

Jon And Kate, What About The 8?

You may have heard all the brouhaha about the TLC reality show *Jon and Kate Plus Eight* that's been in the news lately. If not, a quick re-cap: Jon and Kate Gosselin were a young couple who had a set of twins and a set of sextuplets, giving them a grand total of 8 kids before either one of them had even hit the age of 30. They filmed a show for TLC chronicling their lives with all the little ones, and the special was such a success that they soon found themselves celebrities with their own reality show. Apparently the sudden mega-stardom caused too much strain on the family, and the marriage did not survive. Amidst accusations of infidelity and other ugly, yet very public issues, the couple filed for divorce earlier this year. Scarcely a move has been made by either party since without full coverage from the media.

I watched a few episodes of the show back when the Gosselin's were one big happy family, mostly because it was interesting to watch such a large family function as well as they did, err, as well as they seemed to function anyway. But ever since the big family fall-out, things have been getting increasingly worse for the clan. TLC announced yesterday that Jon would no longer be a major part of the show, and they were re-naming it *Kate Plus Eight*. Ouch. There are millions of people who follow the plight of the Gosselins; there are Kate fans and there are Jon fans, and then there are people who are mainly concerned for the welfare of the 8 kids. The media has certainly vilified Jon, though it's difficult to determine how much of it he has done to himself. No matter how much the accusations about Kate's controlling and domineering nature tend to be proven true by her behavior, she is always able to appear to be the better person through her public statements.

Maybe she really is the better person of the two, or perhaps she is more intelligent or has a better spokesperson advising her than Jon has. But whatever the case, one thing is clear – those 8 kids they created together should not have to be caught in the middle of all of this, it's disgusting.

The reason I decided to join in on the media storm and write about this is because of the latest chapter that broke yesterday – when TLC kicked Jon off the show. His response? He legally banned all production crews from the house he still co-owns with Kate, where the children live and the parents take turns visiting. He has threatened to slap TLC with criminal charges if they come onto his property. He hasn't said whether this includes a ban on filming the children, but one can guess, based upon his actions, that it's no longer ok with Jon that his kids star in a reality show. It's completely understandable – many people, including child psychology experts, etc, were constantly saying how unhealthy it was for the 8 kids to be filmed on a daily basis. But Jon (along with Kate, back when they actually agreed on something) was always a staunch defender of the show and the fact that he and Kate had the kids' best interests at heart. But now that Jon got himself kicked off the show, it looks like he's decided that reality tv is no longer a healthy lifestyle for his children. And that's fine and even makes sense, but one does have to question his intentions when his legal action to stop the show comes the very day that news is released that he is no longer a part of the show himself. As a well-written gossip column stated, "Jon is acting like the kid who didn't get picked to be on a team for the neighborhood baseball game, so he's taking his ball and going home." Whatever his intentions, I am among the many former fans who just want what is best for the 8 kids while the rest of it goes away. But before that happens, I am very interested to hear the spin Jon puts on his reasons for his actions – all of them. He is giving a live interview on Larry King Live tonight on CNN, and I'm almost ashamed to admit that I will be watching (the

midnight replay of course – there is no way this would ever take precedent over a new episode of The Office). Then again, why bother watching the interview when I know the “highlights” will be shoved down our throats for the next few days – or at least until Jon’s careless behavior provides enough fodder to make yet another story...

Some Things I Should Clear Up...

Whenever I take a road trip, I find myself wondering about random things. Since I don’t have access to the internet while I’m on vacation to look up these random things, I make a list to look up when I return home. Here is some of my look-up list from the trip to New York we just took:

– Are there bears in Pennsylvania? YES! I was wondering this as we were driving through their beautiful wooded hills, but I was still surprised to learn that there are black bears (who aren’t always black) in PA. In fact, bears can be found in 50 of PA’s 67 counties!

– Where did the airplane land in the Hudson River a few months ago? As I was looking at the Hudson from our hotel room, I was wondering if we were viewing the very spot (or crossing it on the ferry) where the plane landed. I found that it was just north of where we were. We probably would have seen it happen from our room; definitely from the boardwalk behind the hotel, and definitely if we had been on the ferry.

