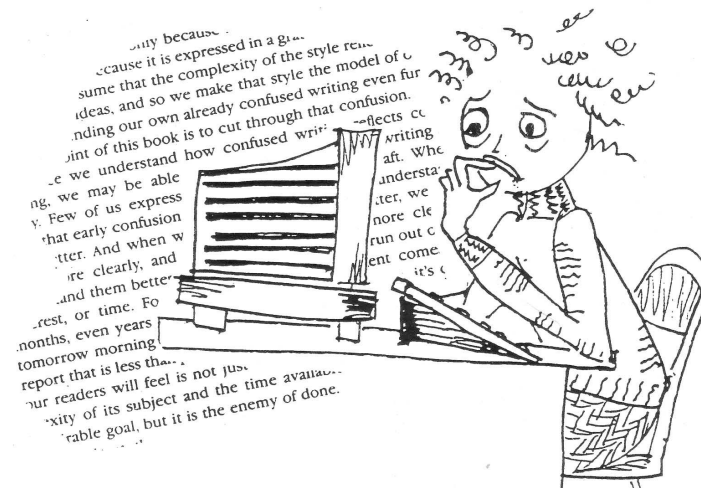


What's in a word?

Lecture 3

Professional Writing & Editing



The study of language



- Language is the predominant channel of communication used by humans
- Language is learned and imbibed from our social surroundings
- Words are symbols: meaning is in the use and interpretation, not in the word itself
- Each speaker and reader will bring their own interpretations to the meaning
- Context can alter meaning

Words as symbols

- Both the sounds and the letters used to represent the sounds are arbitrary: they have no inherent meaning
- We learn and use particular meanings and they evolve and change
- Language is not fixed: it evolves and changes
- Words and expressions, forms of speech etc often act as historical artifacts

The elusive concept of *meaning*

- Language helps form the limits of our reality. It is our means of ordering, classifying and manipulating the world. It is through language that we become members of a human community, that the world becomes comprehensible and meaningful, that we bring into existence the world in which we live. (Spender, 1994, 3)

The elusive notion of meaning

5

- Most meanings differ between source or sender and receiver or destination even if both understand the words used
- It is a *cherished notion* (Cameron, 1995) that speakers have total control over the meaning of their own discourse and that all linguistic codes are unproblematically shared
- Is there such a thing as *neutral* language?

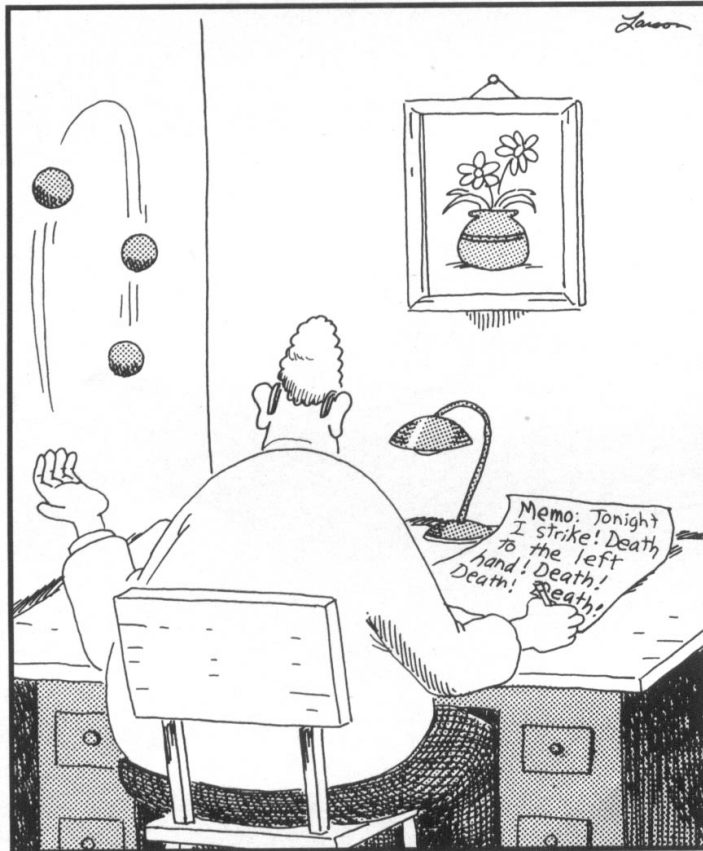
The Meaning of “meaning”

