



A new feature here in **Fortune Land, Sears Tower Elevator Chicken** is a mental exercise wherein you try to imagine two (or more) people sharing an elevator ride down the Sears Tower, and guess who would bail out first. Today's contestants: Judith Martin (aka Miss Manners) and James Carville (aka The Ragin' Cajun)

A brief profile in the latest (July 30, 2007) *New Yorker* magazine brings us up to date on Ms Martin's fascination with Venice. This little aside is precious:

As for modern-day Venice, yes, it's sinking, expensive, and mobbed with rude tourists who are despised by the ever-shrinking local population. (Tiresome observations all, in Miss Manners's view.) Recently, the local legislature proposed a scheme to charge visitors more than residents for the use of public toilets. "One would think," Miss Manners writes, "that a city with liquid streets would not want to tempt people it had already branded as being uncultured and crude."

[Decorum Dept.: When in Venice: The Talk of the Town: The New Yorker](#)

But more pertinent to today's game is this critique:

"I brought back the word 'etiquette,'" she said, explaining her resentment of the idea that "civil comportment is some sort of quaint form of behavior that we've grown beyond. Certainly not!" People don't realize, Miss Manners said, that to the Greeks morals and manners were topics as worthy of inquiry as the principles of democratic society. "Just be yourself." Now, what does that mean? Carving her carpaccio with X-Acto precision, she lamented the popular sentiment that knowing which fork to use is a trifling matter lorded about only by mean-hearted snobs. "If you were going to go live in Japan, would you learn how to use chopsticks?"

How would Mr. Carville respond to that, one wonders? Well, let's look at how he responded to a bit of well reasoned criticism from his own wife, Mary Matalin:

"It stretches any credulity to believe that the White House could not stop this rabid dog. He's not my husband when I speak of him as a frothing, rabid dog. He's clearly a front for the president ... If anyone is close to obstruction of justice, it's the president of these United States whose pit bull is out front."

— Radio talk show host and former Republican strategist Mary Matalin on "Fox News Sunday," describing her spouse, Democratic consultant James Carville, who has attacked the integrity of Whitewater independent counsel Kenneth Starr (The Washington Post, December

9, 1996).

James Carville's reaction to hearing of Mary Matalin's comment: "I went home and bit her" (The Washington Post, December 11, 1996).

[James Carville - George Loper - Rogue's Gallery](#)

Hmm. This one is close.

**Pawn** thinks it has to go to Carville, by a nose. He isn't used to backing down, and we think he would most surely chase Miss Manners screaming from the car.