

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



"I'm just so grateful that someone nearby happened to know CPR!"

Catholic hospitals value life of mother

Dear Abby: You printed a letter from a woman (Nov. 25) whose husband told her while she was pregnant that, if it came to a choice, he would choose the life of the baby over hers.

Your response contained a piece of misinformation I would appreciate you correcting for your readers.

You asserted that it is Catholic policy to save the life of the baby over the mother in obstetrical emergencies.

Abby, that is one of the oldest but most persistent pieces of misinformation out there! This inaccurate statement has been replayed even in movies in spite of repeated denials by Catholic hospitals and the professionals who render care in them.

The fact is: Catholic policy is abundantly clear on the dignity of both mother and baby, and makes no priority of one over the other.

Catholic hospitals operate with the same standards of safety in maternity care and are inspected by the same organizations that

inspect non-Catholic maternity programs such as the Joint Commission and the licensing agency of each state.

Catholic hospitals must adhere to the same robust standards as every other maternity service in the country.

I would appreciate it if you could assure your readers that, while this makes for good movies and novels, it is not the Catholic position.

The dignity of the life of both mother and baby are critically important to all those serving in Catholic health care. Thank you for your help with this. — *Sr. Carol Keenan, President and Chief Executive Officer, Catholic Health Association*

C-sections. Obstetrical complications (now solved by surgical delivery) created a dilemma: Either allow a dysfunctional labor to continue until the child died and could be forcibly dragged or dissected through the birth canal, or perform the surgery that would cause the mother's death.

About the only time such an issue could arise in contemporary America would be in the rare case of a pregnant woman who is discovered to have an aggressive cancer, and has to decide whether to start chemo or radiation therapy that could abort or harm the fetus, or delay until after delivery, which could allow the tumor to grow or metastasize. — *Robin T., Richmond, Calif.*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Dear Sister Carol: Since printing that letter, I have received a crash course in ethics at Catholic hospitals. I apologize to you and to my Catholic readers for saying what I did. In the interest of educating my readers, I am sharing some of the enlightening letters I received. Read on:

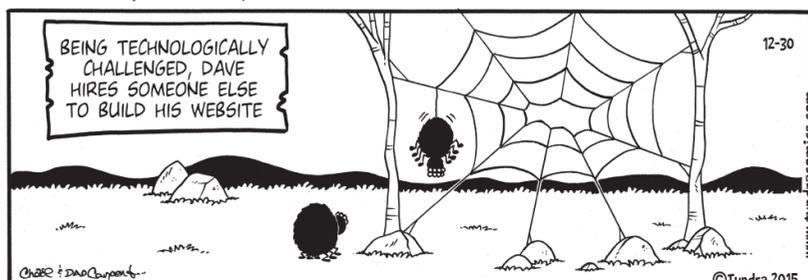
Dear Abby: In the days before blood banks and antibiotics, very few women survived

Dear Abby: Devout Catholics are pro-life in every instance, and, of course, efforts to save both mother and infant are always the rule.

But the value of the life of a newborn never surpasses the value of the life of the mother. Never! — *Catholic Doctor in Ohio*

Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



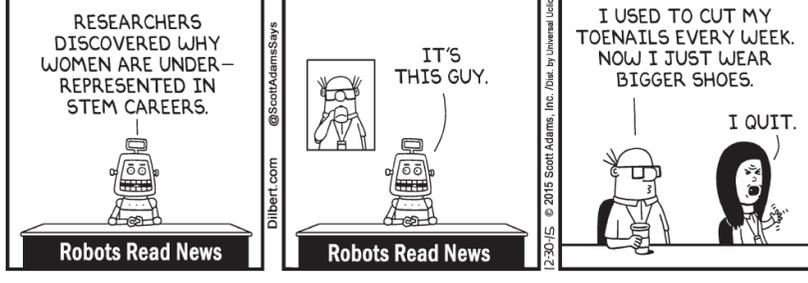
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



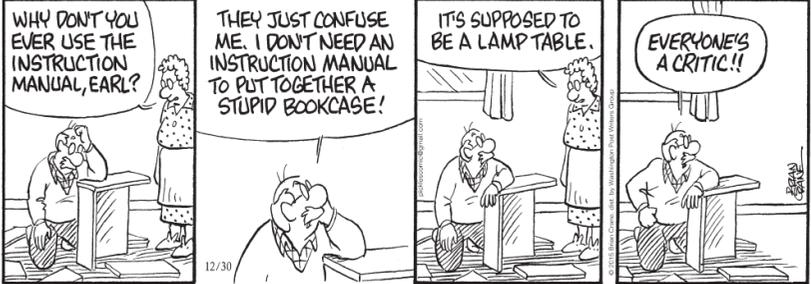
MARK TRAIL by James Allen



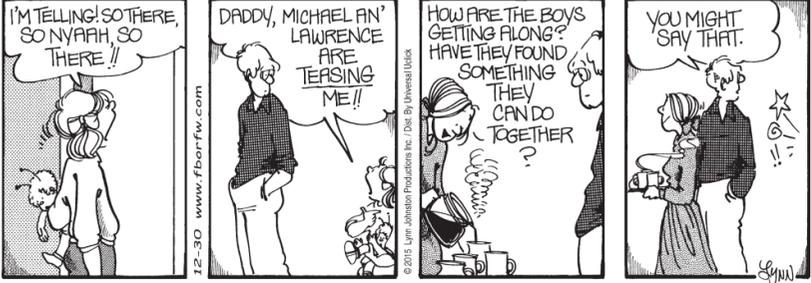
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



PICKLES by Brian Crane



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Decisions that appear to point to a permanent result actually do not. That's good news. Now you can just choose in a lighthearted, carefree manner: You can always change your mind later.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Resist the temptation to try hard to be liked. You're already liked. Encourage others to share, and then say very little. Confidence, real or pretend, is the secret to today's win.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The choices you make today are based on the education you got long ago. Realizing this will help you appreciate, understand and have compassion for the choices and history of another.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). From the small choices of diet or dress to the major life decisions, put yourself first. Yes, other people's needs matter. But you tend to forget that you're the only one who can live your life. Do it for you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). When you feel the impulse to share what you're going through, trust it and unload your feelings. The others need to hear this and will be processing what you've said through the night.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Maybe your problems are trivial. It would comfort you to think so, anyway. It's a good excuse to take in a sad

drama about someone's extremely difficult life. Whatever you can do to put your worries in perspective will help.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Remember when you didn't think you could do it, but you tried anyway and ended up with a feeling of accomplishment and new skills to boot? Well, that will happen all over again.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Life is so much easier when you act in the optimum moment, i.e., the moment the impulse rises in you. It's not true for every day, but today your timing is stellar!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Your popularity rush has started (thanks to Venus) and you're already starting to give the world another side of you. They see you as courageous, even though you're just doing what comes naturally.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The vagaries become clear as you ask more questions and track the answers. Even more revealing will be the answers that are not forthcoming. Pay attention to the gaps.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Should you blend or should you pop? Neither will win you the chance to participate. Instead of thinking in terms of blending in or standing out, think in terms of fitting and you'll do just fine.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). With all of your grand plans, there's no time or energy to waste in harboring resentment. The easiest way will be to cut your losses, but if you can't take it that far, go in for a short, sweet negotiation.



HOLIDAY MATHS