

ROTARY DISTRICT 5440 PEACEBUILDER
NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2018
NUMBER 13

CARTOONS AND PEACEBUILDING

William M. Timpson and Bob Meroney
Fort Collins Rotary Club
and
Lindsey Pointer, 2017 Rotary Global Grant Recipient

In these newsletters of the Rotary District Peacebuilders, we want to invite readers for contributions and ideas, suggestions and possibilities for our efforts to promote the foundational skills for promoting peace, i.e., nonviolent conflict resolution, improved communication and cooperation, successful negotiation and mediation as well as the critical and creative thinking that can help communities move through obstacles and difficulties.

When you dig below the surface, these are the same skills and ideas we can see in various Rotary activities, for example, in Community and Global Grants. By sharing what we learn, we hope to spark new thinking about what can be done locally, on college campuses, elementary and secondary schools, in churches, other organizations as well as in communities of all sizes, formally and informally—wherever people are looking for new and constructive ways through conflicts.

You can look through previous newsletters that have been archived on the District 5440 website: <https://www.rotary5440.org/SitePage/peace-building-newsletters>

What aspects of peacebuilding would you like to see addressed? Let us know what you think:

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Lloyd Thomas

NOTE: Lloyd Thomas, Ph.D. is a longstanding member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club, a licensed psychologist and a life coach. Contact him if you would like to receive his newsletters. He can be reached through email: DrLloyd@CreatingLeaders.com

Robert N. Meroney

NOTE: Bob Meroney is an Emeritus Professor of Fluid Mechanics and Wind Engineering with a long career at Colorado State University. He has been an active member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club and regularly researches a range of topics on modern life, issues and politics that serve to spark deeper conversations among friends and colleagues. If you have questions or ideas, you can contact Bob: Robert.Meroney@ColoState.EDU.

Cartooning for Peace! Freedom of Expression

On 18 August 2018 Kofin Annan, past UN Secretary General died at the age of 80. Annan often soft spoken was known for his sense of humor and his appreciation of political cartoons as examples of free speech. In October 2006 he gathered press cartoonists from all over the world at the UN to build a bridge between press cartoonists and different national cultures. Based on his initiative The Cartooning for Peace Foundation was established in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2009 with United Nations support.

<http://www.cartooningforpeace.org/en/>



Political cartoons, like our Peace Newsletters, are intended to make us think. Often a good cartoon will shock the reader and may even offend since they are drawn to challenge the pre-conceptions of the observer. They can be very funny, but their main purpose is not to amuse you, but to persuade you, and even sway your opinion toward the cartoonist's point of view. A political cartoon can be like a heavy stick hitting the head of a mule to get its attention. Cartooning often uses caricatures which can be insulting or complimentary, but usually serve a political purpose. Often the drawing is a visual commentary that exaggerates circumstances but should not alter facts. In all cases the political cartoon is intended to be a tool of free speech and public dialogue.

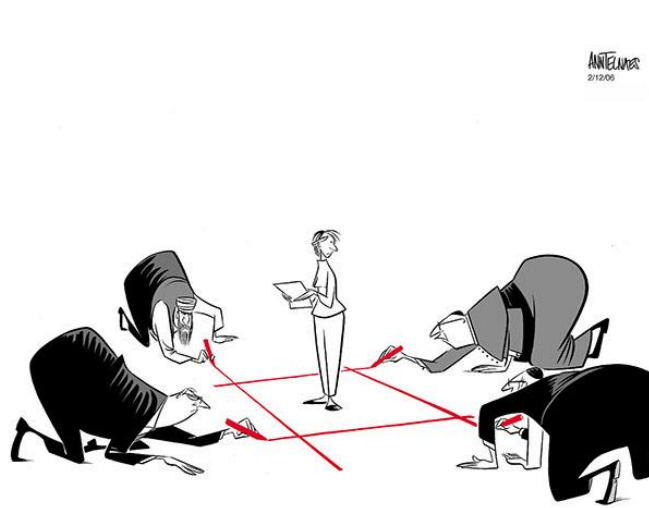
The Foundation has established an annual award for cartoonists whose work contributes to human rights, freedom of expression, tolerance and peace. The nominees are judged by a jury of 124 international cartoonists, Nobel Peace Prize winners, and the Mayor of Geneva.

