

**Title of Session:** LOC Learning Page Chat - Political Cartoons

**Moderator:** Leni Donlan

**Title of File:** 20041118locpoliticalcart

**Date:** November 18, 2004

Room: After School Online Room

**LeniD:** Hello everyone. Are you here for the Library of Congress chat about political cartoons?

**GeneKe:** yep

**KatieBo:** yep

**CraigE:** yes

**SusanR** cheers for Leni

**LeniD:** Wow...thanks, Susan

**GeneKe:** I second those cheers

**KatieBo:** me too

**LeniD:** My goodness ::::::::::blush::::::::::::

**LeniD:** We will get started in just a minute. I see BJ is looking for stragglers.

**BJ** . o O ( if you see this you're in the right place )

**LeniD:** Political Cartoons...coming right up!

**BJ:** before we begin...

**BJ:** if you're new to Tapped In, go to the actions menu in the top right of the chat window...

**BJ:** and clicik on DETACH

**BJ:** that will make your chat screen larger and easier to follow

**BJ** . o O ( Leni usually takes us on a wild ride! )

**LeniD:** Thanks, BJ. Any other tips for the group?

**BJ:** do you want to start with introductions, Leni?

**LeniD:** Yes, please. Will you please tell us your name, where you are from and what you teach?

**BJ:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania

**StevenSh:** My name is Steven and I teach High School Social Studies in Houston, TX

**GeneKe:** Gene---Akron, Ohio-----preservice middle school math/science

**KatieBo:** Katie, Akron, Ohio, preservice middle social studies and science

**LeslieWa:** Leslie Warren, a librarian at Moraine Valley Community College in Chicago's southwest 'burbs

**ZakW:** I'm Zak, and I'm working towards a history degree and secondary licensure at Maryville college in Maryville, TN

**SusanR:** K to 8 Occasional Teacher from Ottawa, Ontario

**CraigE:** My name is Craig----Fairfax, Va---I'm a pre-service teacher studying at George Mason University

**GailP** joined the room.

**LeniD:** Gail! :-)))

**GailP:** Hello from Roanoke!

**LeniD:** We are just introducing our selves...Gail is one of my Library colleagues....

**LeniD:** I'm Leni Donlan the coordinator of the Learning Page project at the Library of Congress.

**GailP:** I'm in the middle of an event using public computers, but wanted to say hi and see if I could visit for a bit!

**LeniD:** Welcome, one and all

**LeniD:** So let's talk about political cartoons...

**LeniD:** and how they are used in teaching and learning.

**LeniD:** We'll begin by considering what others have said about this art form...

**LeniD:** The political cartoon is a sort of pictorial breakfast food. It has the cardinal asset of making the beginning of the day sunnier. ~ John T McCutcheon

**LeniD:** Would you agree?

**LeniD:** Do you see political cartoons as day brighteners? Do your students?

**BJ:** sunnier? Depends on the topic of the cartoon!

**KatieBo:** I think they can be a highlight for me sometimes

**LeniD:** I'm with you on that...I'm not sure I find McCutcheon's view to coincide with my own.

**CraigE:** I agree with BJ...

**StevenSh:** I agree with BJ...depends on topic.

**CraigE:** Depends on the topic

**GeneKe:** it's possible, but not always

**LeniD:** Herb Block said...

**ZakW:** they can definitely make a day sunnier, but also make you think before beginning the day

**LeniD:** "The political cartoon is not a news story and not an oil portrait. It's essentially a means for poking fun, for puncturing pomposity. ...

**LeniD:** I've often summed up the role of the cartoonist as that of the boy in the Hans Christian Andersen story who says the emperor has no clothes on."

**LeniD:** (agree, Zak!)

**LeniD:** Is this how you view the medium?

**LeslieWa:** They are often able to strip away the "sound bite" nature of typical news

**LeniD:** Yep! Well said, Leslie.

**ZakW:** somewhat yes. I certainly get my laughs out of it, but they can also be more blunt in the point that is trying to be conveyed.