- “ ‘Sodium chloride means ‘salt’ ” – (ie *denotes the same substance as*” or *“is a word more or less synonymous with ...*)
- ‘Brenda means mischief’ – (ie *‘intends to cause ’*)
- ‘Bill means the University of Technology’ – (ie *‘wishes to convey’ or ‘is referring to’ ...*)
- ‘Mozart has no meaning for me.’ – (ie *‘arouses no specific emotion in ...’*)
- I mean what I say – (ie *... am determined to do’*)
- ‘In Spanish “espejo” means “mirror” – (ie *‘translates as or is the equivalent of*)

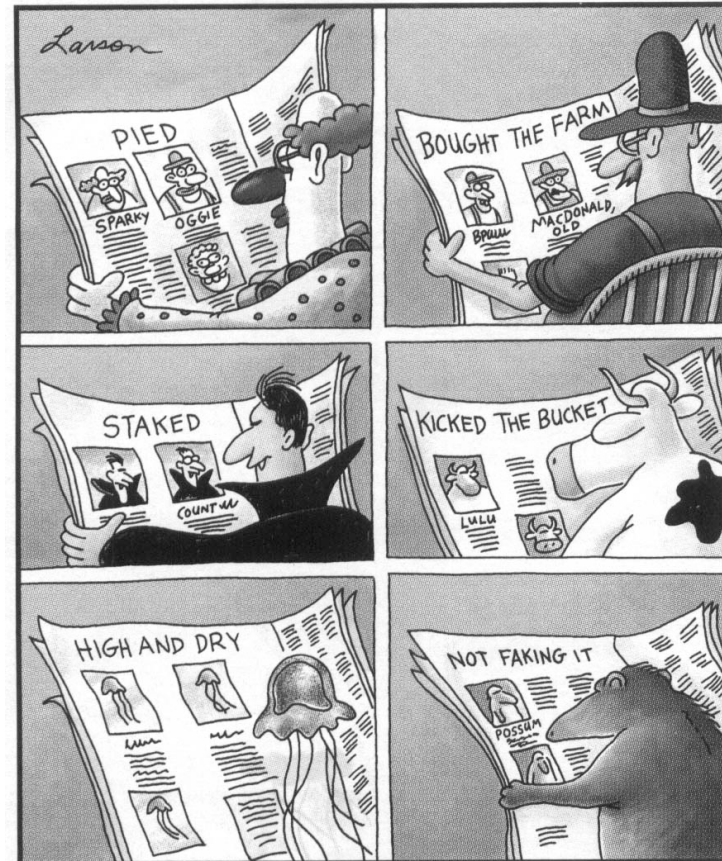
Denotation vs connotation

- Denotation is the literal or *objective* meaning of a word
- Connotation is the *subjective* or emotive meaning that a word may have. Can be positive or negative
- Words may have both denotative and connotative meanings
- Even apparently value-free words in certain contexts may be subtly value-laden eg slim vs skinny, casual vs nonchalant, determined vs obsessive

Some examples of the absurdity of language thanks to “The Far Side”

