Worksheet for Analysis of a Political Cartoon

Prepare a written report on your assigned cartoon by answering these questions about it.

A. VISUAL ASPECTS OF THE CARTOON
   • Is the cartoon dated?
   • What is the event or issue that inspired the cartoon? How do you know?
   • Are there any real people or places in the cartoon? If not, what images are portrayed?
   • Does the writer label anyone or anything in the cartoon? If so, why?
   • Identify the specific artistic techniques used in the cartoon (e.g., symbolism, analogy, exaggeration, labeling, and irony). What is the artist trying to show the reader by using these techniques?
   • How can an understanding of the artistic techniques used to create political cartoons help you to understand the author's message?
   • Are there aspects of the cartoon (e.g., clothing styles, animals, or activities) that serve as symbols (metaphors) that represent the cartoonist’s point of view?
   • What action is taking place in the cartoon?
   • How is the action significant to the interpretation of the cartoon?

B. VERBAL ASPECTS OF THE CARTOON  (if present – not all cartoons use words)
   • Does the cartoon have a caption or title? Is its message immediately clear?
   • Are there labels on people or objects that helps identify them or what they represent?
   • Do the words in this cartoon help explain the symbols?
   • Are there numbers in the cartoon – dates, financial data, or other figures? Is it clear what the numbers represent?
   • Are the numbers an important part of the message?
   • Evaluate the ways in which an artist uses artistic forms of figurative language (e.g., irony, symbolism, exaggeration) to persuade or manipulate the viewer.

C. OVERALL EFFECT OF THE CARTOON
   • How are political cartoons different from other cartoons in the newspaper?
   • How are these cartoons different from news articles?
   • What is the cartoonist’s point of view about the subject portrayed in this cartoon? What evidence in the cartoon supports your interpretation?
   • Some cartoonists create their intended effects through shock value. Is that true of this particular cartoon? How does it produce its effect?
   • Do you believe the cartoonist intends to produce a particular emotional response?
   • Are there people who would be angered or distressed by this cartoon? Why?
   • Are there people who would think it is wonderful? Explain the difference.
   • Do you believe this cartoon is successful in producing the effect the artist intended? Explain why or why not.
   • Do you feel this cartoon is persuasive? Why or why not?
   • What other techniques could the artist have used to make this cartoon more persuasive?
   • State the premise of this cartoon in one sentence (no more than ten words).

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America When Femininized

"Set on them yourself, old man, my country calls me!"

"Why, ma, these eggs will get all cold!"

Suffragist—Feminist Ideal Family Life.

The more a politician allows himself to be henpecked, the more henpecking we will have in politics.

A vote for Federal Suffrage is a vote for organized female nagging forever.