

Signs of the Times (350 words)

Could it be that I have an unusual affliction that affects my perception of signs so that they amuse me, but make little sense? A vision impairment? A teeny slippage of the grey cells.

I re-read the words, expecting that I have made unfortunate additions, omissions, or juxtapositions of words, but no amount of scrutiny changes the text.

A few samples will illustrate my condition.

On the highway, a sign not yet in service, but prepared to light up and read:

*"You are overweight. Use next exit."*

Once this is in use, I shall have to find another route.

Again on the highway, fortunately not my turn:

*"All Lanes Closed. Expect delays."*

Delays? I should think that would bring traffic to a dead halt.

The fine print on one of my credit card statements:

*"We reserve the right to not assess any or all finance charges for any given billing period."*

I must give my credit card company their due; they have shown great restraint in exercising this particular right and keep right on assessing any and all finance charges for every given billing period.

These instructions came with a desk-top fountain and picture frame:

*"...keep away from moisture"*

A moisture-free fountain is a concept I am still wrestling with.

This advice appears on the automatic teller machine after I've made a withdrawal:

*"Please take all your cash."*

In case I had an attack of altruism and considered leaving a few bills behind for the next customer, this was just the nudge I needed to bring me back to my senses.

This malady sometimes extends to hearing. One memorable television ad I heard went like this:

*"Tune in tonight to see what your favorite soap stars are like when the cameras aren't rolling."*

Now, how exactly would that work?

On the radio:

*"The law firm that attained the highest dollar amount for... is also the firm that attained the 2nd highest."*

Still trying to get my mind around that one.

Well, whatever the cause of this unusual condition of mine, I believe I'll defer treatment and see what comes next.