– What was that story about the chicken who lived for many years without his head? I don’t know how this one came up in conversation, but it did, so here are the details as printed

in wikipedia.com: On Monday, September 10, 1945 at 6:45AM PST, farmer Lloyd Olsen of Fruita, Colorado, had his mother-in-law around for supper and was sent out to the yard by his wife to bring back a chicken. Olsen failed to completely decapitate the five-and-a-half month old bird named Mike. The axe missed the jugular vein, leaving one ear and most of the brain stem intact. On the first night after the decapitation Mike slept with his severed head under his wing. Despite Olsen's botched handiwork, Mike was still able to balance on a perch and walk clumsily; he even attempted to preen and crow, although he could do neither. After the bird did not die, a surprised Mr. Olsen decided to continue to care permanently for Mike, feeding him a mixture of milk and water via an eyedropper; he was also fed small grains of corn. Mike occasionally choked on his own mucus, which the Olsen family would clear using a syringe. When used to his new and unusual center of mass, Mike could easily get himself to the highest perches without falling. His crowing, though, was less impressive and consisted of a gurgling sound made in his throat, leaving him unable to crow at dawn. Mike also spent his time preening and attempting to peck for food with his neck. Being headless did not keep Mike from putting on weight; at the time of his partial beheading he weighed two and a half pounds, but at the time of his death this had increased to nearly eight pounds. In March 1947, at a motel in Phoenix on a stopover while traveling back home from tour, Mike started choking in the middle of the night. As the Olsens had inadvertently left their feeding and cleaning syringes at the sideshow the day before, they were unable to save Mike. Lloyd Olsen claimed that he had sold the bird off, resulting in stories of Mike still touring the country as late as 1949. Post mortem, it was determined that the axe blade had missed the carotid artery and a clot had prevented Mike from bleeding to death. Although most of his head was severed, most of his brain stem and one ear was left on his body. Since basic functions (breathing, heart-rate, etc) as well as most of a chicken's reflex actions are controlled by the brain stem,

Mike was able to remain quite healthy. Other sources, including the Guinness Book of World Records, say that the chicken's severed esophagus passage could not take in enough air properly to be able to breathe; and therefore choked to death in the motel. So Mike the headless chicken lived for about 18 months without a head.

– Kent State Massacre – We saw lots of signs for Kent State on the trip, and we decided there must be a few campuses. We were wondering where the massacre happened, what year, how many people were killed, and what happened to the murderer. Kent State happened in Kent, Ohio (a little bit outside of Cleveland and Akron – so that was the same Kent State University we saw signs for). 4 students were killed and 9 wounded, some paralyzed for life. But what makes this massacre significant is that the students were shot by the Ohio National Guard – not a lone gunman gone crazy. The 3 adults in the car decided that if Kent State would have happened in more recent times, it would not be nearly as historically significant because sadly, there are many more of these types of massacres nowadays. However, I don't think any of us realized that it was the National Guard doing the shooting – which I should have; I remember studying this in Sociology class, but apparently the knowledge didn't stick...

– Murder in Small Town X – Do you remember this reality show? It was basically like a reality show of a murder mystery; there were actors, witnesses and victims. I thought it sounded cool, but I didn't watch it when it aired even though I wanted to. I was in the middle of moving out of the state I grew up in for the first time and busy with my first 2-year-old. The show was cancelled, but what was significant about it was this: The final episode aired on September 4, 2001 – exactly one week before the infamous terrorist attack on the US – 9/11. And the last contestant standing, the guy who won the jeep and the \$250,000 prize, Angel Juarbe, was a firefighter from New York who perished in the attacks one week after the

final episode of the show aired.

