

Cartoons for the Classroom



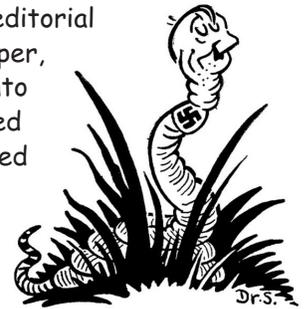
Presented in cooperation with the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



The political Dr. Seuss

A legacy of editorial cartoons from WWII paved the way for *The Cat in the Hat*

The *Cat in the Hat* is a hit at movie theaters. In 2004 a new postage stamp will debut honoring Theodor Seuss Geisel. The artist, who died in 1991, was the best selling American author of all time. You're much more familiar with Dr. Seuss' later work, but for two years (1941-1943) Geisel was the chief editorial cartoonist for a New York newspaper, tackling issues leading up to and into World War II. Even then, he signed all his cartoons "Dr. Seuss" and used his now-familiar cast of bizarre characters to drive home his strong opinions on isolationism, racism and anti-Semitism.



It may seem odd that the same hand that drew *Green Eggs and Ham* also drew Hitler as a snake in the grass. But, Richard H. Minear, who wrote the book, *Dr. Seuss Goes To War*, points out that many of Dr. Seuss's whimsical children's books also contain serious themes. *Yertle the Turtle* can be viewed as a cautionary tale against dictators. *The Lorax* contains a strong environmental message. *The Sneetches* is a plea for racial tolerance. *Horton Hears a Who* is a parable about the American Occupation of Japan.

Talking points: Write a short definition for...

Isolationism _____

Anti-Semitism _____

Get out your newspaper

Gather political cartoons from your newspaper dealing with the war in Iraq. What's the cartoonists' stance on the war? What makes their position clear to you?

Online Extra: Visit the websites listed below to examine Dr. Seuss' views leading up to World War II. Was he for or against U.S. involvement in that war? Judging from his arguments, would he be for or against the war in Iraq today?

Additional resources

Dr. Seuss Went to War:

Mandeville Special Collections Library

<http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll/dspolitic/>

The Springfield Library exhibit of Dr. Seuss cartoons

<http://www.tfaoi.com/aa/1aa/1aa291.htm/>