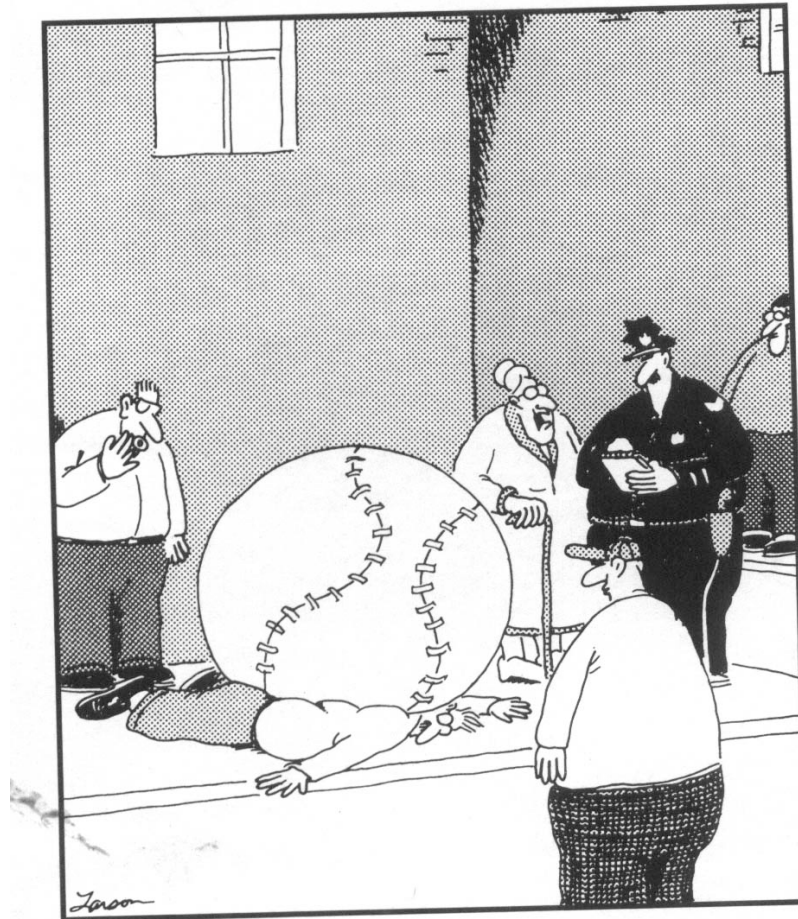


Innocent and carefree, Stuart's left hand didn't know what the right was doing.



Specialized obituaries

And some more ...



"And then wham! This thing just came right out of left field."

© Myra Gurney 2010
School of Communication Arts



Understanding only German, Fritz was unaware that the clouds were becoming threatening.

How do we *know* reality?

- A central concern for philosophers and linguists since the time of the Ancients
- Does thought come from language?
- Can we think without verbalising our thoughts?
- Do we know things and then look for the words to express them?
- Do we learn language and then look around for something to say?

Edward Sapir 1929

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group.

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis

- *Linguistic determinism* – our thinking is determined by language
- *Linguistic relativity* – people who speak different languages perceive and think differently about the world
- Whorf studied the language of the Hopi Indians which makes no distinction between past, present and future tense
- He later distanced himself from the more extreme implications of the hypothesis

Language and 'reality'

- The words we choose our version of 'reality' will reflect both how we experience these phenomena and also how we wish others to see it.
- Bill Lutz writes:
 - I like my coffee hot; my wife says my coffee is scalding; I say the handle of the pot is too hot; my wife grabs it with her bare hand; I say the shirt is red; my wife says it is orange. I say the car is small; the salesman calls it 'mid-sized'. What passes for a mountain in the mid-West is called a 'foothill' in the West (1996, 9).

George Orwell, 1984 & Newspeak

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Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thought crime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed, will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten. Already, in the Eleventh Edition, we're not far from that point. But the process will still be continuing long after you and I are dead. Every year fewer and fewer words, and the range of consciousness always a little smaller ...
(Orwell, 1949, *Nineteen Eighty Four*, 44-45)

“Ruddock-speak”

- For him a broken child has suffered ‘an adverse impact’; people who go on hunger strikes or sew their lips together are involved in ‘inappropriate behaviours’; refugees who flee to the West in terror are ‘queue jumpers’; ... those who are dispatched to tropical prisons financed by Australia are part of the ‘Pacific solution’.