Political cartooning can be dangerous in situations where intolerance exist and free expression is controlled by a nation state. When cartoonists are repressed in one time and place, others often fire back in media in their own nations. In many parts of the world state censorship is rampant. Consider the following examples drawn by cartoonists from various nations:

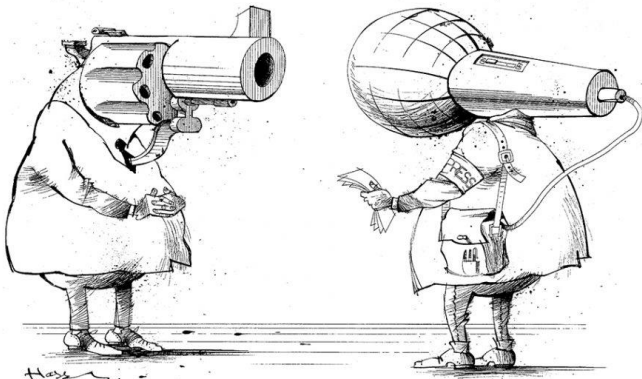
Censure & liberte d'expression – Jiho (France)



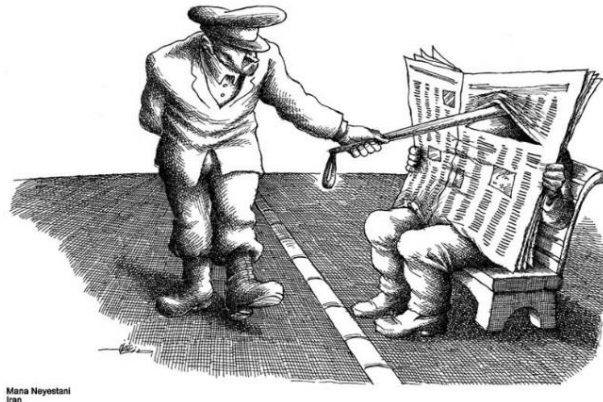
Kept in the box - Ann Telnaes (USA)



Hassan (Iran)



Mana Neyestani (Iran)



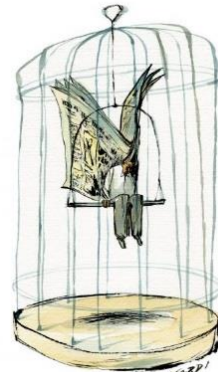
Rayma (Venezuela)



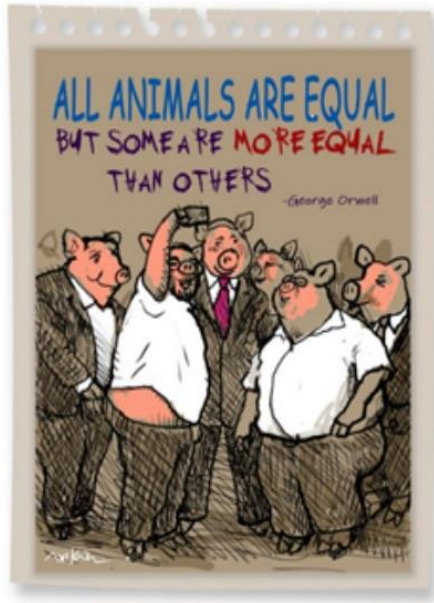
Free the pencils - Ares (Cuba)



Narde (Italie)

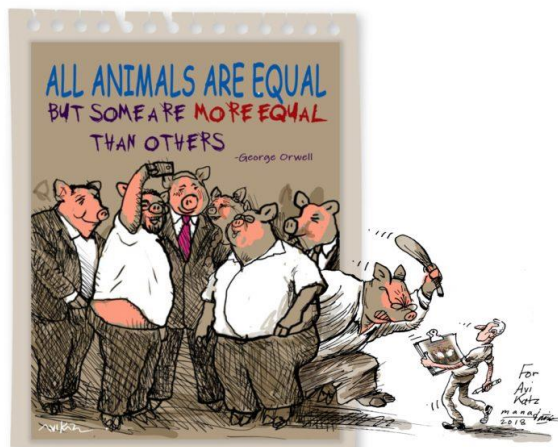
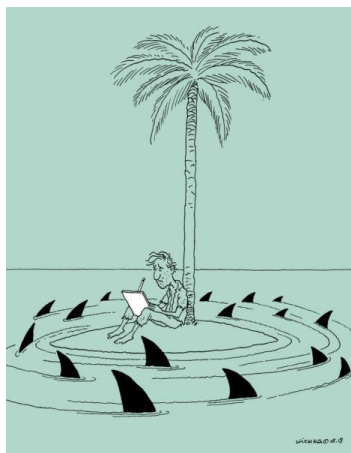


Recently Israeli cartoonist Avi Katz expressed his opinion when Benjamin Netanyahu and fellow members of the Likud party celebrated after the adoption by the Israeli Knesset of a controversial nation-state law which sanctions Israel's status as a Jewish nation-state. The law was considered discriminatory against non-Jewish citizens. His cartoon replicates a photo of a Likud group taking a celebration selfie.



