

Program Name: Parody, Politics, and Painting:
Art and Political Cartooning

Artist: Cynthia Pederson

Workshop Description

Other programs by
this artist:

[-Collecting Your Wits](#)
[-How TALL do Sunflowers Grow?](#)

Can caricatures cause controversy? Is it possible for a cartoon to provoke death threats? Can caricatures and cartoons be used to spark critical thinking and teach visual literacy? This workshop looks at how political cartoons push viewers to think in new ways.

Cynthia Pederson will use contemporary cartoons to illustrate how parody and caricature come into play, and will also include a brief history of political cartooning.

If you think Muslims are the first religious group to be the target of cartoons, learn how Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation used such graphics as propaganda

against the Catholic Church five hundred years ago. Or find out how the first acknowledged American cartoon slithered out of Ben Franklin's brain.

As visual allusions to artwork by Grant Wood, Leonardo da Vinci, Auguste Rodin, and others will reveal, this medium of illustrated humor has always relied on "shared culture" to ridicule prominent figures and comment on current events.



Educational Objectives & Standards

Students will:

- Engage in a new way of looking at the genre of art.
- Be introduced to a brief history of political cartooning.
- Be able to form and express an opinion about current news events.

Standards Addressed:

- Knows how a culture's art works and artifacts reflect its values and beliefs
- Understands the impact of criticism on psychological state, emotional state, habitual behavior, and beliefs

Artist Bio: Cynthia Pederson



Cynthia Pederson is an experienced writer, researcher and teacher. She takes great joy in passing along knowledge through the many workshops and presentations she leads.

Cynthia holds several advanced degrees in literature, creative writing and library science. Her teaching certificate for grades K-8 has given her the opportunity to gain experience in several teaching positions.

Cynthia's publications include

two volumes of poetry, an adult literacy curriculum guide, literary reviews, newspaper articles, plus poems, articles and essays in many journals, magazines and anthologies. Her poetry has won a number of awards including the *Carruth Award*, *The Great Poets Award*, and the *Florence Levitt Kahn Award*.

Cynthia has entertained many with her storytelling performances, including the original story *The Wide-Eyed Tree Frog Who Loved Books*.

List of Resources:

Books:

[A Recent History of the United States in Political Cartoons: A Look Bok \(Law, Politics, and Society\)](#) by Chip Bok
University of Akron Press
(2005)
ISBN: 1931968128

[Drawn & Quartered: The History of American Political Cartoons](#)
by Stephen Hess & Sandy Northrop
Black Belt Press (1996)
ISBN: 1880216396

Online Resources:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~liblilly/cartoon/cartoons.html>

Vocabulary

Editorial or Political Cartoon: an illustration containing a commentary that usually relates to current events or personalities and combines artistic skill, hyperbole and biting humor to question authority or draw attention to social ills.

Caricature: exaggerates the features, parts or actions of someone or something usually for comic or satiric effect.

Parody: a work or performance that imitates another work or performance with ridicule or irony.

Satire: use of ridicule in exposing, denouncing or deriding vice, folly, etc. A

common feature of satire is irony and sarcasm; it uses wit as a weapon--often with the purpose of constructive social criticism.

Symbol: a character or glyph representing an idea, concept or object. For example, % is a symbol for percent; a flag symbolizes a country.

Irony: consists of stating the contrary of what is meant.

Allusion: refers to or represents something else (work of art, literary work, etc) either directly or by implication.

Post-Workshop Activities

1. Draw a caricature of yourself.
2. Draw a cartoon that comments on a social issue using your school mascot.
3. Make a collection of editorial cartoons. Choose one and write a short essay analyzing the cartoon. How does it use visual language? Does it use symbol, caricature or parody? Do you agree or disagree with the cartoonist's point of view?
4. Spend one day keeping track of symbols you use or see.
5. Look at Daryl Cagle's Professional Cartoonist Index online. Pick a favorite cartoon. Explain what the cartoon is about and why you think it's effective

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