted moving furniture to different spots in a room may not classify as "redecorating" while wifey relented that if we were to do all the projects she wanted it'd be cheaper to move.

As is the case in all peace talks, negotiations soon boiled down to the crucial items. First on the list was a new china cabinet-curio. I agreed the pseudo-wood monstrosity we bought 20 years ago hadn't, over time, magically begun to match any other piece of furniture and was no longer large enough to house wifey's knicks and knacks.

I argued the couch was in fine condition and it would be a shame to get rid of it now

THIS
'N
THAT



John McGhie

that the dogs had finally dented the cushions enough to fit their bodies. The kitchen floor was removed from the agenda and deferred to next spring. Since we currently don't have a loveseat I argued that if we have survived this long without one we should, by logical conclusion, be able to continue to survive without one. The wallpaper issue was also put on hold.

After a short time we had reached a mutual agreement on the china cabinet, deferred some items and taken others off the negotiation list. If only the Israelis and Palestinians could follow our example, I thought.

We then visited wifey's favourite furniture store where, it should be noted, I found the ideal china cabinet. However, as we were leaving, wifey spotted a living room set—including lamps—which immediately gained her stamp of approval. I protested loudly, pointing out these items had not been agreed upon during our earlier negotiations and the dogs would never be able to climb on the back of the big-cushioned couch.

She countered she was "just thinking".

It was then a salesman, a veteran of these marital détentes, sidled up to me with a knowing look and uttered five words that indicated he has seen how countless of these husband-wife discussions usually end.

"See you next weekend, pal."



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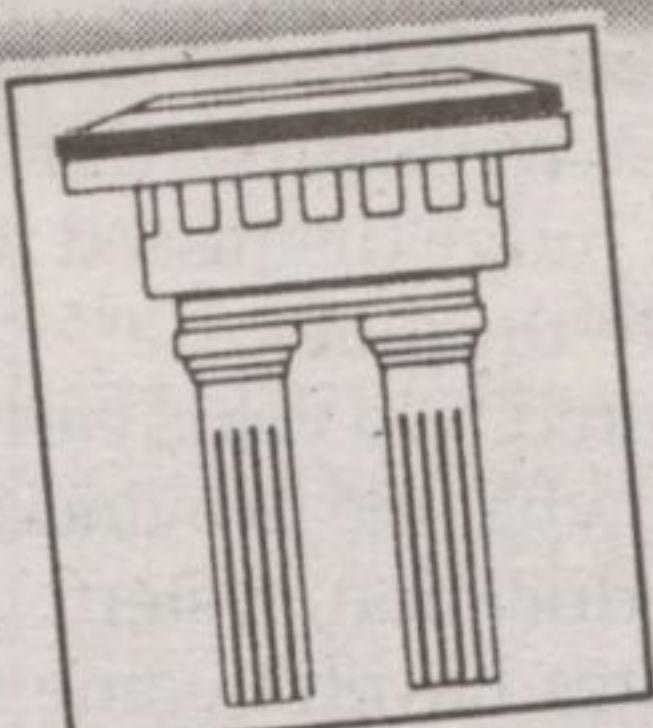
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A: To live longer.

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