**LeniD:** Some are like a poke in the eye...and not really laughable.

**StevenSh:** I agree with Zak...I like the fact that they get the point across without necessarily being sensationalized

**ZakW:** that is very true

**LeniD:** Do you think your students understand this kind of humor?

**KatieBo:** I think it depends the level they are on

**StevenSh:** I just had my students do cartoons on progressivism and expansionism...they didn't get it

**LeniD:** What grade, Steven?

**LeniD:** I agree, Katie.

**StevenSh:** high school

**LeslieWa:** Some of mine do, but it usually takes a lot of current events awareness to understand the sophisticated ones

**StevenSh:** I agree with Leslie

**ZakW:** I think it depends on the level of the students and the class subject and the cartoon itself

**LeniD:** Yes, they do require "background knowledge."

**LeniD:** All true, Zak.

**LeniD:** How have you used political cartoons with your students?

**ZakW:** I'll agree with they do require background knowledge

**LeniD:** If you are preservice...how do you think you may in the future?

**StevenSh:** Every chapter I teach we use political cartoons...big on our state mandated tests

**ZakW:** preservice?

**LeslieWa:** I'm getting ready to teach Intro to Mass Comm in the spring - my first time to teach it - I want a cartoon activity

**LeniD:** sorry...I think we have a few teachers in training (preservice).

**GeneKe:** would you define what you mean by a political cartoon

**KatieBo:** I think that they can be useful

**LeniD:** We may find one, tonight, Leslie!

**LeslieWa:** great!

**LeniD:** Hmm...that's a good question, Gene.

**LeniD:** I'll take a stab at it...you can all jump in to help...

**GeneKe:** clear up my misconceptions

**LeniD:** A political cartoon is a drawn depiction of an event, person, issue...

**ZakW:** ah yes...I am one of those in preservice

**LeniD:** that points out what is laughable or ludicrous about what is shown....either playfully or even painfully.

**LeniD:** Thought so, Zak

**StevenSh:** I think that is an excellent definition Leni

**LeniD:** Does that sound close, folks?

**LeniD:** Thanks, Steven!

**KatieBo:** sounds good to me

**GeneKe:** how is that different from any other cartoon

**ZakW:** I'm a big fan of political cartoons though. and yeah, that sounds like a good description of a political cartoon

**D\_rauscGst16:** why do you think it is good to use them in the classroom?

**StevenSh:** they point out what is right or wrong about a particular person, event, issue - according to the cartoonist and sometime popular opinion

**BJ:** I think that a 'political cartoon doesn't necessarily have to depict a political event...it can be social commentary

**LeniD:** Gene...I think the term "political" indicates that it is more than just about "life"...

**KatieBo:** it gives the students an idea of the issues around them

**LeniD:** Thanks, Steven...that's good!

**GeneKe:** k

**GailP:** I'm here at a library conference in Roanoke (VEMA) and was talking to someone watching over my shoulder who said - and I quote " Political cartoons are the only truthful thing in the newspaper." Interesting comment!!

**ZakW:** yeah, these cartoons can encompass anything in life and socially whether it be politics, consumerism, etc...

**LeniD:** True, BJ...but not just an observation about 'life'.

**LeniD:** Good comment, Gail!

**BJ:** a very touching cartoon when Chris Reeves died was a picture of a man in a wheelchair entering a phone booth and superman with wings flying off to heaven

**GeneKe:** it's merely a visual representation of a person's bias...no different than text

**CraigE:** or truth

**LeslieWa:** We keep hearing that our students are more visually literate than in the past, maybe cartoons are good way to engage them in current events

**LeniD:** Gene...you're a tough one. You are right about the representation of bias or point of view, though!

**KatieBo:** right but you can read them at a glance, and don't have to read an article for meaning

**StevenSh:** or work around all the 'junk' they include in order to fill in an article

**LeniD:** If you understand them and know what to look for, Katie.

**KatieBo:** right

**SusanR:** editorial cartoons

**BJ:** ahhh, Katie...that is assuming that the viewer is visually literate

**BJ:** o O ( and knows how to 'read' a picture )

**ZakW:** Leni is right. If you have no background knowledge of what the cartoon is commenting on, it is very difficult to know what's going on