– What the heck does “poppy” mean? In a bizarre episode I forgot to put in my trip diary, my husband pulled up to a full serve gas pump in New Jersey without realizing it. The attendant came out and tried to take the nozzle away from my husband, who said, “I already swiped my card.” – he had no idea what this guy was doing since he didn’t know he was in full serve. The attendant snapped, “Stop asking so many questions!” and proceeded to pump the gas and kept calling my bewildered (and very tired) husband “poppy” and “boss”. As we pulled away from the gas station, we noticed we had in fact been in the full serve area, but that still didn’t clear up the mystery of all the alleged questions my husband asked and what the heck poppy means. I remembered an episode of Cops I had seen where a perp kept calling the cop “poppy”, and the cop was getting extremely irritated. “Stop calling me Poppy!”, he said, to which the perp replied, “I’m sorry poppy” and it kept going on and on like that until the cop finally charged the guy with something and hauled him off to jail, probably because they guy really just couldn’t help himself from saying “Poppy”. So what does it mean? When I looked it up, all I found was stuff about flowers and something about a nickname for a grandpa (sorry Hon!). But I tried changing the spelling, because it seemed like the guy was speaking spanish, so I tried to spell it in Spanish, and I came up with Papi. When I looked that up, I was scared about the results – it was one of those wiki-answers places, so here is a direct quote: *“To me, papi means: Daddy, Baby, My Love...you say it to the boyfriends, husbands, and sons...if you are in a committed relationship. If you are single, then to a man you have an interest in getting to know alot better.”* Giggling, I read this quote to my husband, and his eyes got really wide and he insisted that I do further research on the subject. I don’t have a lot of time on my hands for this kind of stuff, so I found the fact that different cultures have different meaning for Hispanic terms, and apparently it’s

common for Dominicans to call other males “papi”. But it seemed to be condescending when the attendant was saying it, and I’m not sure I even have the correct spelling of papi. Anyone want to offer any help on this? Any spanish-speakers out there? Mary, you love a good mystery, I hear ☐

Well, anyway, that’s about everything on the list, or all I have time to put into a blog post, anyway. I hope you learned something, least of all the randomness 3 adults talk about on a very long road trip when the kids are asleep! Some day, I will probably have internet right there in the car with me to look up these things. In fact, I will probably be *blogging* on the road trip – let’s just hope I’m not the one driving!

The Mole – FINALE!!!

SPOILER ALERT!!! *The following blog post contains a synopsis of the final episode of the ABC reality show, The Mole. Do not read if you don’t want to know what happened!*

Last night’s Mole finale did not disappoint. Well, maybe for those of us who got 0 points in the tangents.org mole poll... But as far as dragging out the results episode like most reality shows do, the Mole was not guilty of this. The episode was only an hour long, they still had one elimination to reveal, and they revealed the winner of the game without dramatizing things by adding a commercial break. Turns out, good guy Mark took home the cash, all so his wife can stay home with the kids and not work anymore (be careful what you wish for; sometimes I wish *I* could go back to work and get away from the daily chaos of the chorus of crying kids!). Then, it was time to reveal the mole... but first a dramatic commercial break, of course! We returned from commercial, and

they milked it even further with some more dramatic pausing... and then we learned – CRAIG is the MOLE!

At least I don't have to go back and count up points for our tangents.org mole poll – I believe Jamiahsh is the only one who ever guessed Craig, therefore, with 1 point, he is the winner of our tangents mole poll!

After the big reveal, which happened quite early in the hour I might add, compared to the way they've done things in past mole seasons, time was spent recapping episodes with the knowledge of the mole's identity. It was fun to see the different contestants' reactions to Craig being the mole, and it was even more fun to watch the clips that were recorded during the playing of the game of them suspecting Craig. I always like when they explain the hidden clues from every episode that (supposedly) pointed to the mole. I say supposedly pointed to the mole because a few of the clues were far-fetched; for example the business about the latitude and longitude. One of the clues I liked is the one where they altered the background where Craig was giving an interview. There were two "i" statues, and they altered them so there were 4 "i" statues when Craig was doing his interview. Get it? 4 "i"'s = four eyes – Craig is the only player to wear glasses.