By teaching Australians to think and speak like this, the minister has gradually helped to reconcile a goodly part of the nation to the unspeakable cruelties enacted daily ... (Manne, 2002, in Mohan et al, 2004, 43)

War doublespeak

- Friendly fire
- Collateral damage
- Ethnic cleansing
- Incomplete successes
- Pre-emptive counterattacks
- Rendition

Euphemisms

- The practice of using non-offensive words to disguise offensive, brutal or painful actions or states
- Part of the *language game* of politeness
- Orwell coined the term 'doublespeak' to refer to the use of euphemism to cover or conceal horrendous or unsavoury acts or situations

Euphemism, PC, jargon & doublespeak

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- Euphemisms are designed to remove the “offence” or “unpleasantness” that can arise from certain words, notions or concepts eg
 - Die = passed away, life extinct
 - Go to the toilet = use the bathroom, spend a penny, see a man about a dog, visit the powder room
 - Sacked or dismissed = career change, downsized redeployed, selective separation, workforce imbalance correction

Doublespeak at work



Euphemisms designed to deceive

20

- Radiation enhancement weapon = nuclear bomb
- Eliminate with extreme prejudice = kill
- Pre-dawn vertical insertion = invasion
- Friendly fire = kill your own soldiers
- Engage the enemy on all sides = ambushed
- Ballistically-induced aperture in the subcutaneous environment = bullet hole
- Period of accelerated negative growth = recession

The notion of 'discourse'

- Language is more a social than an individual matter and Kress uses the term *discourse* to mean the systematic way in which institutions or social groups habitually talk or write (Mohan et al, 1997, 69)
- “A body of ideas, concepts and beliefs which become established as knowledge or as an accepted world view. These ideas become a powerful framework for understanding and action in social life” (Bilton et al, 1996, 657)

Language as a “social construction”

22

- Kress: language not something that is “outside time” –
- Language not a static, fixed system or as something where “the individual language user meets the system as a monolithic, immutable given, which he or she may use but cannot alter.”
- Discourses reflect the users’ view of the world and act to internalise these views via language
- According to Kress and Hodge (1979), naming and labeling a phenomenon has the effect of shaping how we think about it: boat people, illegal immigrants, queue jumpers

Language and taboo

- Swearing: “According to Freud, the basis of a taboo is a forbidden action for which there exists a strong inclination in the subconscious”

Geoffrey Hughes (1991) Swearing: a Social History of Foul Language, Oaths and Profanity in English

- The most potent swear word is still that which refers to female genitalia
- What constitutes swearing has changed from blasphemy to sex and bodily functions
- Change in taboos reflected in language: “These days it is more dangerous to say someone is fat than to say they’re a fuckwit.” Sue Butler, Macquarie Dictionary

The 'Scarlet P'

- Names of brands and advertising rhetoric have long implied the need for secrecy, concealment and discretion
 - ▶▶ Modess (implies modesty)
 - ▶▶ Meds (medical/ pathology)
 - ▶▶ Carefree/Stayfree (freedom from restriction)
 - ▶▶ Whisper (discretion)
 - ▶▶ Fibs (lies/concealment)



Shower...
Play...
Dance
*any day
when you use*
Meds

Yes, with this new method of Internal Sanitary protection you can lead your normal life *every* day of the month.

You can wear your snappiest tennis frock or your clingiest evening gown—even on "those days."

You see, with Meds there is no revealing line; no uncomfortable bulk; no odor; no belts, pins or pads; no chafing. And they're so easy to dispose of. You can be happy and free all the time.

**NEW
REDUCED
PRICE**
2²/₃^d
3/6 with
applicators

FOR SINGLE GIRLS? Certainly!
Medical evidence shows that any normal, fully-grown girl can wear Meds. Remember, Meds were designed by a Doctor and are worn by Nurses the world over.

*It's
so much easier
when
you know*

So be ready for "next time." Buy a packet of Meds to-day and enjoy their wonderful advantages. Get a free copy of the Meds booklet and learn the secrets of this fascinating new protection. Fill in the coupon and post it to Nurse Reid, Johnson & Johnson, Box 3331, G.P.O., Sydney.

'Womanhood' pathologised

- Medical establishment claimed the right to speak for women – “accepted for advertisement by the American Medical Assoc
- The previous example claims “Meds were designed by a doctor and are worn by nurses the world over.”
- Focus on ‘sanitation’



The discourse of 'feminine hygiene' ...