**LeniD:** Editorial cartoons and political cartoons...sometimes used interchangeably. Do you think they differ, Susan?

**GeneKe:** can be more succinct yet vague at the same time leaving room for different interpretations

**StevenSh:** BJ's thought is a good one in my opinion...that is what I am trying to teach my students

**LeniD:** Yes...that's true, too, Gene!

**KatieBo:** right

**SusanR:** usually they are the same thing, Leni

**LeniD:** Visual literacy is a very important skill, today.

**LeniD:** So....you are full of thoughts about these critters...do you want to see what the Library offers?

**D\_rauscGst16:** has anyone allowed their students to create their own cartoons regarding an issue?

**SusanR:** yes

**GeneKe:** of course!

**StevenSh:** I just had my students create some

**LeniD:** That's a great activity, D-rausc :-0

**StevenSh:** yes Leni...I need all the help I can get

**D\_rauscGst16:** do they really enjoy it?

**SusanR:** I am only aware of the Cagle site

**ZakW:** I believe my junior history teacher had us do that in high school

**LeniD:** I did it several times with younger students. (5th grade)...they did great work

**LeniD:** Let me start "showing"...

**LeniD:** Let's start with this essay from the late cartoonist, Herb Block...

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/herblock/cartoon.html>

**KatieBo:** my English teacher in 12th grade had us make one, but she also had the local comic come in and talk to us

**LeniD:** Do you all know how to view the links?

**LeniD:** What a great idea, Katie!

**GeneKe:** just click?

**CraigE:** no ..need some help with the link

**LeniD:** Welcome, Cory. We are looking at resources from the Library of Congress about Political Cartoons.

**GailP:** If you click on the link, it should open in another window.

**LeniD:** Thanks, Gail

**GailP:** Then you can toggle back and forth from the conversation to the link.

**BJ . o O** ( you might need to hold the ctrl key down if you have a pop up blocker )

**LeniD:** Did you all get that one? Yes, do keep checking back here.

**CraigE:** I can't get to the link

**MichaelH** joined the room.

**LeniD:** Craig, did you see BJ's suggestion? Did that help?

**LeniD:** Hi, Michael!

**BJ:** if you can't open the links now, they will be in your transcript and you can check them later

**BJ . o O** ( if you're logged in as a member )

**MichaelH** waves to Leni

**CraigE:** k

**LeniD:** When you use the next link, choose one of the clickable links that appeal to you. When the new page appears showing specific items, click on the "preview images" button.

**LeniD:** Cartoon Prints, American

**LeniD:** <http://memory.loc.gov/pp/apphtml/appback.html>

**LeniD:** Are you having fun yet?

**KatieBo:** they are interesting

**GailP:** If you don't know how to go about searching for a cartoon in the collection, or you can't think of a subject to use, go to the subject index - you'll get lots of ideas.

<http://memory.loc.gov/pp/apphtml/appsubjindex1.html>

**StevenSh:** Leni, besides Uncle Sam representing America in political cartoons, what are some of the other common characters used?

**LeniD:** Hmm...good question, Steven. Gail? Michael?

**StevenSh:** I'm trying to teach my students how to read these...

**GailP:** Try the index

**StevenSh:** and most of them understood Uncle Sam

**StevenSh:** thanks Gail!

**LeniD:** I have something coming up that will REALLY help your students, Steven.

**LeniD:** We'll get there soon...but let's keep looking at the available resources for now...

**LeniD:** I think you will really like what I show you next... It's an excellent place to start when looking for political cartoon resources from the Library.

**LeniD:** Caroline and Erwin Swann Foundation for Caricature and Cartoon...

**LeniD:** Exhibitions and Online Presentations

**KatieBo:** ok

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/swann-exhibits.html>

**TimothyR** joined the room.

**LeniD:** Welcome, Timothy

**TimothyR:** thanks new to this

**BJ:** Tim, we're looking at <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/swann-exhibits.html>

**LeniD:** There is help, if needed

**TimothyR:** I read a cartoon not proud of. It was about Bush asking C. Rice if she wanted to be The Secretary Of State.

