

## THE LIGHTER SIDE OF THE NEWS

## 'Clean reader' app or just good ol' censorship?



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**H**ave we hit a low point with high tech? Let's scan the headlines:

■ "Some parents say 'No' to phones for teens": Apparently, this is now a rare enough event that it makes "news."

■ "10 killer apps you shouldn't live without": Does one of them alert you to silly, overwrought headlines? In fact, some of these "killer apps" you should definitely live without, such as the one that "Remove swear words from eBooks" with an app called Clean Reader.

The article author argues for its use by saying: "Have you ever had a perfectly good book ruined by inappropriate language? It's a real bummer when you're in the middle of an interesting story, and you come across vulgar words or phrases that you'd rather avoid. Luckily, you can finish the story without reading those words you

don't like." (The app offers "Clean," "Cleaner," or "Squeaky Clean.") Aaaieeee. How \*^\$!&\*^#@! phony. And wrong. Go ahead and read "Catcher in the Rye" again instead. For crying out loud.

■ "Huge iPad buyer demands Apple refund": That would be the Los Angeles Unified School District. Apple and a partner were supposed to provide curriculum to be used on the iPad. The district spent millions and millions to get the project underway, but when the launch came, only pieces of the curriculum were available. And then: In weeks, students hacked the devices to get around their security, allowing them to freely browse the Web instead of using the devices for education, the Los Angeles Times reported. Meanwhile, scores of the devices have gone missing. Sigh. Rarely is the question asked: Is our educators learning?

■ "Why do humans have chins?": So men can stroke them thoughtfully while stalling for time to come up with an answer? And women can indignantly jut their's out in response? Or vice versa.

■ "37 tons of dead fish removed from Rio Olympic rowing venue":

This may spark the first call to boycott the Olympics on the grounds of health concerns. The stench is reportedly stronger than the sewage and garbage that caused it in the first place. Let the games begin?

■ "Dogs and people bond through eye contact": Sure. But not exclusively. What about guide dogs who bond with their blind owners, and regular dogs who bond with autistic children, who have a hard time making eye contact? And blind dogs who also manage to bond with people? Such a study seems to underplay canines' famous olfactory abilities, among others. Such as the ability to bond with the treat giver.

■ "Ben & Jerry: We don't need this stupid tax cut": Congress, listen to the super wealthy ice cream guys. Like the B&J ice cream flavor, the proposal to get rid of the estate tax is "Half Baked." Those of us not worth at least \$5.4 million, or \$10.8 million for a couple, will retreat to our bowls of B&J "Chocolate Therapy," "Americone Dream" and "What a Cluster" ice cream.

Will someone invent an app that will add more swear words to a book?

