

Cartoons for the Classroom

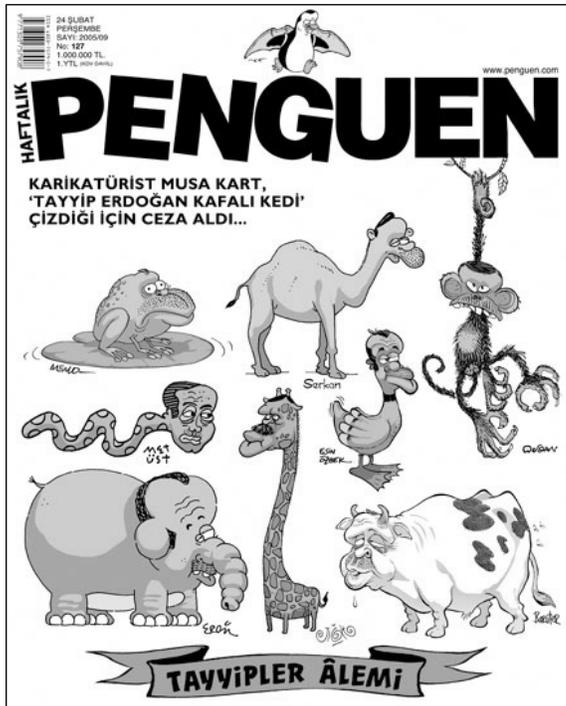
Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Freedom is not universal

Opinions can be dangerous

In February, 2005, the prime minister of Turkey successfully sued political cartoonist Musa Kart for a cartoon that caricatured him as a cat entangled in a ball of wool. A court in Ankara fined Kart \$3,500 for "publicly humiliating" the prime minister. In March, Penguen, a satirical weekly magazine, showed solidarity with Kart by devoting its cover to drawings of the politician as various animals. The prime minister responded by suing the magazine, claiming that the caricatures were an assault to his personal rights. That lawsuit is still pending in April, 2005.



Additional resources

Assn. of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)

<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

World Press Freedom Day (from the World Association of Newspapers)

<http://www.worldpressfreedomday.org/>



Cartoon courtesy Musa Kart /Cumhuriyet, Turkey

Caption: "Stop creating tensions. I promised I would solve this."

Talking points

1. Caricature is defined as "the deliberately distorted picturing or imitating of a person, . . . by exaggerating features or mannerisms for satirical effect." Caricatures are often MEANT to be embarrassing. Should the U.S. government ban caricature here?
2. Do politicians need protection from cartoonists who want to make fun of them? Where would you draw the line?
3. What does the court ruling in Turkey mean for political cartoonists in that country? What does it mean for political dissent? Do you think the Turkish cartoonists should have been censored?

Get out your newspaper

From your local newspaper, gather a couple weeks' worth of political cartoons focusing on caricatures of public figures. Are the toons embarrassing to the subjects? Would these cartoons be allowed to run in other countries? Why are politicians in other countries afraid of Free Speech and put limits on the concept?