Political Satire and Parody

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History of Political Cartoons

- Political cartoons have been a part of America’s history even before this country became an independent nation.
- Benjamin Franklin drew the first published American cartoon in 1754. He wanted the colonies to unite together against the British. Instead of writing a commentary, he drew an editorial cartoon instead.
- Franklin’s cartoon portrayed a snake that had been cut apart. Each piece of the snake symbolized an American colony. Franklin’s point was that if the colonies were cut apart; they would not survive.
- Franklin entitled his cartoon, “Join or Die.” He got his point across with a picture and very few words.
Political Satire

- **Political satire** specializes in gaining entertainment from politics. It is sometimes used as a method for advancing political and social issues.
- Political satire is usually distinguished from political protest or dissent since it doesn’t necessarily carry an agenda. More typically, political satire is designed to provide entertainment by making fun of politicians, political institutions and/or contemporary hot topic issues.
- During the 20th century, satire moved from print to other forms of media, including: music, television, film and the Internet.
First Amendment: Snyder v. Phelps

OUR RIGHT TO PROTEST STANDS ON THE FIRST AMENDMENT!
Herb Block

- From the stock market crash in 1929 through the new millennium beginning in the year 2000, editorial cartoonist Herb Block has chronicled the nation's political history, caricaturing twelve American presidents from Herbert Hoover to Bill Clinton.
- He has received three Pulitzer Prizes for editorial cartooning (1942, 1954, and 1979) and a fourth with *Washington Post* colleagues for public service during the Watergate investigation (1973).
- He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and in 1994 was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 2000, the Library of Congress named him a "Living Legend" in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to the nation.
Ronald Reagan I.

- **Cardboard Ronald Reagan**
  Unlike Carter, President Ronald Reagan projected a strong image. His own Iranian hostage situation exploded in scandal, and his attempts to establish a presence in Lebanon cost the lives of 241 Marines.

- But it was the Iran-Contra scandals that shook the country and his administration.

- Through all this, Reagan remained popular, and his image was upheld."
Ronald Reagan II.

- "Speak softly and carry a big stick"
- As the Iran-Contra scandals grew, President Ronald Reagan told the Tower Commission that:
  - (A) He did not know the National Security Council staff had been helping the contras;
  - (B) he had "no definite knowledge of military aid"; and
  - (C) "I was very definitely involved in decisions about the freedom fighters."
TV Evangelism I.

- **Church of the Heavenly Antenna**
- Self-serving TV evangelists made the news even as they broadcast their sermons on television.
- In *Herblock at Large*, the cartoonist wrote, “...the TV evangelists who decry sin and who are up there in direct communication with God --- while at a more mundane level, they rake in millions a year to keep themselves on TV --- and sometimes to keep themselves living in the high style to which they have made themselves accustomed."
- A good example was Oral Roberts, who raised $8 million dollars after telling his television audience that God had warned him that he would die if he did not receive the money.
TV Evangelism II.

- "And we pray that you sinners out there will see the light"
- Some televangelists exploited those who could least afford to give. Several of these preachers, who preyed on the guilt of their listeners, were revealed as imperfect role models.
- In April 1987, the Reverend Jim Bakker's television empire, Praise the Lord (PTL), crashed when Bakker's sexual misconduct was revealed and federal and state officials began investigating PTL's funding practices.
Richard Nixon I.

• **I'm Not a Crook**
  
  On November 17, 1973, President Richard Nixon told 400 Associated Press managing editors that he had not profited from public service.
  
  • "I have earned every cent. And in all of my years in public life I have never obstructed justice. People have got to know whether or not their president is a crook. Well, I'm not a crook,"

• On April 3, 1974, the White House announced that Nixon would pay $432,787.13 in back taxes plus interest after an investigation by the IRS and a congressional committee.

• Among Nixon's benefits to himself were improvements in his properties, for his protection. These included a security ice maker, a security swimming pool heater, security sofa and pillows.
Richard Nixon II.

