

Cartoons for the Classroom



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

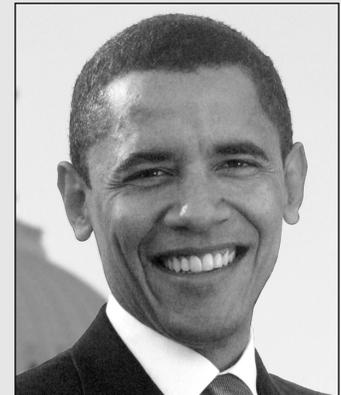


A study in early caricatures

Cartoonists have had years to hone their portraits of George W. Bush. But artists face new challenges when a fresh face bursts on the political scene. As talk of Barack Obama as a potential presidential candidate increased in 2006, so did his presence in political cartoons. In his 1991 book, *The Complete Book of Caricature*, Bob Staake points out: "The fascinating thing about editorial caricature is that an image will grow and develop with the passage of time." In early toons, there is no consensus on how to draw the new face. As time goes on, certain common characteristics will emerge.



John Cox / Coxandforkum.com



Between the lines

Illinois Democrat Barack Obama was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2004. His keynote address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention, helped raise his national stature. And in recent opinion polls he has been identified as the second most popular choice among Democratic voters for their party's nomination in the 2008 U.S. presidential election, behind New York Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Tom Toles and Glenn McCoy cartoons distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Talking points

1. What are the common elements in these relatively early sketches of Barack Obama? What facial features do the tooners choose to exaggerate and why?
2. Obama is not yet as recognizable a face as say, President Bush. And there are big differences in each cartoonist's approach. Do each of these look like portraits of the same man? Or does each portrait look like a different person?
3. Caricatures can be insulting or complimentary. Without the context of the original cartoons, do you consider these caricatures critical or flattering?

Additional resources

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>
Daryl Cagle's Professional Cartoonists Index
<http://cagle.com/>

Get out your newspaper

Gather a collection of caricatures from the political cartoons from your newspaper and other resources. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and explain the issues addressed. Study the caricatures and explain how the portraits affect the message.