Political Cartoons for the Classroom

Promoting Critical Analysis of Current Events, Law, and Social Issues

A project of the Citizenship Law Related Education Program for the Schools of Maryland
520 West Fayette Street ♦ Baltimore, Maryland 21201
410.706.5360 ph ♦ www.clrep.org ♦ 410.706.5576 fax
Introduction

For decades, political cartoons have proven to be effective, powerful learning tools that engage audiences of all backgrounds and ages. They provide concise, humorous (or heart-tugging), quick-witted snapshots of all kinds of issues—from politics and law to education and general humanitarian efforts. We have developed this publication in the hope that those on the “front line” of education will incorporate it into daily discussions with students on “the issues”—to spark debates, critical thinking, and comprehensive, careful analysis of events happening in the world around us.

The positions expressed in these cartoons are not necessarily the position of CLREP or our staff. All cartoons in this publication are re-printed with the express written permission of Cagle Cartoons. If you wish to access additional political cartoons, we encourage you to visit www.politicalcartoons.com—a comprehensive website that includes lesson plans and classroom resources on a wide array of subjects.

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analyzing Political Cartoons</th>
<th>(Student Worksheet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monsters Under the Bed</td>
<td>Tsunami, War, Recent Events (2004-2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2Fast Influence</td>
<td>Movies, Teens, Fast Driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast Food</td>
<td>Fast Food Lawsuits, “Overweight America”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell Phones</td>
<td>Driving Irresponsibly, Cell Phones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollywood Message</td>
<td>Media Influence, Weapons of Mass Destruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Programming</td>
<td>Teens, Computers, Hacking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law School Diversity</td>
<td>“Overweight America”, Smoking, Lawsuits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Soap</td>
<td>Censorship, Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault Weapons Ban</td>
<td>NRA, Supreme Court, Weapons Ban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God Oaths</td>
<td>Freedom of Religion, Separation of Church-State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pledge to Who?</td>
<td>Pledge of Allegiance, Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagram of a Liberal</td>
<td>Liberal, John Kerry, “Left Wing”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halloween Costume Party</td>
<td>Age of Supreme Court Justices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Ballot Box</td>
<td>Bush, Iraq Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Hate Them Too</td>
<td>Americans, Cultures, Attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty Skirt</td>
<td>Privacy, Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supremes on Affirmative Action</td>
<td>Affirmative Action, Supreme Court, quotas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence in Schools</td>
<td>Guns, violence, schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Executions</td>
<td>Death penalty, juveniles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Treatment</td>
<td>Privacy, Right to Remain Silent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Are So Grounded</td>
<td>President Clinton, President Bush, broken world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analyzing Political Cartoons: Student Worksheet

Identifying the Main Idea

1. To what political event or idea is the cartoon referring?

2. What key person(s) are targeted in the cartoon?

3. How has the artist depicted these people? Are they distorted in any way? Does the artist’s portrayal of characters cast them in a negative or positive light?

4. Identify and explain any symbols incorporated in the cartoon.

5. Identify and explain captions, labels, titles and/or speech bubbles. How do these contribute to the cartoon’s message?

6. What is the message of the cartoon? How is the artist trying to persuade the reader?

7. What impact and/or reaction is the artist attempting to trigger?

Analyzing the Method Used by the Artist

1. How does the method used by the artist effectively convey a political message?

2. Identify and explain the use of:
   a. Juxtaposition (the state of being side by side or close together, in a figurative sense)

   b. Irony (the use of words or pictures to express something different from, and often opposite of their literal meaning)

   c. Exaggeration (representation as greater than is actually the case; overstatement)
I GUESS YOU’LL WANT A NIGHT LIGHT...

Artist: Tab
DO YOU EVER WONDER WHAT INFLUENCE MOVIES LIKE "2FAST 2FURIOUS" HAVE ON TODAY'S YOUTH?
DAY AFTER DAY, THE FAST FOOD INDUSTRY BADGERED MY CLIENT WITH QUESTIONS LIKE 'WILL YOU LIKE FRIES WITH THAT?' AND 'DO YOU WANT TO SUPERSIZE IT?'. DID THEY EVER ASK HIM, JUST ONCE, 'WOULD YOU LIKE THE M'sALAD INSTEAD?'
WE GOT YOUR CELL PHONE CALL! SO, WHAT CAUSED THE ACCIDENT?

I WAS ON MY CELL PHONE.
Artist: Larry Wright
I AM TOOB!
ALMIGHTY ARBITER
OF CULTURE!
DICTATOR OF TASTE!
DIRECTOR OF
NETWORK PROGRAMMING...

PAY NO ATTENTION
TO THE DUDE
BEHIND THE CURTAIN.

www.caglecartoons.com

Mike Keefe, The Denver Post, 2002
IF THEY REALLY WANT DIVERSITY IN LAW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS THEY SHOULD RECRUIT SOME STUDENTS WHO BELIEVE IN PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.
Artist: Mike Keefe
OH, WAIT... BEFORE YOU CAN TESTIFY HOW THE WORDS "UNDER GOD" IN THE PLEDGE IS AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL SANCTIONING OF RELIGION BY GOVERNMENT, PLEASE PLACE YOUR RIGHT HAND ON THIS BIBLE AND SWEAR THAT YOU'LL "TELL THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, SO HELP YOU GOD."
WHO IS THIS GOD CHARACTER ANYWAY?
Artist: Bob Englehart
Artist: Best of Latin America
I HATE THEM TOO.
Artist: Best of Latin America

www.caglecartoons.com/espanol
Artist: Mike Keefe
THE SUPREME COURT ALLOWS JUVENILE EXECUTIONS...
Hey, c'mere. What's your name?

I choose to remain silent.

-No can do, homey. Supreme Court says you got to tell me your name.

And if I don't?

Now, "You have the right to remain silent."