

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson**Teen girl is not sure if she was raped**

Dear Abby: I am a junior in high school. Last year, a guy I have known for two years began showing a sexual interest in me. I rejected his advances. Last week, he began expressing his interest again, letting me know he wanted to have sex. He invited me to study — only study — but said we "might" make out.

I was a virgin and had never even kissed anyone before. I had just gotten out of a relationship that didn't end very well, so I liked the attention. I decided I was fine with just kissing, but as soon as I got in his truck, he started to feel me up.

He took me to a semi-isolated area and we ended up having sex. It wasn't fun or pleasurable. I told him he was hurting me, but he didn't stop until the third time I said it. He was very upset with me. He only cared about me pleasing him.

I told two of my close friends about what happened. One said he had essentially raped me. The other said it doesn't count as rape



JEANNE PHILLIPS

DEAR ABBY

because even though I said it hurt, I didn't say it forcefully enough. Abby, what do you think? — *Uncertain in Illinois*

Dear Uncertain: It appears you and that boy had a severe breakdown in communication, which led to your being sexually assaulted. He had made no secret that he wanted sex with you, and may have interpreted your willingness to kiss him after he took you somewhere other than what was agreed upon as a signal that you were willing, even though you didn't say so.

Date rape happens when a fellow ends up coercing or forcing a girl to have sex without her consent. Unless a girl explicitly expresses her willingness to proceed, it is the responsibility of the boy NOT to proceed.

To me what happened illustrates how important it is for parents to talk to their sons and daughters about responsible behavior because failure to do that can have lifelong consequences for both. If you haven't already done so, you should tell your parents what happened.

However, if you don't feel safe doing that, tell a counselor at school.

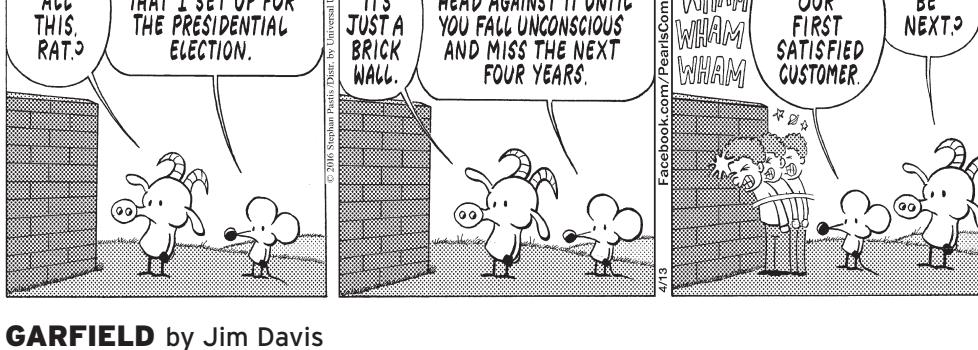
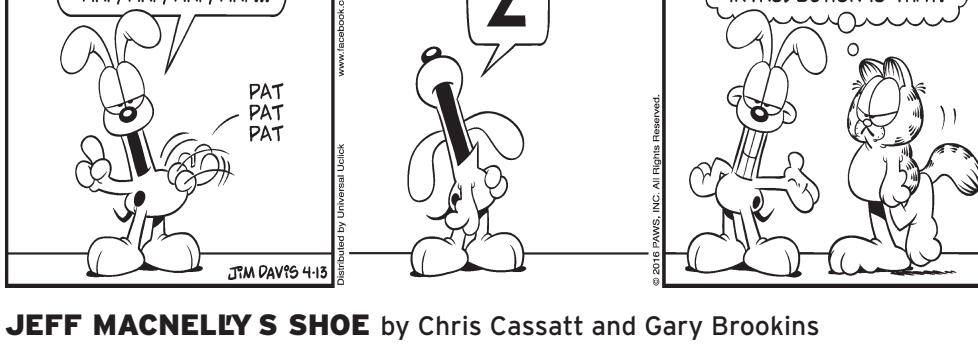
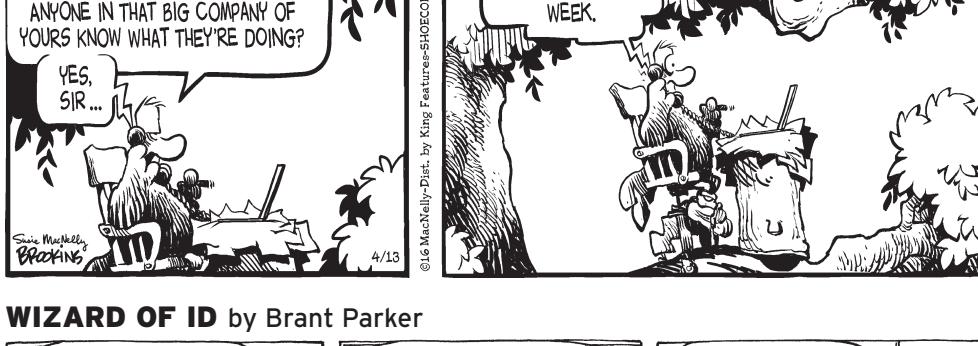
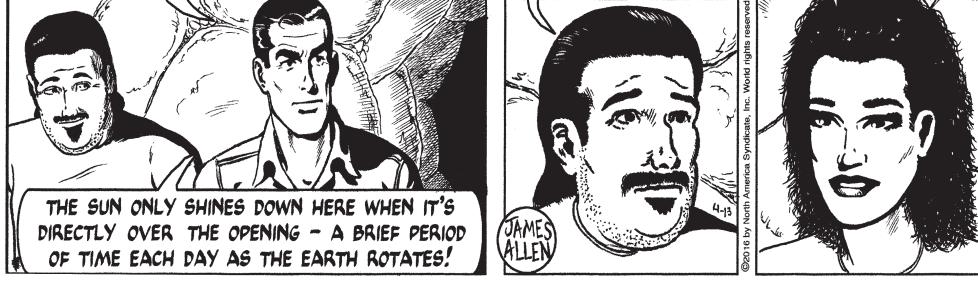
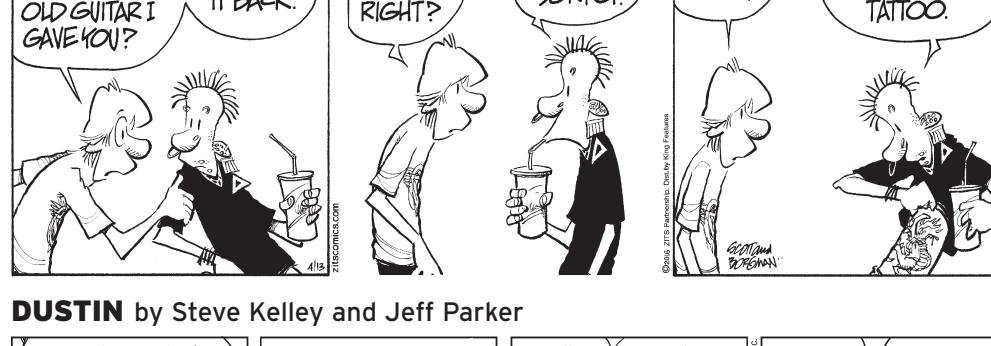
Dear Abby: Can you give me a complete list of etiquette rules for parents with divorced children?

