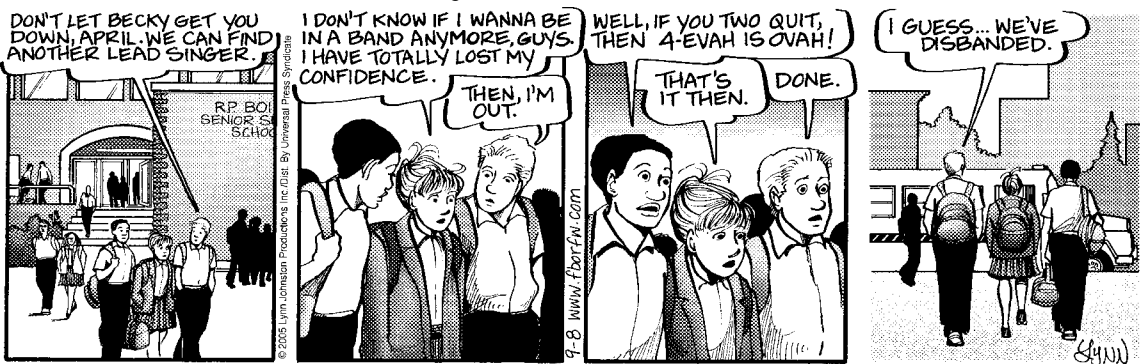
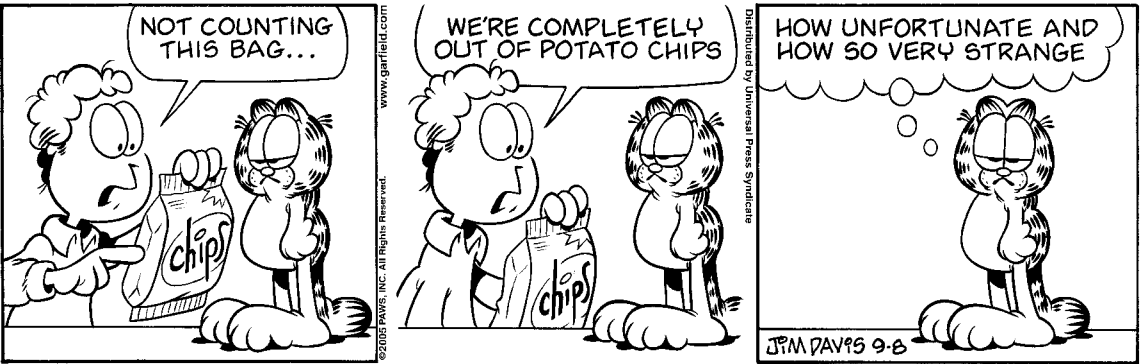


For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



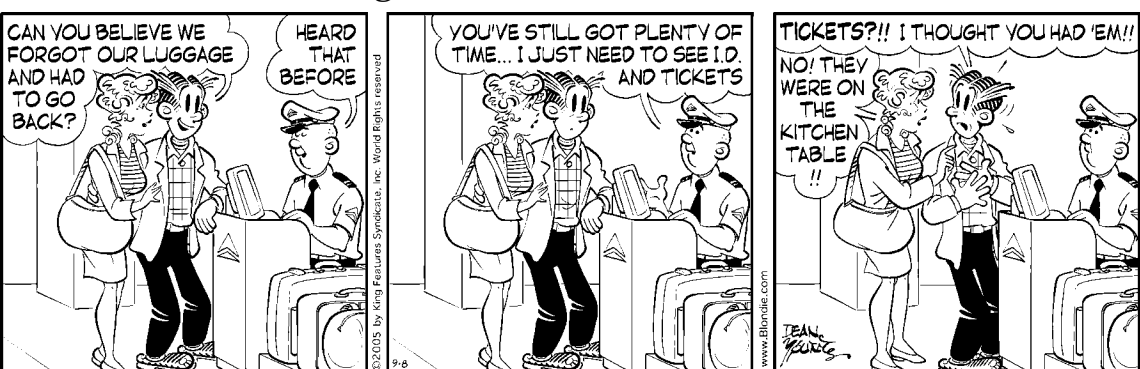
Garfield • Jim Davis



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Blondie • Chic Young



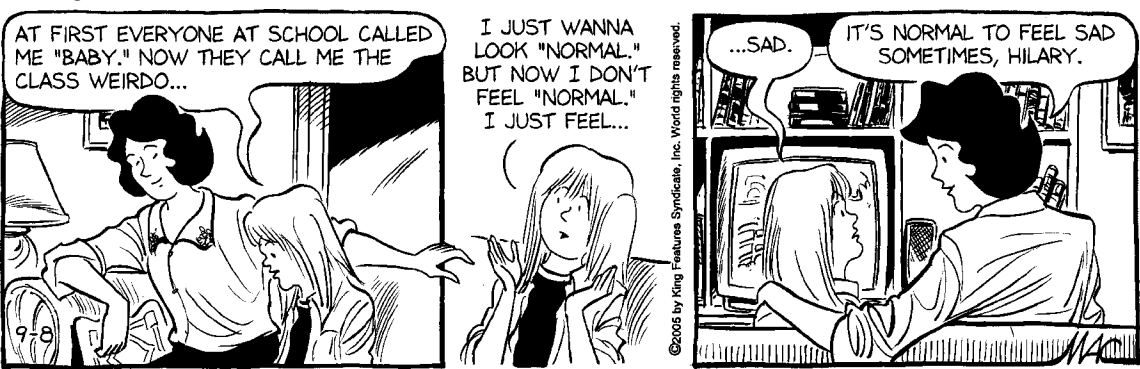
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