**LeniD:** That's a great mega-collection to get you started.

**LeniD:** Not all p-cartoons will make agree with your point of view...that's for sure.

**LeniD:** Some individual collections...

**LeniD:** Bill Mauldin - Beyond Willie and Joe

**ZakW:** even the ones I don't agree with I will still laugh at

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/mauldin/>

**TimothyR:** I don't know what some people are thinking

**LeniD:** What do you mean, Timothy?

**BJ:** Tim, click on the url to open a new webpage

**LeniD:** from the Wise Guide...

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/wiseguide/nov03/nobel.html>

**TimothyR:** Well if Mrs. Rice has the credentials don't make it sound like a step up because she is offered the job

**TimothyR:** She has earned it

**TimothyR:** The cartoon made what I thought to be a racial statement

**GeneKe:** some don't believe that....maybe she's filling a quota

**GeneKe:** from their perspective

**TimothyR:** You could be right but I would like to believe she has the credentials

**LeniD:** You interpret cartoons according to your own biases, don't you?

**LeniD:** But they make you think!

**KatieBo:** opinions are opinions, you have to remember that when viewing their art work

**GeneKe:** you're rational though

**ZakW:** a lot of political cartoons are what you make of them and get out of them

**TimothyR:** yes that is true

**LeniD:** Yes...interpretation is what makes them work...or not for different individuals.

**LeniD:** Cartoon Cornucopia - The J. Arthur Wood, Jr. Collection of Cartoon Art...

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/artwood/>

**LeslieWa:** The drawing styles have certainly changed a lot in the last hundred years

**StevenSh:** Leni, are all of these links available through the LOC?

**LeniD:** Yes, isn't that interesting Leslie?

**LeslieWa:** It seems we need significantly less detail to interpret them now

**LeniD:** Yep...they are Steven.

**KatieBo:** how do they decide what comics are available?

**LeniD:** We've gathered items from many of the Library's sites to share tonight.

**StevenSh:** I think a lot of that is because we have the background knowledge via TV news

**LeniD:** The work of cartoonist Edmund Valtman...

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/valtman/>

**LeniD:** so should we use them to create conversation, controversy, to engage....what do you suggest

**LeniD:** Katie, we can only share what has been donated or bought by the Library, what we have permission to digitize and what seems to appeal to our large public audience.

**GailP:** Perfect question, Gene. What do you think?

**GeneKe:** all of the above

**StevenSh:** I agree Gene

**LeniD:** All of the above, Gene :-0

**LeniD:** We're in agreement!

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/wiseguide/feb04/cold.html>

**GeneKe:** are there copyright rules to follow

**GailP:** I would agree - and you know your audience (ie - students and background knowledge)

**LeniD:** Gail, would you like to address this copyright question?

**GeneKe:** same as anything else?

**GailP:** Yes, here from the Virginia Educational Media Conference

**LeniD:** Yes, Gene. Our holdings all have some copyright information that indicates what restrictions on use are required.

**LeniD:** Most of the material on our sites can be used for educational purposes without too much worry...

**GailP:** If you are going to use the cartoon as a teaching example - in class - not in many classes - not copying it and saving it for many, many semesters, etc. etc - and thinking about fair use.....

**GailP:** very complicated question....

**LeniD:** it's when you want to use them for commercial purposes that you need to begin exploring the existing limitations.

**GeneKe:** standard copyright laws apply, thanks

**LeniD:** That's simplistic, but usually fairly true for educators.

**LeniD:** Herblock's History - Political Cartoons from the Crash to the Millennium...

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/herblock/presidents.html>

**StevenSh:** Love the 'Balance' cartoon

**LeniD:** There are a number of my favorites in there, too :-0

**LeniD:** Humor's Edge - Cartoons by Ann Telnaes

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/telnaes/telnaes-pulitzer.html>

**LeniD:** And the Wise Guide companion piece...

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/wiseguide/jul04/reality.html>

**LeslieWa:** Saw the Telnaes exhibit at the LOC when I visited DC over the summer - EXCELLENT exhibit!

**LeniD:** Yes...I agree, Leslie! It came down only very recently.

**GailP:** Now you can review it all online, Leslie!

**LeniD:** Good point, Gail

**GailP:** But I have to admit, seeing the real thing is the BEST!

**LeslieWa:** I liked its context in the LOC building - great example of First Amendment in action to be able to see the cartoons across from the Capitol

**LeniD:** LOL...so true!

**GailP:** Great comment!

**LeniD:** You can take older students directly to many of the resources just shown...but how can you get them (and younger students, as well) to understand and appreciate political cartoons?