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- Underpants are always 'panties'
- Blood is 'fluid' or 'moisture' and is shown as blue not red
- Tampons are 'worn internally' not 'inserted'
- Women don't 'bleed' they 'flow'
- Reference is made to 'that time of the month', 'on those special days'
- Focus on secrecy and shame

And I thought this weekend was going to be a bummer!



Wouldn't you know! Great skiing and I got my period. Napkins are so uncomfortable, and I can't use tampons, Pat, I've tried.

Tish, you need more than a slalom lesson. When we go back, I've got something for you.

AT LODGE

Here! Try a Pursettes tampon. Even my kid sister was comfortable using one of these the first time.

But what makes Pursettes so different?

See. A Pursettes tampon is no larger than the key to our room. And it has a pre-lubricated tip instead of a bulky applicator, which makes it easier to use.



NEXT DAY

Why, the way Pursettes fit without being felt, I don't feel tied down at all.



You'll love this neat little carrying compact, too. Really makes Pursettes the tote tampons. And small as they are, they give you super protection.



Oh, Alex, this weekend was even better than I dreamed.



TAKE PURSETTES. WHEN YOU TAKE TO THE SLOPES.

If you love the outdoors, you'll love the highly-absorbent tote tampons, Pursettes. For a free compact, filled with four regular Pursettes®, or three super-absorbent Pursettes Plus® tampons (indicate choice), send 25¢ for postage-handling to Campana, Dept. T-104, Batavia, Ill. 60510. And don't lose a day of fun.



Offer good in U.S.A. only. Expires in 90 days.

5 YOUR LAB PARTNER IS TOTALLY HOT.



6 YOU MAY SWIM.

7 YOU LOVE SURPRISES.

8 YOUR TINY PURPLE SEQUIN PURSE.

9 NO OTHER GIRL HAS.

O.K., YOUR PERIOD IS NO BIG DEAL. BUT IF HE FOUND OUT, YOU'D CHANGE SCHOOLS. IT'S A LOT SIMPLER JUST TO USE KOTEX ULTRA THIN MAXIS, AND RELAX. HE'LL NEVER, EVER KNOW.

PERIOD IS TOO. THAT'S WHY THERE'S A WHOLE RANGE OF KOTEX PRODUCTS. SO YOU CAN CHOOSE THE ONE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU... NOT YOUR MOTHER.

YOUR KIND OF Protection



FORGET BULKY! KOTEX PADS AND TAMPONS COME IN NEAT LITTLE POUCHES THAT FIT IN PRACTICALLY ANY PLACE.

Kotex Understands

- Advertising to teenage market took off in 1970s
- Similar thematic concerns



Only you'll know what they're really for.

Ever reached inside your handbag for a lipstick, and pulled out a tampon, instead? Embarrassing, isn't it?

That's why we're introducing our new SIMPLICITY® FREEDOM® range.

A range of quality pant liners and wetwipes - expanding, regular and super tampons.

Individually wrapped in outrageous colours, they look nothing like tampons or pant liners, at all.

So it won't matter who sees them, or where you keep them.

The new SIMPLICITY FREEDOM range, a clever idea, in a brilliant pack.

ONE EVERYTHING IN YOUR LIFE NOW

Simplicity Freedom

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They'll never guess what you've got up your sleeve.

Ever been called over for a chat when you're holding a tampon in your hand?

Embarrassing, isn't it?

But not with the SIMPLICITY® FREEDOM® Range.

Because they're cunningly camouflaged in the most outrageous colours.

Our softer, body-shaped pant liners, and wetwipes - expanding, regular and super tampons, offer you all the protection you expect from the SIMPLICITY Range.

So you'll feel just as comfortable wearing them, as you will carrying them.

The SIMPLICITY FREEDOM Range, a clever idea, in a brilliant pack.