My daughter and her ex-husband are constantly battling over issues regarding their two children. Her ex is engaged, and his soon-to-be wife gives her opinion on everything to do with parenting the kids. This is causing a continuous battle, and it isn't good for the children. — *Grandma in Minnesota*

Dear Grandma: I will offer just one "rule." Divorced parents should remember that above all, what's most important is what's best for the children and maintain consistency whenever possible between the households.

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ARIES (March 21-April 19). You're always nice to those who are older, younger or weaker than you in any way. The kindness you dole out today will make a bigger difference in someone's life than you might guess.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Unnecessary purchases go masquerading as necessary ones. Go without and see what happens.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Are sensual cravings a gift from heaven or an enticement toward a lesser version of the self? It is not easy to manage the want for delight against the need for spiritual evolution, but you'll achieve a good balance today.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You've a talent for getting to the source of the problem. When you speak to the core of a situation, confusing and unpleasant symptoms disappear.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Happiness leaves no scar: If only it did! There is so much joy to be had in recollection. Take a souvenir from today's happy experience. This sweetness must be remembered!

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The extra time and effort you put into your look is not something you do out of vanity; rather, it's in the spirit of altruism. Whatever you can do to make

yourself a source of delight is a gift that you bring to the world.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22). Why struggle against worldly ambitions? You want what you want; there's a reason. Accept that some of the things you want don't seem like a spiritual ideal, but this is where you're at right now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21). When you're not sure if you should chime in or not, consider the very important role of silence. See if some well-spaced pauses might further your purposes.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You've the courage to try for your exciting goal; then again, a lot of people have that much courage. Do you also have the courage to try again? And then another time?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). While doing work you love, you're compelled to put more time and thought into each step. This is why you'll wind up in a completely different place than the others who started out with you on this project.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). When good friends want to spend time with you, they won't care about the details that go with it. The environment, food and entertainment involved doesn't matter much, so don't stress over it. What they want is you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If you're going to compare yourself to another person (not advised, but hey, it happens) at least be fair enough not to measure the other person's best result next to your work in progress.



HOLIDAY MATHIS