**LeniD:** Here's a new activity from the Learning Page to help you!

**LeniD:** It's No Laughing Matter - Analyzing Political Cartoons

**LeniD:** [http://www.loc.gov/learn/features/political\\_cartoon/index.html](http://www.loc.gov/learn/features/political_cartoon/index.html)

**LeniD:** See what you think

**GailP:** Make sure to view the Resources For Teachers - you'll find links to sites both within and outside of the LOC.

**GailP:** [http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/political\\_cartoon/resources.html](http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/political_cartoon/resources.html)

**KatieBo:** I like the definition this website has

**LeniD:** Good!

**KatieBo:** it helps us as educators understand what they are, so we can then explain them

**StevenSh:** wish I had this a week ago

**LeniD:** Well, remember where it is the next time you need it, Steven!

**GailP:** Glad to hear that, Katie!

**LeniD:** Good to hear, Katie.

**StevenSh:** just saved it as a favorite

**GailP:** That is a great compliment, Steven!

**StevenSh:** it's an excellent description and activity...

**LeniD:** Would you like to spend more time with that activity, or would you prefer that I show you more resources?

**StevenSh:** we have Internet access in the room, so I think I'll do the self-test with my kids

**KatieBo:** the Analysis Guide will also give students a concrete list of items that make a good comic, that will help them understand what they are looking for

**LeniD:** We have about five more minutes.

**LeslieWa:** Have the LOC exhibit selectors faced any political pressures in selecting which cartoons to include in the exhibits or in teaching activities?

**KatieBo:** I think it would be cool to see more

**LeniD:** The teaching activities are developed by my group, Leslie. We look for items that are already online ...to give us themes and direction. The guidelines for the library at large sometimes involve some political pressures, I'm sure.

**LeniD:** From the Wise Guide:

**LeniD:** "It's the Stupidest Tea Party"

**LeniD:** <http://www.loc.gov/wiseguide/may03/tea.html>

**LeniD:** And from America's Library:

**LeniD:** Jane Adams - Peacemaker

**LeniD:** [http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/activists/addams/peace\\_1](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/activists/addams/peace_1)

**LeniD:** William Jennings Bryan and the Free Silver Movement...

**LeniD:** [http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/leaders/bryan/silver\\_2](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/leaders/bryan/silver_2)

**LeniD:** Marshall and McCarthyism...

**LeslieWa:** You could teach a whole American history class based on these

**LeniD:** [http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/leaders/marshall/mcarthy\\_3](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/leaders/marshall/mcarthy_3)

**LeniD:** Yes...you certainly could!

**LeniD:** And here I'll stop!

**LeniD:** These resources and many more (including Lessons, Collection Connections, search terms and a bibliography) can be found in the Learning Page Community Center, Political Cartoons

**LeniD:** [http://www.loc.gov/learn/community/cc\\_pcartoon.php](http://www.loc.gov/learn/community/cc_pcartoon.php)

**GeneKe:** thanks Leni

**ZakW:** thanks

**StevenSh:** thanks Leni!

**LeslieWa:** Thanks!

**GeneKe:** and Gail

**LeniD:** You are all very welcome! We hope this was helpful, folks.

**KatieBo:** great resources, thank you much

**GailP:** You're welcome

**GailP:** Fun to be here

**LeniD:** Please join us in our next chat on December 16...same time, same place!

BJ applauds enthusiastically. Thanks, Leni

**LeniD:** We will talk about the role song and music can play in learning... and sharing music-related resources from the Library of Congress.

**BJ:** and Gail

**LeniD:** Our pleasure

**LeniD:** Enjoy your Thanksgiving holiday!

**LeniD:** Good night, everyone. Thanks for joining us tonight