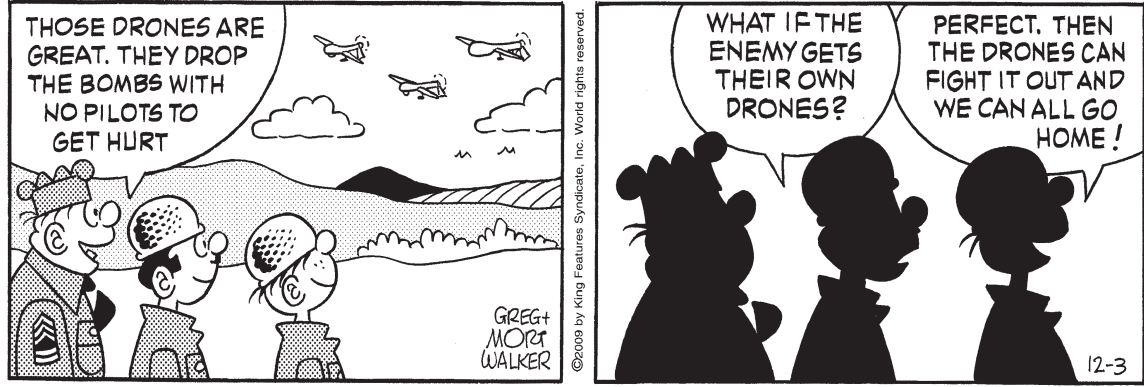


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



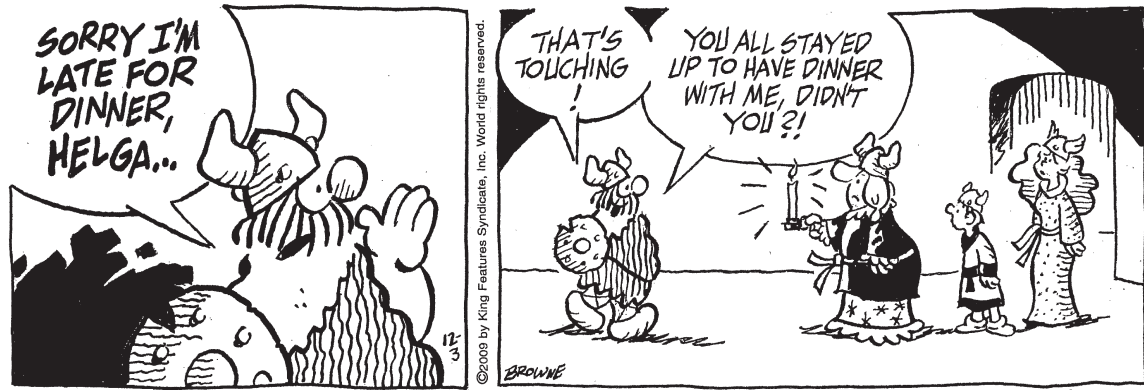
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



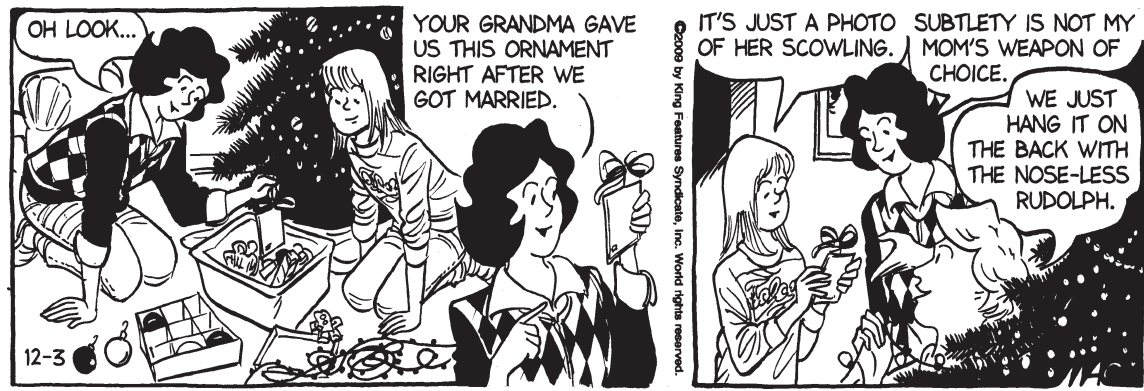
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