Anyway, it was a great season like always. Even though I lost the tangents.org mole poll, I'm actually glad I did because if Nicole (she was my guess) was the mole, I would have felt it was so obvious it actually would have dampened my enthusiasm for another season. But since I was SO taken by surprise, as far as another mole season goes, I say, bring it on, and soon!

The Mole – Week #9

SPOILER ALERT: No one was eliminated and we didn't find out who the mole was this week, so since there is nothing to spoil, go ahead and read my post!

I don't have much to say about this week's episode... probably cuz I missed most of it. But no matter, it's not like we learned anything about the mole's identity – that big reveal will be next week. Chris thought Mark getting the mole's dossier was mole-y, so that is his guess this week now that Paul is out. Mark struck me from the very beginning as NOT being the mole; I don't know why, so I am sticking with my Nicole guess... any thoughts jamiahsh?

Chris – Mark

Lisa – Nicole

The Mole – Week #8

DISCLAIMER – Do not read this if you don't want to know about what happened on the ABC reality show, The Mole, yada, yada, yada...

WOW – mole-y behavior abound last night... but not too much from Paul, who was shockingly executed. So, my friends who've been going with Paul for weeks now, it seems you have to pick a new guess... But fear not, at least not yet, because if Nicole isn't the mole, then I am right there with you with 0 points because I don't think I've ever guessed Craig or Mark. But what am I saying, Nicole is SO the mole – let's take a look at last night's episode to find out why...

First, it seemed odd to me that Paul was making excuses about the camera in the very beginning of the camera-block game, though it's not like it was mole-y behavior since Paul is obviously NOT the mole. Then, during the same game, Nicole states that she is a lapriscopic surgeon, which caught me by surprise because during the entire run of the show, she's been labeled (and said she was) an OB-GYN. Suspicious yes, but even if she is the mole, I cannot figure out why they would change her profession. And if they were going to change her profession for some reason, why would they keep her as a doctor and just change the type of practice? I am convinced she is the mole, but this I do not get... hopefully it will be explained.

Next up, players used the same camera contraption (one player holds the camera and the other player wears glasses that display what the camera is recording) to play soccer, and Paul did act a little suspicious because he didn't seem to be giving his entire effort. He didn't seem to be trying to kick the ball hard or straight enough to get it in the net... but again, it doesn't matter how he was acting since we know he is not the mole. Nicole on the other hand, would not stop shaking the camera. The camera was extra jiggly during the chalkboard portion of the game, and it's not like she even needed to mess with poor Craig all that much anyway given his problem with vertigo. But why would a lapriscopic surgeon (or anyone for that matter, really) feel the need to shake the camera so much? Very mole-y indeed. When she and Craig lost the chalkboard challenge, she broke into a big grin and then quickly bit her lip to keep from smiling! Did anyone else see that? Nicole hopes not, but I sure did! And lastly, a few things on the cell-paintball challenge. She made sure she choose her cell first – if she is the mole then the producers could have told her what cell to pick so she didn't get the exemption to let a legitimate player win it (much to Paul's dismay – nice little tantrum there). Also, a player noted (think it was Mark) how small and fast she is, yet she still got shot with a paintball... that seems mole-y also. I really

enjoyed this episode; I liked the camera games a lot. But when it's all said and done, Nicole is still my top guess for the mole!

Chris has changed his guess to Nicole. I haven't yet received an official guess from Jamiahsh yet... either he's lost since he can't guess Paul or he doesn't want to submit his guess yet until he's sure we've seen the episode to avoid the teasing for spoiling the execution quizzes outcome ☐
Either way, let me know as soon as you have one!

The Mole – Week #7

The following is a synopsis of the Mole episode that aired Monday, July 21, 2008. It contains spoilers – do not read ahead if you don't want to know who was executed!

