

... cartoons are meant to sway people's opinions ...

**This chapter teaches how:**

- to read and analyze both the print and visual text of a cartoon
- cartoonists express a point of view through graphics
- to use cartoon analysis strategies
- to create and draw your own political cartoon.

Political cartoons in newspapers are often humorous but have a different purpose than comic strips. While comics are created to entertain the reader, the political cartoon communicates a viewpoint about an issue. The newspaper's editorial page contains the political cartoon and articles expressing the opinions of the paper's owners.

**Step 1: Taking Aim At The Target**

The cartoonist often uses insult as a tool to express an idea. By insulting a person or organization the cartoonist tries to change the reader's opinion about an issue.

Cartoonists deliberately exaggerate the subject's distinctive features or peculiarities to produce a comic or grotesque effect.

One can easily see this characteristic in the cartoon on the right, drawn by David Catrow in the Springfield News-Sun during the War on Terrorism in 2002. This cartoon features President George W. Bush. Notice the exaggeration in:

- Bush's facial features
- the Western Sheriff's outfit
- the oversized hat.

The caption beginning with "Go Ahead, Make My Day..." is a reference to the "Dirty Harry" films made by Clint Eastwood.

Is the cartoonist trying to be funny? No, Catrow is spoofing the President's promise to attack any country who harbors "evildoers" (terrorists). He shows Bush is finished with Afghanistan and is now ready to take on other enemy nations. Since cartoonists cannot use several paragraphs to communicate their position, they often use the exaggeration of caricature.

**Step 2: Learning Cartoon Analysis:  
Getting the Point**

In order to understand the viewpoint of a cartoonist, study the drawing carefully. Both print (words) and visual (pictures) texts are in the drawing for a purpose. A cartoon serves the same purpose as an editorial. It communicates a personal point of view.



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