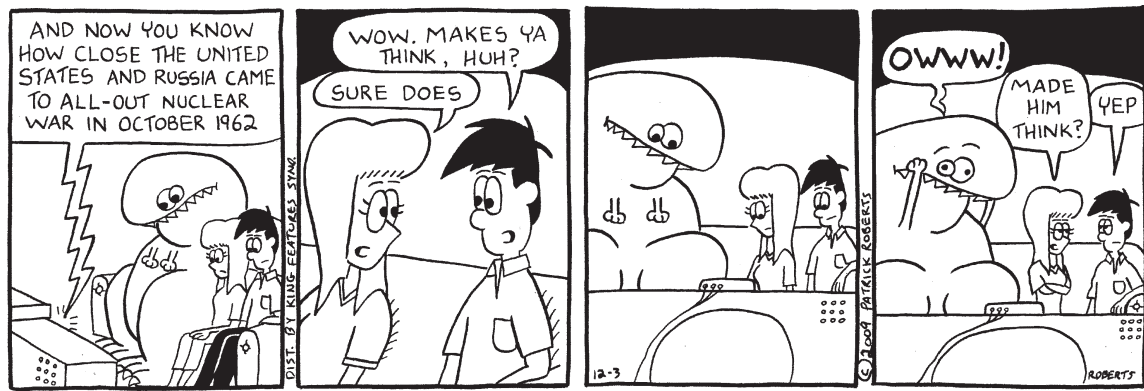
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Small classes benefit children

Dear Dr. Brothers: Class sizes in my son's elementary school are enormous. Some classes have almost 50 kids, with just one teacher. I've read that classes that big, especially in elementary school, are detrimental to kids' education, and could mean my son isn't doing as well in school as he should be. I wonder if this is true, or just a myth. If it is true, is there anything that I, as a parent, can do to help? — B.K.

Dear B.K.: It is well-established that smaller class size in early elementary school can boost student achievement in those grades. It also can encourage students to be more engaged in learning than they are in larger classes. And now, research published in the *Journal of Educational Psychology* suggests there are long-term effects of small class sizes. This study showed that four years in small elementary-school classes increased the likelihood students would graduate from high school, particularly students from low-income homes. It seems that three or four years of small classes are necessary to sustain long-term achievement and actually affect graduation rates.

The effect is likely due to better teacher attitudes and ability to help students in small classes. When a teacher isn't overburdened, he or she can foster a more positive climate. Unfortunately, there is little a parent can do about class size, besides voting for educational reform or enrolling your son in a different school. One technique to make students feel school is personalized is for teachers or the principal to greet students individually at the beginning of the day, so you might suggest this as an improvement.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I found out from my daughter's school that she was caught smoking. She's only in eighth grade. She claims she only tried it once, and I really don't want her to become a smoker for life. I know it's hypocritical, as I smoke and have tried to quit multiple times, but I don't want that for her. What can I do to make sure she doesn't become addicted? — T.D.

Dear T.D.: It's great you're taking an active interest in whether your daughter falls victim to cigarette addiction. Parents certainly play a key role in whether a teenager who has experimented continues smoking. A study in the journal *Pediatrics* confirmed that parents can decrease their kids' risk of becoming smokers by communicating and establishing guidelines about smoking.

Another conclusion from the study was that if parents smoke, children have more access to cigarettes and are more likely to smoke. Regardless of rules, your teenager will learn from you that smoking is acceptable. So a way to decrease your daughter's chances of becoming a smoker is by quitting yourself. I know this can be a nearly insurmountable challenge, but that may only increase the significance of your quitting in your daughter's eyes.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

East dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 10 9 6
♥ J 6 4 3
♦ 10 6 2
♣ K J 6

WEST
♠ A K 7
♥ 10 7 2
♦ A 1 9 3
♣ 10 7 2

EAST
♠ Q J 8 4 3
♥ K 9
♦ 8 4
♣ A 9 8 4

SOUTH
♠ 5 2
♥ A Q 8 5
♦ K Q 7 5
♣ Q 5 3

The bidding:
East South West North
Pass 1♥ Pass 2♥
Opening lead — king of spades.

Silence Is Not Always Golden
If misdeeds and malefactions could be divided into errors of omission and errors of commission, there is no doubt as to which would be more noticeable. Failing to do something you should have done is not nearly as obtrusive as doing something you should not have done. This doesn't alter the fact, though, that errors of omission can prove very costly.

Consider this deal from a team match where, at the first table, South became declarer at two hearts and finished with eight tricks for a score of 110 points.

The bidding and play at this table seemed altogether normal, but not when viewed in the light of what happened at the other table, where the bidding went:

East South West North
Pass 1♥ Pass 2♥
Pass Pass Dble Pass
2♠ 3♦ Pass 3♥
3♠

Here, when the bidding died at two hearts, West doubled. He realized that his partner was bound to have some high cards as well as a singleton or doubleton heart, given South's heart bid and North's raise. This in turn increased the likelihood that East would hold a five-card suit.

