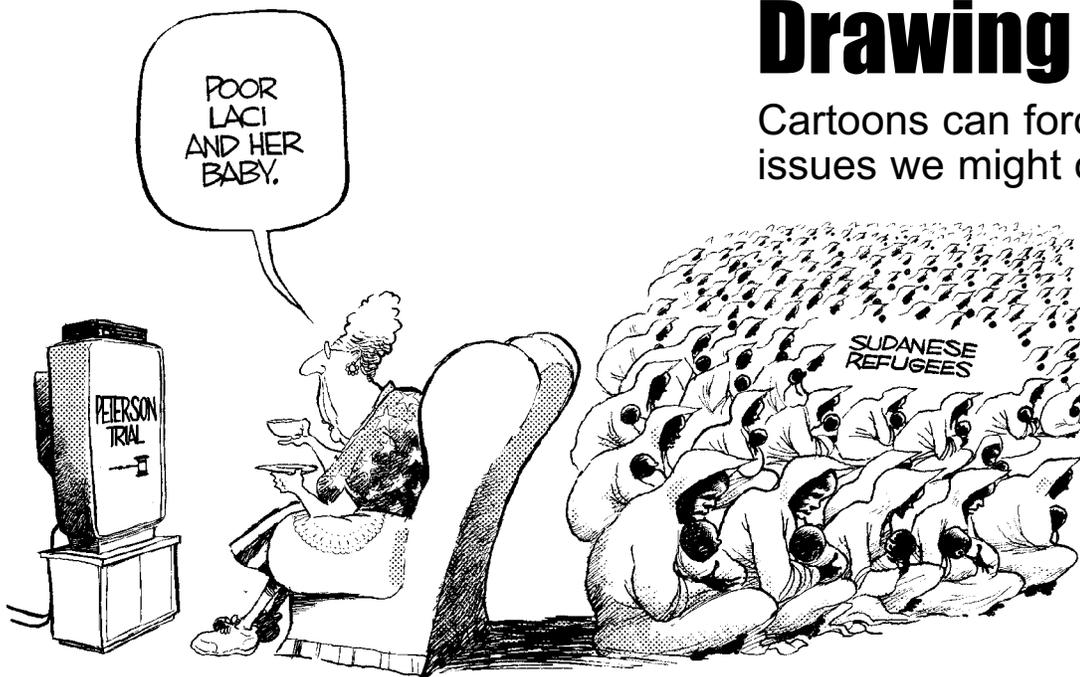


Cartoons for the Classroom

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

Drawing attention

Cartoons can force us to focus on issues we might otherwise ignore



Courtesy Steven Breen / The San Diego Union-Tribune

A 15-month conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan has killed some 30,000 people and left more than 1.5 million homeless in what the United Nations has described as the world's worst humanitarian crisis. As of mid-August, there had been little improvement despite growing media attention and international pressure on Sudan's government.

Get out your newspaper

Gather a collection of political cartoons from your newspaper over the next two weeks. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and explain the issues addressed and determine the point of view of the artist. Gather news stories about those issues and evaluate the cartoonists opinions.



Courtesy Vince O'Farrell / The Illawarra Mercury ,Australia

Talking points

1. In Steven Breen's cartoon (above), a TV viewer fixates on the death of Laci Peterson and her baby and yet is blind to the scores of mothers and babies dying in Sudan. What makes Sudan so easy to ignore?
2. Is Breen's criticism valid? Explain why or why not.
3. Vince O'Farrell draws attention to a different aspect of the Sudan crisis. What does oil have to do with fate of the refugees according to the artist?
4. Critics of the U.S. intervention in Iraq often say we stepped in because of the country's oil reserves. If Iraq had no oil, do you think the U.S. would have invaded Iraq? If Sudan had oil do you think we would respond more forcefully to the crisis there?
5. Why is oil so important to us?

Additional resources

Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)
<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>

More by Steven Breen:
<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/features/breen/>

More Cartoons dealing with the Sudan crisis:
<http://cagle.slate.msn.com/news/SudanCrisis/main.asp>