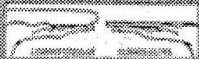
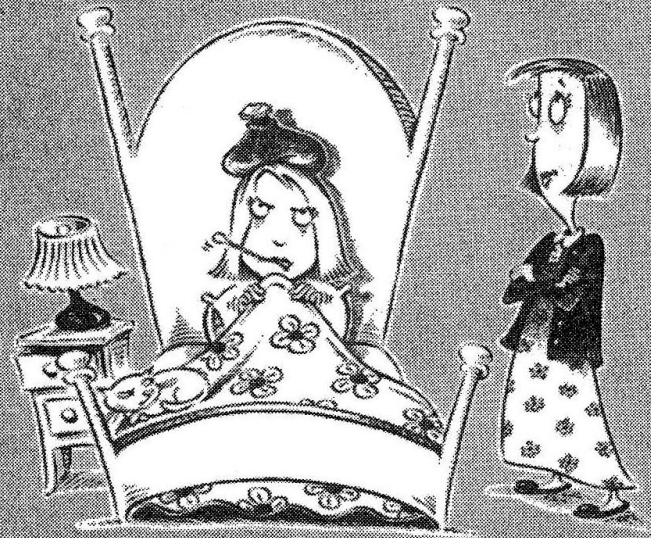
ONE EVERYTHING IN YOUR LIFE NOW

Simplicity Freedom

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The Scarlet 'P' ...

HOW
COULD YOU DO THIS
TO ME, MOM?! DID YOU
THINK I'D HAVE TO FLOAT TO
SCHOOL? DID YOU THINK IT WOULD
DOUBLE AS AN AIRBAG IF THE SCHOOL
BUS GOT INTO AN ACCIDENT? WHY DON'T
YOU JUST PIN A SCARLET "P" ON MY
CHEST? OR HAVE THE PRINCIPAL MAKE AN
ANNOUNCEMENT THAT DIANE FIELDS HAS
HER PERIOD TODAY?! I'M SORRY, BUT
I'M NOT GONNA WADDLE AROUND ALL
DAY WEARING THESE SUPERSIZED
PADS. WRITE ME A NOTE.
I'M SICK TODAY.



DIANE WOULDN'T BE HAVING SUCH A COV IF SHE KNEW ABOUT
ALWAYS ULTRA®. THEY'RE ULTRA THIN PADS WITH A SUPER-ABSORBENT
CORE THAT TRAPS MOISTURE BETTER THAN REG. WOMEN'S REGULAR HONCOMING FLOAT
PADS*. BUT STAY CLEANER AND DRIER THANKS TO DRIVE-AWAY - THE TINY FUNNELS ON TOP OF
THE PAD THAT HELP PULL MOISTURE AWAY FROM THE SURFACE AND KEEP IT AWAY. THEN
DIANE COULD SAVE THE QUIET TRIP - AND THE SICK NOTE - FOR ANOTHER DAY.

IT'S CLEANER. IT'S DRIER. IT'S ALWAYS.



How could you do this to me Mom?! Did you think I'd have to float to school? Did you think it would double as an airbag if the school bus got into an accident? Why don't you just pin a scarlet 'P' on my chest? Or have the principal make an announcement that Diane Fields has her period today? I'm sorry but I'm not gonna waddle around all day wearing these supersized pads. Write me a note. I'm sick today.

What's changed?

- Not much! Focus still on ...
- women being “active” during “that time of the month” – uncontrolled menstruation can be a social hazard
- new technologies – absorption qualities of sphagnum moss, ultra thin pads, coloured tampons as accessories
- Need for secrecy and discretion
- Some more recent ads from *Dolly* and *Girlfriend* Magazines




“Between
US,
Carefree is
not just
for periods.
It's freshness
every day.”
— Sarah

Fresh Day. Every Day.
Carefree To Go Pantliners.

Carefree To Go. The only pantliner individually wrapped so it goes where you go. Stays fresh, neat, discreet. Softly quilted, absorbs light flow and between-period moisture. Carefree To Go. And off you go.

Carefree.
Care Fresh.
Care Free.



PPC 1026

Stay comfortable

Make yourself more comfortable.



Even if you haven't tried using a tampon yet, you've probably thought about it. After all, it means you can go swimming, wear anything you want and, best of all, forget you've even got your period. So there's plenty of upsides.

