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Friday Zeitgeist

Marni Soupcoff, National Post
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Here are some of the more intriguing entries in Google's latest Hot Trends, an index that tracks the search engine's fastest-rising queries. Read on, and get better acquainted with the current Zeitgeist -- the spirit of the times.

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I know the deerstalker is a hunting hat with earflaps, and I know it's primarily associated with fictional detective Sherlock Holmes, but I'm not sure why people have been Googling it so much lately. The best guess I can offer is that the hat owes its renewed prominence to the limited imaginations of reporters sharing the news that Robert Downey Jr. will play the role of Sherlock Holmes in a future movie. (For example, the Associated Press reported, "Robert Downey Jr. is trading Iron Man's metal suit for Sherlock Holmes' deerstalker hat," and the Mega-Star Web announced, "Downey Jr, last seen in summer blockbuster smash Iron Man, will don the famous deerstalker for [director Guy] Ritchie's take on Holmes.")

British comedian Sacha Baron Cohen (best known for his characters Borat and Ali G) may also have contributed to the deerstalker search frenzy; he'll be playing Sherlock Holmes in a second movie about the clever sleuth-- this one a comedy co-starring Will Ferrell.

Even though Sherlock Holmes author Arthur Conan Doyle never actually referred to his detective wearing a deerstalker, it's hard to look at the hat without making the Holmes connection. For that mental link, we can thank portrait artist Sidney Paget, who illustrated a popular series of Sherlock Holmes short stories that appeared in The Strand, a monthly fiction magazine, in the 1890s. Paget's the one who put Holmes in a deerstalker and Holmes' sidekick Watson in a bowler.

MOM CORPS

It's tough to keep up a full-time job and be a good mom. But many women aren't ready to dump work completely to care for their kids. After accumulating years of education and experience, mothers are looking for ways to keep a finger in the corporate pie, while still spending most of their time running their households. An Atlanta staffing agency called Mom Corps is capitalizing on this pool of skilled part-

time workers by matching them with companies looking for small amounts of professional help on demand.

According to CNN, there are currently 25,000 people seeking flexible work through Mom Corps. If the company maintains its spot on the Google charts, that number is sure to grow.

EMMY NOMINATIONS

The 2008 TV Emmy nominations are out, and the complaining has begun: Why was The Wire nominated only in the writing category when it's frequently hailed as the best show on TV? Why does Boston Legal keep getting nominated for best drama when it's no longer anything special? How could Dancing With The Stars beat out So You Think You Can Dance? Where is Flight of the Conchords? And for goodness sake, is it really necessary to set aside two separate categories for reality shows? Couldn't they all just compete in one big fat reality show called something like So You Think You Can Win The Emmy?

Despite the inevitable whining, the nominations have been fairly well-received, with a lot of online celebrating for the nominations of Pushing Daisies' Anna Friel and In Treatment's Gabriel Byrne. (I don't even watch House, but I'm pulling for Hugh

Laurie (left) out of sentimentality for Jeeves and Wooster and Blackadder.) The winners will be announced at a Gala awards show on Sept. 21.

msoupcoff @ nationalpost.com

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