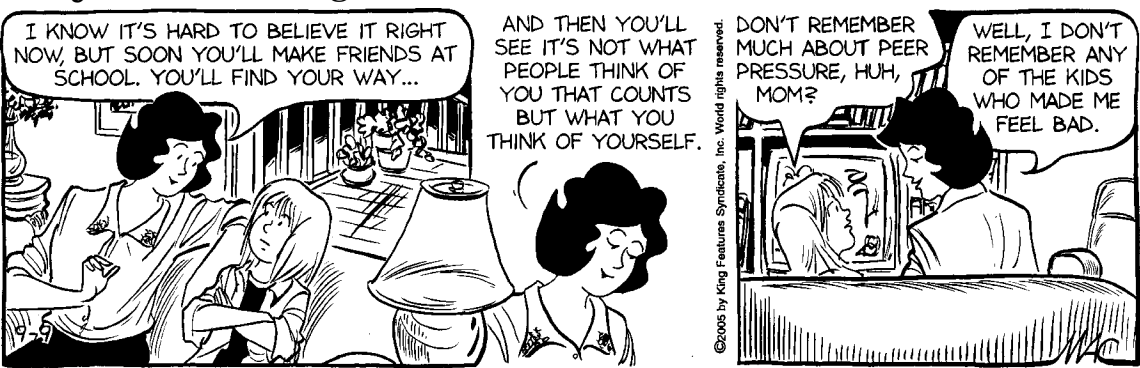
Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



THANK YOU FOR READING THE

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Cryptoquip

SYHX VYH HFHBVJEBEVM

AQHC QOV PXU MQO'JH

PXAHJHU, E CODDQCH

VYPV'C P DQSHJ QOVJPAH.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A VERY SEXY PERSON MADE EXPLOSIVES, SHOULDN'T YOU REFER TO HER AS A BOMBSHELL?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals U

Couple stay together sleeping apart

DEAR ABBY: I was glad to see your reply to "Frustrated in Florida," who doesn't share a bedroom with her husband and is getting heat about it from her parents and in-laws. You said there is no law that demands couples have to.

My husband and I also sleep in separate rooms. We are embarrassed to let people know we don't sleep together because they automatically assume we're not getting along. We still have a very close relationship and always will.

—HAPPY WITH SEPARATE BEDROOMS, GURNEE, ILL.
DEAR HAPPY: That letter brought in bushels more from couples who also sleep better apart. It seems the practice isn't as unusual as some might think.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I haven't shared a bed for 15 of the 20 years we've been married. It saved our marriage. He's a night owl; I'm an early-to-bed, early-to-rise type who sleeps very lightly. Sharing a bedroom is not a part of the marriage vows. It's whatever works best for the couple — and nobody else's business.

—SLEEPING SOLO, PEN-DLETON, IND.
DEAR ABBY: After 25 years of marriage, we use separate bedrooms, too. I have insomnia and am going through menopause. My cowboy sleeps with a lot of covers and is always cold. We tell anyone who questions our arrangement that sharing a bed doesn't guarantee sex all the time. With us, I ask my cowboy, "Should I go to the Holiday Inn or Best Western tonight?" It works for us, and we sleep great.

—RESTED IN MOUNT PULASKI, ILL.
DEAR ABBY: Sleeping in separate rooms saved my marriage. For years, we forced ourselves to share the same bed. I finally got mad and slept in the guestroom one night. We



Abigail Van Buren

• Dear Abby

both woke up the next morning relatively sane! The only one who has a hard time with this is the family dog, who now must rotate between bedrooms. We have no problem arranging "together time." As for family members, it's none of their business.

—NO LONGER FRUSTRATED, LAKE WORTH, FLA.

DEAR ABBY: It took our marriage to almost fail before we realized we just needed to sleep apart. Our physical relationship improved after we used separate bedrooms because we were better rested and not so irritable with each other.

We have never told our families about it. If you print this, please do not reveal my name or location. They still don't know.

—HAPPY IN DREAMLAND

DEAR ABBY: I'm a morning person, in bed by 10:30 p.m. My husband usually stays up till 1 a.m. Having separate bedrooms works beautifully for us. When I retire at night, he rubs my feet with cream. In the morning, I bring him his coffee in bed. Everyone needs time to themselves. I have my alone time in the morning; he has his at night. We're always happy to see each other after our alone time. For 45 years, this has worked perfectly for us. When anyone acts surprised that we have separate bedrooms, we always say, "Oh, but we have plenty of visitation!" That gets 'em.

