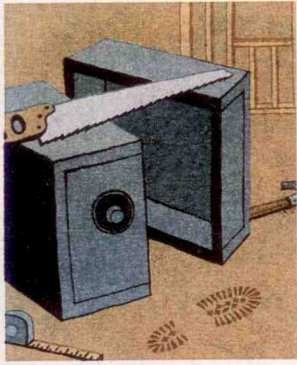


# LETTERS



## Building Tension

The title “Avoid Contractor Rip-Offs” (December 5) implies all contractors will take advantage of you. This is simply not true. Most are honest and want to do a good job while earning a decent living. The best source of information for a homeowner is a reference from the contractor’s last job.

**Doug Storey** / Bolton

I would suggest that anyone who is contemplating having work done on his or her home call a building inspector to find out what types of permits are needed and how the process works once you get them. Not all contractors are out to scam you, but you may not know until well into the project.

**Janice Gould** / Framingham

We were ripped off by a contractor when we added on to our house, so our advice to others is don’t be afraid to ask questions and, most important, have a lawyer who represents your interests look over the contract.

**Jeff Chung** / Lexington

Your estimable article was illustrated by an artist who

clearly has never used a handsaw. The teeth go in the wrong direction and would only glide over the wood, rather than cutting into it.

**Todd Lee** / Boston

## Getting Personal

In regard to “Our Sticking Point” (Coupling, December 5), I need to point out something to writer Jodi Daynard: One should discuss birth control and abortion before sex, not after.

**Sarah Harrison**  
Exeter, New Hampshire

Daynard’s attempt to frame the abortion debate as primarily a religious issue is curious. Simply stated, it revolves around the question of when life begins. The search for this objec-

tive truth should be right up the alley of a self-described secular humanist.

**Tom Kenny** / Falmouth

## Scram, Spam

I loved Miss Conduct’s response to A.K., who was unhappy because a friend forwarded relevant information in response to A.K.’s e-mail health warnings (December 5). But I thought it didn’t go far enough. Tell that scaremonger to check out Snopes.com *before* sending out unfounded warnings.

**Cory Kerens** / Malden

## A Season of Giving

Hear, hear on “Ho-Ho No” (Perspective, December 5). Our Jewish children are not deprived. They get little gifts, but, more important,