My daughter is away this week and didn't get to see this episode, so we won't have her guess. Darn, she was really getting into the show too, and it was fun to see an 8-year-old's perspective on it. But anyway, I thought Craig and Nicole both seemed very mole-y during the challenge; there were times when it seemed that they both tried to sabotage the numbers they were collecting. I didn't notice any suspicious behavior from anyone else. Then there was a game where the contestants answered questions about their loved ones, and another contestant was re-quizzed about their answers. The loved ones appeared in a train, and If they got enough answers correct, the doors would open for a reunion. So of course whoever the mole is didn't have the heart to sabotage this one – which means it's NOT Nicole. Just kidding. Anyway, the train doors opened for everyone, thank goodness, and the anticipation was pure agony to watch; especially Mark's wife

(in 19 years of marriage we've never been apart this long) and Paul's wife and especially his little girl. I knew there was absolutely no way they would disappoint a little girl like that, and I wonder what they would have done if enough questions were not answered correctly?

I'd have to say Nicole's mom is a bad influence on her – she really wanted Nicole to quit and even justified her reasons for doing so (it's not really quitting, it's not like this is your job). It's clear that Nicole really cares a lot about what Mommy thinks because she lied and said she was going to throw the quiz, and she also apologized for disappointing her mom by not quitting. So I'm guessing that she can just explain it away to Mommy later by saying, "I disobeyed you because I was the Mole so I couldn't quit the game." And, if she can lie that easily about throwing the quiz, it will be no surprise that she was lying the whole game about being the Mole.

So, the guesses remain:

Taylorhis – Nicole

Chris – Paul

Jamiahsh – Paul

The Mole – Week #5

SPOILER ALERT – The following contains a synopsis of the June 30th episode of the ABC show, The Mole. Do not read if you don't want to know what happened, including results of the elimination quiz!

I got some really interesting comments about mole-y behavior

on last week's post. They were thought provoking and fun to read, so keep them coming! As for this week, unfortunately my kids were going completely crazy during my viewing of the show, so I won't be able to go into much detail since I missed a lot.

My husband thought Craig was acting very mole-y. I somewhat agree, although I just don't get the moleish vibe from him. Could someone really be SO intolerant to cold weather just from living in California? If so, that seems really unhealthy! But anyway, back to the episode. In my opinion, Kristen and Mark were the least suspectable contestants left, so I just knew one of them was going to be eliminated. I think Paul seems like too much of a loose cannon to be the mole, but who knows, it could always be an act. This week, I think my official guess will be Nicole. It stinks because I think I'm really influenced by my husband's equation using Nicole's name – (N+I) (C+O) L E = M O L E

In past seasons, the show has been known to do things like this, and I just can't get it out of my head. Plus, last night I noticed a change in her personality where she seemed to act like an actual human being for the first time during the run of the show. So that makes me think the extreme bitchiness was just a facade and as the show progresses, it's starting to crack. I mean, could anyone really be THAT much of a bitch? During the first few weeks of the show, I thought that her extremely bitchy and arrogant personality excluded her from being the mole, but now I'm not so sure, and I don't know if it's just that equation getting to me or not.

So continue to comment and post your thoughts and feelings – I really enjoy reading all the theories and observations. Here are the official guesses for this week:

Jamiah – Paul

Chris – Paul

The Mole Week #4

SPOILER ALERT!!! – The following is a summary of Monday, June 23rd's episode of The Mole – it contains outcomes and spoilers. Do not read any further if you don't want to know about past Mole episodes.

6/23/08 – The focus tonight was on Clay and Victoria. Since Victoria ended up getting eliminated, the episode's emphasis on Clay put my mole-suspecting focus back on him. That and his mole-y behavior. Before the gold-brick-up-the-mountain challenge, Clay made sure to talk about how little money he wanted his team to earn. He was so focused on getting up the mountain to win the exemption from the quiz that he specifically said that bringing bricks to earn money was not important. That's understandable, but then when they did get to the top of the mountain, and Clay already knew that his team had won the exemption, he was still making comments about how much money his team had won. And his comments were about how the team won too much money for his liking. Then, when it was discovered that the team had earned only one exemption and they had to decide which of the 3 got to use it, Clay both insisted to and bargained with his teammates in order to be able to use the exemption for himself. That seems like something the mole would do in order to "prove" his or her "need" for the exemption – ie, throw others off his mole-y trail.