- **Nixon hanging between the tapes**
  - Even more damning than President Richard Nixon's profiting from public office -- were the disclosures of his corruption and misuse of government agencies, including the FBI, Secret Service and the Pentagon.
  - A taping system that had recorded most of President Nixon's conversations in the Oval Office provided the "smoking gun" that spoke of crime and corruption involving Watergate.
  - Nixon refused to release the tapes until the Supreme Court ordered him to do so.
Tom Lehrer

- Tom Lehrer is an American songwriter, satirist and mathematician. Lehrer is best known for the pithy, humorous songs he recorded in the 1950s and 1960s.
- In the 1960s, he produced a number of songs dealing with social and political issues of the day, particularly when he wrote for the television show, *That Was the Week That Was*.
- In the early 1970s, he retired from public performances to devote his time to teaching mathematics and music theatre at U.C Santa Cruz.
- National Brotherhood Week
  - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=allJ8ZCs4jY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=allJ8ZCs4jY)

- Who’s Next
  - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRLON3ddZ1w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRLON3ddZ1w)
Presidential Politics
Jimmy Carter – Meeting with Hamas
Jimmy Carter
After laying a wreath at Arafat’s grave, Hamas gave me this cool sweater vest.
Bush Legacy

Evolution
Or
Intelligent Design

You Decide!
HISTORY WILL BE KIND TO ME... HECK, I'M JUST LIKE HARRY TRUMAN!
...and for those who wrongly insist I have no exit strategy in the Iraq War...
The New Yorker magazine created a political storm with the publication of a cartoon cover that depicted then Presidential candidate, Barack Obama looking like Osama Bin Laden next to his wife Michelle Obama with a machine gun strapped to her back and looking very militant.

The cartoon on the cover of the July 21, 2008 edition of the New Yorker magazine is called The Politics of Fear" and drawn by the illustrator Barry Blitt. One would expect conservative media to publish similar images, but the New Yorker is considered a liberal publication.

The cartoon depicts the Obamas in the oval office looking like a pair of terrorists. Barack is dressed in traditional Muslim clothing with a turban and sandals. Michelle Obama is wearing camouflaged military clothes, an AK-47, and a giant afro hair style. The future US president and first lady are fist bumping in front of a portrait of Osama Bin Laden hanging on the wall; while the American flag burns in the fireplace.

David Remnick, Editor of the New Yorker, said the satirical cartoon cover "combines a number of fantastical images about the Obamas and shows them for the obvious distortions they are... Satire is part of what we do, and it is meant to bring things out into the open, to hold up a mirror to the absurd. And that's the spirit of this cover."

Obama's campaign spokesman, Bill Burton said "The New Yorker may think that their cover is a satirical lampoon of Sen. Obama's right-wing critics. But most readers will see it as tasteless and offensive.
Newsweek’s decision to use the corresponding image of Sara Palin on its cover proved highly controversial and offended both Sara Palin supporters and critics alike.

The decision to select this photograph was done to coincide with the release of Sarah Palin's book *Going Rogue*.

The photo chosen was from a shoot Palin had done for *Runner’s World* magazine. Palin denounced both the photo and Newsweek to her million-strong Facebook following.

The choice of photo for the cover of this week's Newsweek is unfortunate. When it comes to Sarah Palin, this 'news' magazine has relished focusing on the irrelevant rather than the relevant ...

Others, like CBN’s David Brody, said *Newsweek’s* cover was a new low: "biased and sexist at the same time."
Saturday Night Live

- Political Satire: Presidential Election, 2008
  Tina Fey as Sarah Palin
- Available at:

  Or

  http://www.hulu.com/watch/34465
Saturday Night Live

- Christine O’Donnell:
- 2010 Republican candidate for US Senate, Delaware
- I’m not a witch
  - http://lockerz.com/d/8795584
Presidential Election, 2012

- Newt Gingrich

*Therefore, I am suspending my campaign for the presidency.*

*NEWT CAN'T TALK NOW. HE'S IN THE MIDDLE OF A CAMPAIGN FUNDRAISER...*
Presidential Election, 2012

- Mitt Romney