—SLEEPING SOUNDLY IN HAWAII

DEAR ABBY: Silence is golden, I say. And that goes for telling mar-

riage secrets outside the home. Where they sleep is nobody's business but their own!

—BETHESDA SLEEPER

DEAR ABBY: We moved into a very quiet neighborhood a year ago. Then our neighbor, a divorced father of a 3-year-old boy, reconciled with his wife and they moved back in.

When the father had visitation we allowed our son to go over there once while my husband and I got some chores done. Nothing bad happened. However, now that the boy — who is the same age as our son — is a full-time resident, we have become aware of some not-nice behavior on his part. He has tried to get our son to eat dog doo-doo, and has told our boy to be mean to our dogs, which of course, our son would never do. He is always looking through our chain link fence and teasing our son. I get a bad vibe from him. We are people who don't like conflict. Is there anything you can suggest so that we can go out into our back yard and again enjoy the peace and quiet we once did before the boy was a full-time fixture? We love our house, but we will move if we must.

—DISGUSTED IN DES MOINES

DEAR DISGUSTED: It would not be creating conflict to pay a call on the mother of that child and ask if she's aware of the way her son is acting with your boy, and give her chapter and verse. If she doesn't talk to the child and discourage his behavior, consider landscaping your property to guarantee some privacy. Only as a last resort should you move.

Bridge

West dealer.

Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ 10 9 5 3

♥ A Q 4

♦ 5

♣ A J 9 4 3

WEST

♠ K Q J 8 7

♥ 10 9 7

♦ K Q J

♣ 8 2

EAST

♠ 4

♥ J 8 6 5

♦ 10 9 7 6 2

♣ K 7 5

SOUTH

♠ A 6 2

♥ K 3 2

♦ A 8 4 3

♣ Q 10 6

The bidding:

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

Strike While the Iron Is Hot

Most players have set notions as to what constitutes an opening bid.

Sometimes these notions work well, but sometimes they boomerang and prove expensive.

Consider this deal from the final of a national team-of-four championship.

The players involved were first-rate, but they came to opposite conclusions as to whether or not to open the bidding with the West hand. As it turned out, this difference of opinion proved critical.

At the first table, West ended up in two diamonds as shown, going down one for a loss of 100 points.

It was dangerous for either North or South to enter the bidding at any stage, and they passed throughout.

At the second table, however, the bidding went:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 C	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 NT		

Here, according to West's way of thinking, he did not have an opening bid, so he passed. North-South quickly reached game, which declarer easily made after winning the king-of-spades lead and taking a club finesse. Score — 600 points.

The North-South pair at the second table thus gained 500 points on the deal — largely because West failed to open the bidding.

It is true that one swallow doesn't make a summer, and one hand doesn't prove a theory, but insofar as this writer is concerned, West had a clear-cut opening bid and should have made it.

An opening one-spade bid has considerable pre-emptive value, in that it makes it more difficult for the opponents to get into the bidding.

This should always be taken into account when considering whether to open a marginal hand with a decent spade suit.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.
(c)2005 King Features Syndicate Inc.

Family Circus • Bil Keane



"How many prayers can God listen to at once?"

Crossword

ACROSS

1 Interlaken injection

4 Sherbet flavor

8 Tat preceder

12 Great Lake canals

13 You love, to Livy

14 Eager, plus

15 Vacation times

17 Actress Gershon

18 Remnant

19 Tea urn

21 Coat

24 One of us

25 Feast-famine link

26 Bad hairpiece

28 Lucy's pal

32 Grackle or grouse

34 Purchase

36 Pop

37 Begin's co-

39 Nobelist

41 Triangle part

42 Sticky stuff

44 Faints from rapture

46 "My Little Chickadee" star

50 Gerund suffix

51 Ticklish Muppet

52 Yelled

56 Sphere start

57 List-end-ing abbr.

58 Idolater's feeling

59 Loath-some one

60 Venomous vipers

61 Kitten's comment

2 Bill's partner

3 Strategic advantage

4 Fire-fighter's need

5 "Yankee ..."

6 "The Say Hey Kid"

7 English home-work

8 Thick stews

9 Tel —

10 Turner or Fey

11 Hebrew month

16 Squid squirt

20 "Simpsons" bartender

21 To-do list

22 Sutherland solo

23 Jalopy among boats

27 Wrigley product

29 Laser-made picture

30 Paradise

31 Trails the pack

33 Large sandwich

35 "Of course"

38 Pirouette pivot

40 Woven fabrics

43 Milo or Tessie

45 "A Chorus Line" song

46 Vegan's no-no

47 Sax range

48 Austen heroine

49 Youngsters

53 You can't stand to have one

54 Lamb dam

55 Morning moisture

Solution time: 25 mins.

Yesterday's answer 9-8

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
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		
59				60				61		