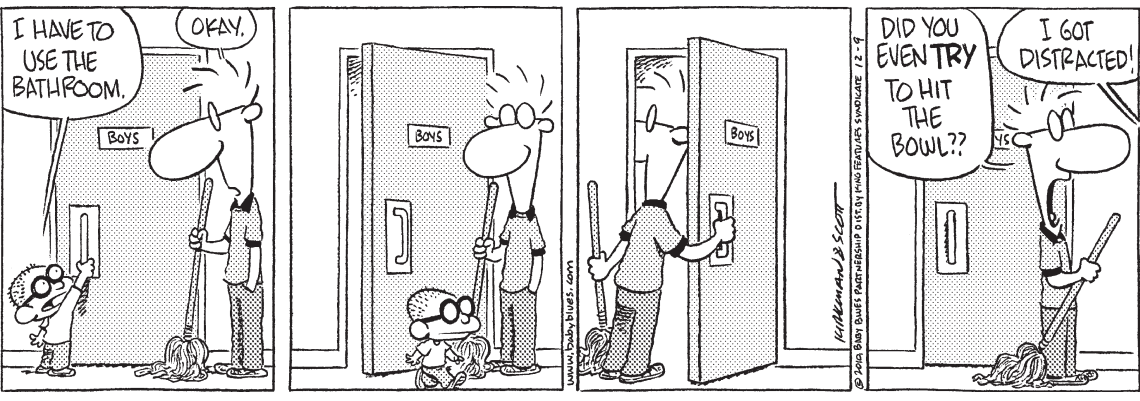
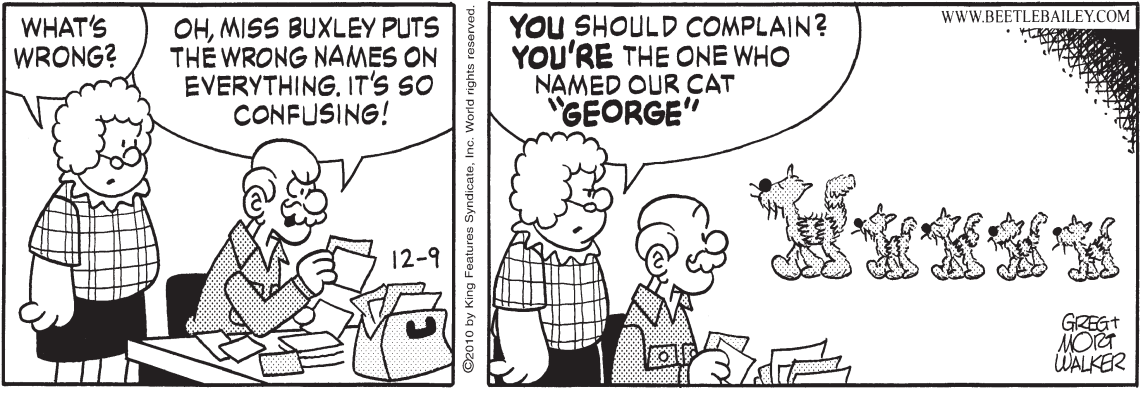


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



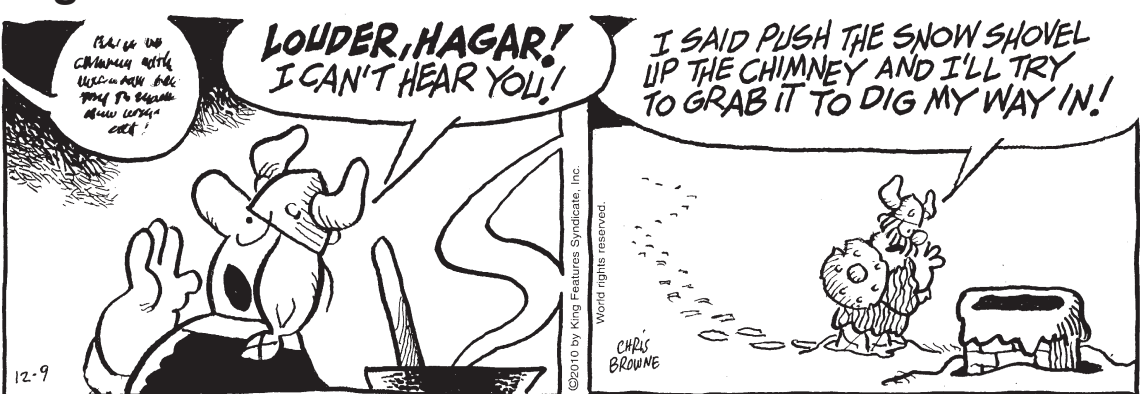
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