South led the diamond king against three spades. Declarer took the ace, played the A-Q of trumps and returned a diamond. South won with the queen, but there was now no way to defeat the contract. Making three spades was worth 140 points, which, added to the result at the other table, yielded a 250-point gain.

The villain of the piece was the West player at the first table, who was guilty of the sin of omission. He adopted too conservative an attitude when he allowed North-South to play the hand unchallenged at two hearts. He should have competed — i.e., “balanced” — with a takeout double, as his counterpart did. Although there was an element of risk in acting at this point, it was far more risky to pass.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



“Grandma says that's how she used to rock you, but how could she even LIFT you?”

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

		6	5	7			1	
			2					6
8				4				
1	9							
6		7				4		8
							3	2
			2					4
9				8				
	5			1	9	3		

Difficulty Level ★★★

This is a logic-based number placement puzzle.

The goal is to enter a number, 1-9, in each cell in which each row, column and 3x3 region must contain only one instance of each numeral.

The solution to the last Sudoku puzzle is at right.

9	3	6	5	7	4	8	2	1
1	7	5	8	3	2	6	4	9
4	8	2	9	1	6	3	7	5
8	2	1	3	9	7	5	6	4
7	9	3	4	6	5	2	1	8
5	6	4	1	2	8	7	9	3
3	4	7	2	8	9	1	5	6
6	5	8	7	4	1	9	3	2
2	1	9	6	5	3	4	8	7

Cryptoquip

NOCI WCLCZGB IGSXUIW GZC
QXPOSXIP ULCZ WCCHBCWW
UZGIPCW, NUEBH MUE WGM
SOGS XW IGLCB NGZQGZC?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE TWO FASHIONABLE WOMEN TEAMED UP TO INVENT A REVOLUTIONARY NEW FABRIC CALLED POLLY-ESTHER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals Y

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Truckload
 - 5 Bill
 - 8 Bat a gnat
 - 12 Celestial bear
 - 13 In olden times
 - 14 Apiece of
 - 15 Clarinet insert
 - 16 Sleep phenom
 - 17 Ersatz swing
 - 18 Lasso
 - 20 Piece of lumber used for flooring (Brit.)
 - 22 Ostrich's cousin
 - 23 Apiece
 - 24 "Desire Under the —"
 - 27 Stronghold
 - 32 — constrictor
 - 33 Dillinger's foes (Abbr.)
 - 34 Old French coin
 - 35 Strengthen
 - 38 Capri, for one
- DOWN**
- 39 Former M&M's color
 - 40 Discoverer's call
 - 42 Back-related
 - 45 Less of a mess
 - 49 Help a hood
 - 50 Chic no more
 - 52 Notion
 - 53 Got up
 - 54 To — and —
 - 55 Coach Chuck, who won four Super Bowls
 - 56 "Untouchables" role
 - 57 — the season ..."
 - 58 Other-wise
 - 1 Throw hard
 - 2 Vicinity
 - 3 Person at a PC
 - 4 Half the audience?
 - 5 Molière protagonist
 - 6 Census statistic
 - 7 Broadway flop
 - 8 Large bird dog
 - 9 Diner staffer
 - 10 Farm fraction
 - 11 As a result
 - 19 Exist
 - 21 Suitable
 - 24 Recede
 - 25 Brock of baseball
 - 26 Place to settle?
 - 28 Old, like a wd.
 - 29 Rice dishes
 - 30 Scale member
 - 31 Seek damages
 - 36 Preferences
 - 37 Genetics abbr.
 - 38 Common antisepic
 - 41 Greeting "Nuts!"
 - 42 Bassoon kin
 - 44 Barn section
 - 46 "American —"
 - 47 Congers, e.g.
 - 48 Rough breathing sound
 - 51 Spoon-bender Geller

Solution time: 25 mins.

S	P	U	D	P	I	P	S	P	O	T
A	O	N	E	A	L	A	T	A	R	O
P	O	T	B	E	L	L	A	N	E	W
S	H	O	A	T	S	L	I	P	O	N
			S	A	L	T	A	N	I	
R	O	P	E	E	W	E	S	P	A	T
A	D	O	A	V	A	N	A	S	T	E
D	D	T	N	I	N	A	A	S	H	Y
			R	I	O	G	U	L	P	
T	H	O	R	N	S	S	P	O	I	L
S	O	A	K	P	A	N	D	O	W	D
A	P	S	E	A	G	O	S	E	E	R
R	E	T	D	R	E	D	E	S	S	E

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12				13			14				
15				16			17				
18				19			20	21			
				22			23				
24	25	26			27	28	29		30	31	
32					33				34		
35				36	37				38		
				39			40	41			
42	43				44		45		46	47	48
49					50	51			52		
53					54				55		
56					57				58		