But what about the downsides? Like putting it in for the first time? Well there's really nothing to worry about. Honestly, it may feel a bit odd actually inserting it for the first time but Carefree® Slim tampons have a unique Silk Ease™ cover that makes them so silky smooth, no other tampon is more comfortable to insert and remove.

The trick is just to relax and follow the instructions that come with each box of Carefree® Slims.

Once the tampon is in you won't even feel it at all. But you will feel completely protected knowing it has tiny pores which direct fluid inside the tampon where it is absorbed.

In fact, Carefree® Slims with the Silk Ease™ cover give you all the protection you need. In a tampon that's very gentle on your body. Now that's a very comforting thought.



© 1999 Trade Mark Johnson & Johnson

Make yourself more comfortable.



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© 1999 Trade Mark Johnson & Johnson

Accessorise



Accessorise with
a touch of
the East.

Stayfree
ULTRA THINS

REGULAR COTTONY SOFT COVER

WINES

New packs out now.

© 2004 Kimberly-Clark Corporation



Spin out over our
twist tops.

Quick twist for [U]
Easy as. Quick twist-open coloured wrappers.
[U] by Kotex® tampons.

* Trademark Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.

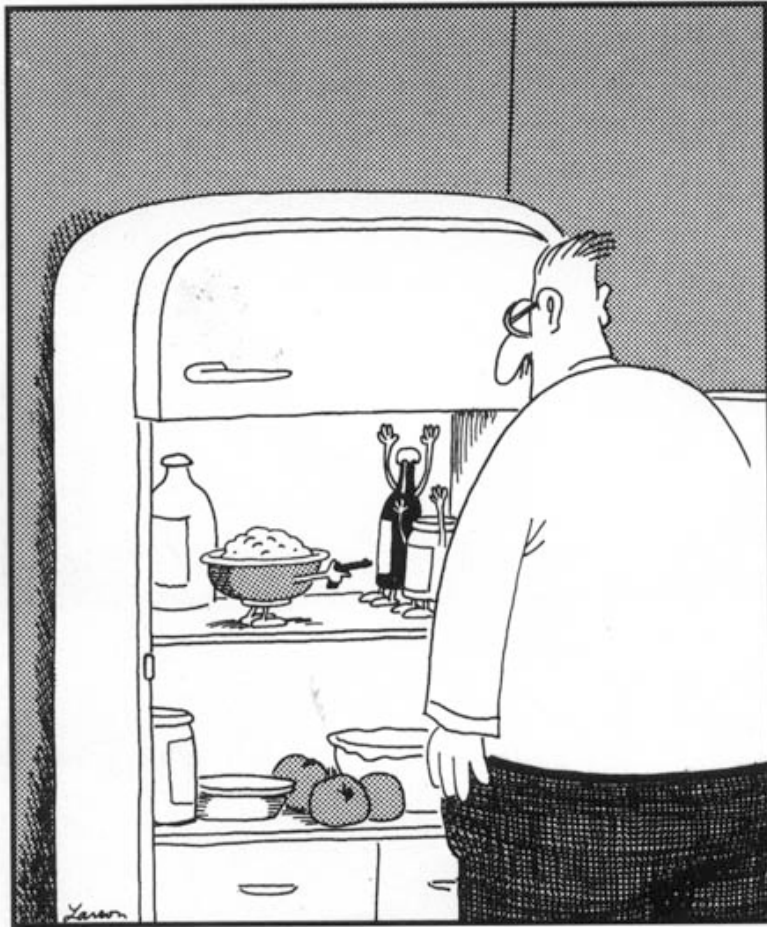
u4u.com.au

As long as they stop the leaks & stay invisible ...