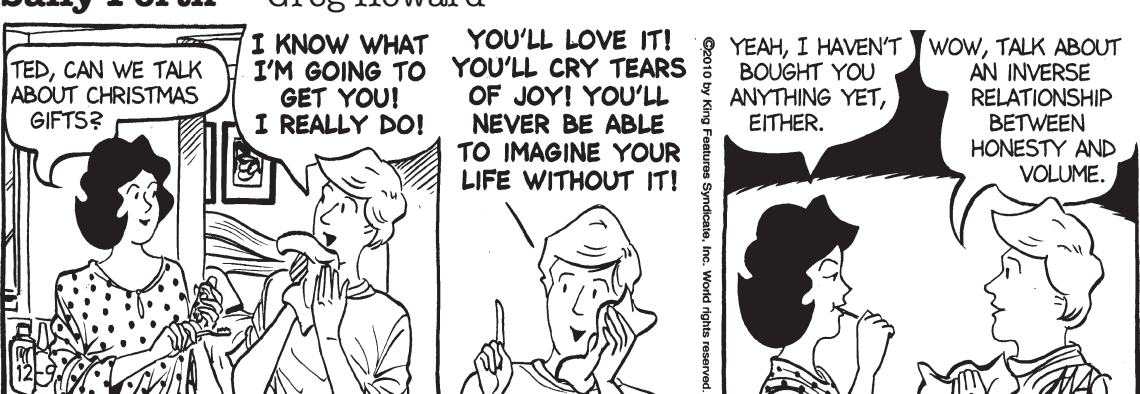
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



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

Sleep affected by baby's mom

Dear Dr. Brothers: I have a daughter who is almost 2 years old. Since she was a newborn, I've sat with her while she was falling asleep. It started out for my own benefit, since I felt more relaxed when I could watch her fall asleep, and I would read or do work in her bedroom as she got older. I was explaining this to a friend, though, and she told me that it was bad for my baby to sit with her at bedtime. Can this possibly be true? — M.D.

Dear M.D.: Your friend isn't entirely incorrect. It is surprising for a lot of parents to hear that co-sleeping — or the practice of either sleeping in the same room as a child or being present while they are falling asleep — actually may interfere with their babies' sleeping habits. According to a study presented at SLEEP 2009, the 23rd Annual Meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies, children who sleep in separate rooms from their parents have fewer sleep problems — they get more sleep, wake up less overnight and have less difficulty falling asleep.

Studies in the past always showed that sharing a bed with your baby could lead to sleeping problems, but the problem is more complicated. It's more likely that babies who learn to fall asleep without their parents in the room can then fall asleep more easily when they wake up during the night. Kids who can only fall asleep with Mom by their side will need that help again in the middle of the night when they wake up. So while there isn't anything dangerous about sitting in the room with your daughter, you might be inhibiting her ability to fall asleep independently and control her sleep cycle through the night.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My 14-year-old son has always been creative. Since the age of 4, he's always had a paintbrush, pen, book or musical instrument. But today he seems to care less about doing something creative and more about how many aliens he kills in a video game. He claims it helps him think of new ideas, but this sounds like a bunch of baloney to me. I think he just wants more games. How can I convince him to give up this complete waste of time? — J.F.

Dear J.F.: As hard as it may be to believe, a recent study done at Penn State agrees with your son. Researchers found that playing video games puts the player in a state of mind that aids in the creative process. The thinking is that the more highly aroused a player's mind is, the more likely he is to create. That's not to say your son should spend all day zoning out on PlayStation. Too much of anything is always a cause for concern. Kids got along fine before video games were invented, making up games of their own on the playground or using that pen, brush or trumpet.