I hated how Nicole was Ahem-ing and blinking rapidly during the journal question activity at dinner, but then again, I hate many of the things she does. I hadn't really considered

her for the mole until my husband brought up a very intriguing point – Take a look at Nicole’s name: NICOLE. It’s very easy to change Nicole’s name to MOLE with a simple equation: If you “add” the N to the I, it makes an M. If you “add” the C to the O, it makes an O: (N+I)(C+O) LE= MOLE

The show has been known for slipping in little clues like this in the past. They will even highlight some of them in the finale once we find out who the mole is. Now I am really starting to consider Nicole. Her ultra-bitchy attitude could be a ploy for the cameras because she is the mole. She was just the woman you love to hate, so as an audience member, you don’t want to think her awful personality is fake because you’re busy hating her. But it’s just a thought for now; I will keep a close eye on her now, that’s for sure. For tonight’s official guess, I’m going to have to go with Clay again. Chris is still guessing Paul. Though that Nicole hypothesis is a good one, I guess it wasn’t enough to convince him of Nicole’s role as the mole. Until next week...

The Mole Week 2

After getting to watch week #2 of the new Mole season UNINTERRUPTED by kids since they’re with Grandma this week (can’t put a price on that by the way, it’s funny how simple pleasures like watching a favorite tv show uninterrupted can feel really nice :)), I am going to change my mole guess from Clay to Kristen. I don’t really have a good reason why; she was just acting kind of moley. And her way of sabotaging the task could have been to get that chain to keep falling off the bike, cuz that *was* unfortunate. Clay had like, one comment during the whole episode, and I just don’t think they would shove the mole into the background like that. And I have to add that I just knew this week was going to be the end of Liz

somehow. Chris thinks the mole is Paul, going with his first week's guess. I guess what I will do is give everybody a point for every week they guess the mole correctly at the end once we find out who it is. Do you have a guess this week, Jamiahsh? I got your comment on my other mole post, and I will repost it here:

After watching the first 2 episodes. It is definitely NOT BOBBY. Trying way too hard to draw attention to himself with his 'overexertion. It could be Alex... unless he really did leave his journal behind by mistake.

Interesting comment. We too, think that Bobby is drawing way too much attention to himself to be the mole. He's just coming across as a lazy jerk, and it's not fun to watch. I will go with Chris' theory on him – he is trying to throw off other players by acting like the mole. I see Alex as the guy who wins everything – there's always one of those on every reality show – and I don't think he's the mole. I don't know whether or not he left his journal laying around on purpose. He could have done so or he could have left it accidentally and just tried to cover it up with the explanation of trying to throw others off. But anyway, another good episode, and here is where we stand on mole guesses:

Lisa – Clay, Kristen

Chris – Paul, Paul

Jamiahsh – Clay, ?

The Mole is Back!

The Mole is the best reality show ever, I think. And now it is back for another season, starting Monday, June 2. It airs on ABC, and I highly recommend it. A quick synopsis in case you missed my previous post about the Mole – 12 contestants complete various stunts and missions, although one of them is the mole. The audience and other players don't know who the mole is, and he or she tries to sabotage the missions while staying undercover. Each week, the contestants take a quiz about the mole, and the person who guesses the most answers incorrectly must leave the game. About the new season, I must say how much I don't like the new host, but other than that, the show seems to be just as it was before – extremely entertaining, thought provoking, and FUN!

I think it'd be fun to keep a running tally of Mole guesses for viewers who read my blog. So if you're a Mole fan also, submit your guess to me each week and I will post it. So far after week one, my guess for the Mole would be Clay, and Chris is guessing Paul.

It's fun to see if anyone can guess who the mole is from early on, so stay tuned to my blog throughout the summer for updates on the show, and if you decide to watch it, and I HIGHLY recommend that you do, join in the fun by posting me a comment with your thoughts on the episodes and guesses on who is...

THE MOLE!