

Cartoons for the Classroom

Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Cartoons Courtesy Clay Bennett / The Christian Science Monitor

Visual irony: The Patriot Act

Talking points

1. In Clay Bennett's cartoon, the Patriot Act has been issued a large number of violations. Define "irony" and explain how the definition applies in the depiction of a police car getting ticketed.
2. Explain the symbols the artist uses to get his point across in this toon. The police car stands for what? The tickets represent what?
3. Is this cartoon for or against the Patriot Act? If the Patriot Act is supposed to defend us, how can it be violating some law?

Between the lines

A federal judge recently struck down a portion of the Patriot Act that permitted the FBI to demand private information about people within the United States without court approval, and also allowed the government to gag those who receive National Security Letters from discussing them with anyone. The judge found this gag power unconstitutional.

Get out your newspaper

Gather a collection of political cartoons from your newspaper. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and explain the issues addressed.

Additional resources

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

More by Clay Bennett
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/cartoon/browse.cfm/BenneC>