But in today's day and age, trying to keep a child from playing a video game often is futile — if we ban them from our homes, it's likely they will find them at a friend's house. You may want to ask your son if he ever thought about designing a game instead of just playing one. Since he already seems very creative, he's probably got a few good ideas up his sleeve. Just make sure he understands the difference between achieving something tangible in the "real world" and racking up points in a fictional one.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

West dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ K 10 7 4
 ♥ A K Q 8
 ♦ 7 4 3
 ♣ 9 5

WEST
 ♠ Q 9 8 6
 ♥ J 4 3
 ♦ J 10 6
 ♣ A Q 4

EAST
 ♠ J 2
 ♥ 10 7
 ♦ Q 8 5
 ♣ K J 8 6 3 2

SOUTH
 ♠ A 5 3
 ♥ 9 6 5 2
 ♦ A K 9 2
 ♣ 10 7

The bidding:
 West North East South
 Pass 1 Pass 1
 Pass 2 Pass 3
 Pass 4

Opening lead — eight of spades.

Junior Class
 In the past two decades, a great effort has been made in North America and Europe to stimulate more interest in bridge among younger players. One of the incentives for the juniors, who can be no older than 25, is the possibility of representing their own country at the annual World Junior Bridge Team Championship, which attracts dozens of teams from all over the globe. Representatives to these contests are determined in qualifying events held at national or zonal competitions each year.

The standard of play at these competitions is extremely high, as witness today's deal, which won the prize for the best-played hand at the 1998 European championship. The declarer was Igo Grzejdziak of Poland, who seemed certain to lose four tricks at four hearts but found a way to lure the opposition into letting him get home safely.

West led the eight of spades (third-best), and Grzejdziak could see that if he proceeded normally, he would surely lose a spade, a diamond and two club tricks. So, after playing low from dummy on the eight (on which East also played low), declarer allowed West's eight to hold the trick!

West, convinced that his partner held the A-J, continued with the six of spades. That sounded the death knell for the defense. Grzejdziak took East's jack with the ace, drew trumps in three rounds, crossed to his hand with a diamond and led a spade to dummy's ten. After the finesse succeeded, he discarded a club on the spade king to bring in his game, losing only a spade, a diamond and a club.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



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Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/09

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.

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

Cryptoquip

T Y N F X L Y H M F H Q P K Y P
 M F O V L Q P S K T Y O P X H , O
 L X J S L Y M Y N S X V C T Y N F V Y C
 F L Y Y C Y P S Q V Y T F I S I .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: PLACE THAT HOUSES MANY MEDICAL PICTURES OF A BIG SITCOM FAMILY: THE DEPARTMENT OF BRADY-OLGY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals E

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
 1 Minus-cule bit
 5 Lend an illegal hand
 9 Eviscerate
 12 Trade-mark symbol
 13 Old Italian money
 14 Spring mo.
 15 Travel while campaigning
 17 Fish eggs
 18 Mono alternative
 19 Minimal change
 21 Yoked beast
 22 Saw
 24 "The Amazing —"
 27 Bear hair
 28 Pirates' quaff
 31 Geological period
 32 Anger
 33 Mate of 37-
 Across

DOWN
 1 Church vest-ments
 2 Perfectly
 3 Fairy tale baddie
 4 Fifth President
 5 Choir member
 6 Story of a lifetime?
 7 Screw up
 8 Florida city
 9 Accumulated
 10 Informed about
 11 Deuce beater
 16 Gender Under the —
 20 Early bird?
 22 Emanations
 23 TV host Carey
 24 Gun the engine
 25 Exist
 26 Noted steel tycoon
 27 Stuff
 29 Eggs
 30 Prized session
 35 Clear the tables
 37 Heart lines?
 39 Sill
 40 Rapa — (Easter Island)
 41 Snare
 42 Head light?
 43 Tackles' teammates
 44 Brewer's kiln
 45 Entreaty
 46 Vivacity
 49 "You've got mail" co.
 50 Aries

Solution time: 25 mins.

B	A	I	L	G	E	M	P	R	O	F	
U	L	N	A	L	E	I	L	O	G	E	
R	O	C	K	F	O	R	D	A	C	R	E
R	E	H	E	A	R	S	O	C	K	E	
A	M	P	E	F	T	O	B	E	I	E	S
T	O	U	R	Y	O	U	O	L	I	O	
M	I	N	O	S	O	P	T	L	P	S	
K	Y	L	E	D	E	C					
M	O	R	A	Y	S	R	E	U	S	E	
I	D	O	L	S	H	A	M	R	O	C	
D	I	C	T	A	U	F	B	U	R	Y	
T	N	K	Y	Y	E	T	S	L	U	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			