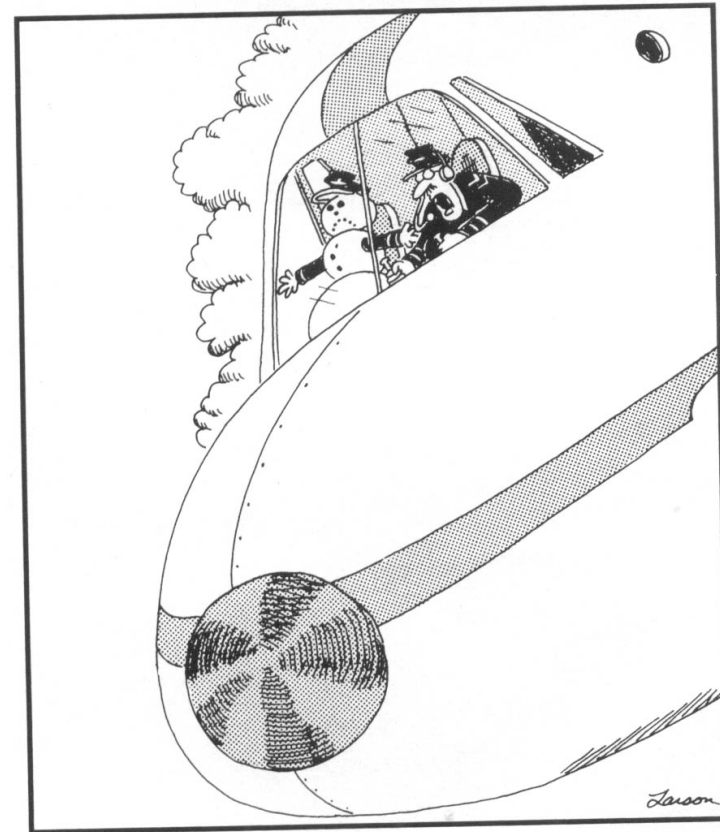
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More Larson ...

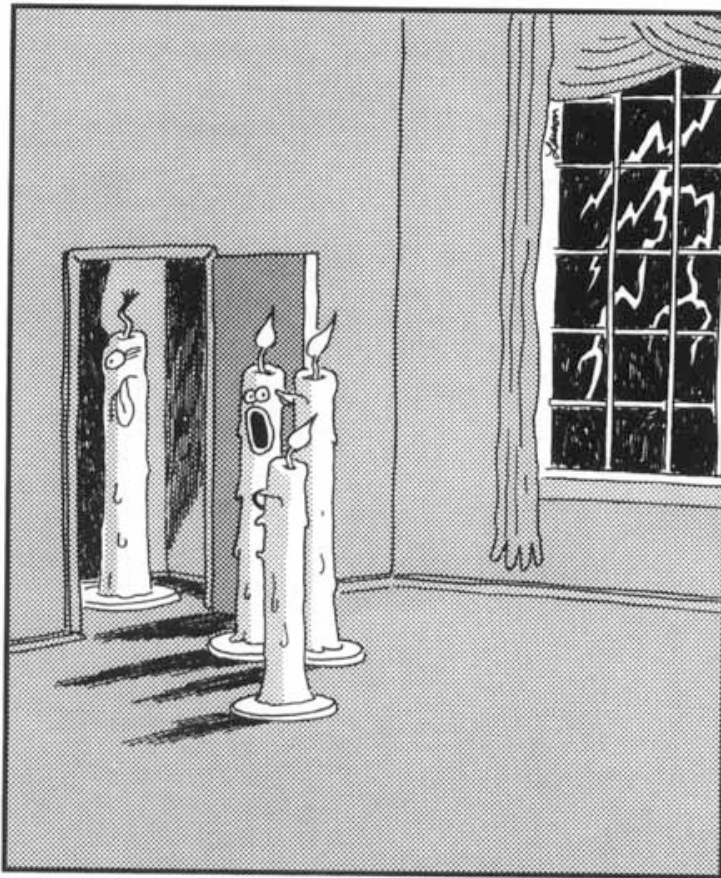


When potato salad goes bad



"Mayday! Mayday! This is Flight 97! I'm in trouble! ...
My second engine's on fire, my landing gear's
jammed, and my worthless co-pilot's frozen!"

Last ones



"AAAAAAAAAAAA! It's Sid! Someone snuffed him!"