The cartoon led to so much political backlash that cartoonist Katz was dismissed from his position with *The Jerusalem Report*. Other journalists have since resigned in protest, and the cartoonist has received support from the Union of Journalists in Israel and the international group PEN America. Nissim Hezhyahu, founder and former president of the Israel Cartoonists Association organized an exhibition in response to Katz dismissal at the 18th Comics Cartoon festival in Tel Aviv in August 2018. Subsequently, cartoons supporting Katz have appeared internationally.

Supporting cartoon by Kichka (Israel) Supporting cartoon by Mana Neyestani (Iran)



Lindsey Pointer

NOTE: Lindsey Pointer has been working on the use of restorative principles in the criminal justice system. She defines herself as a restorative practices facilitator, trainer and researcher and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Restorative Justice at Victoria University in New Zealand with support from a Rotary Global Grant Scholarship and the [Fulbright](#) Program from the U.S. State Department. If you have questions or ideas, contact Lindsey: lindseycpointer@gmail.com

If a picture is worth a thousand words, how can we illustrate restorative justice?

The challenge of describing restorative justice and how the philosophy and approach differs from the conventional justice system is one that practitioners and scholars have grappled with since the beginning of the movement. The retributive approach to justice is so culturally ingrained that it can be difficult to fully communicate the restorative paradigm and the impact of this different way of understanding and responding to wrongdoing.

Images play a powerful role in communicating complex ideas. As the well-known idiom in the title suggests, the best images are capable of conveying meaning more effectively than a lengthy description.

So how can we use the power of images to help communicate the concept of restorative justice?

A recent article by Brunilda Pali highlights the lack of images of restorative justice available to help communicate its meaning. The most common image used is of a group of people seated in a circle, which does not communicate significant conceptual depth to someone new to restorative justice. She notes that “art can mediate, enhance, and make tangible new and alternative understandings of the notion and practice of justice” and laments the fact that restorative justice scholars have been latecomers to grasping this power of images.¹

When we consider the complex concept of justice, the most common image encountered is that of Lady Justice. Lady Justice is generally depicted wearing a blindfold and carrying scales and a sword. The blindfold is meant to represent impartiality, the scales signify fairness and the weighing of evidence, and the sword symbolizes the authority to punish.

Restorative justice challenges the concept of justice communicated by the Lady Justice image in almost all of its elements. As Pali notes, “from a restorative justice perspective, the sword, the scales, and the blindfold mainly represent the



¹ Brunilda Pali, "Images of Alternative Justice: The Alternative of Restorative Justice," *Crime, Media, and Popular Culture* (2017): 11.

limitations of formal justice, where justice is seen as harsh, rigid, and unable to see the injuries imposed in her name.”²

Pali’s article inspired me to think about how I would visually portray the restorative concept of justice. Because of the strong association of the word “justice” with the image of Lady Justice, I felt that an effective restorative justice image would need to be in conversation with the Lady Justice image. How could the Lady Justice image be modified to communicate the ways in which the restorative conception of justice differs from the punitive justice she personifies?

I began to wonder about a Lady of Restorative Justice, who has taken off her blindfold in order to see the complex humanity and individual needs of each person involved in the process. She would have hung up her sword and scales, and taken her place in the circle, leaning in, intently and compassionately listening to the stories of the people present and what each needed to repair the harms and make things right.

I reached out to a local Wellington artist, Phil Dickson, who agreed to illustrate the idea. This is the image he created.



What concept of justice do you think this image communicates? How would you illustrate restorative justice?

² Ibid., 5.

William M. Timpson

NOTE: Bill Timpson has been on the faculty at Colorado State University in its School of Education for many years and a member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club where his focus on sustainable peacebuilding in Burundi, East Africa, has been supported by two Global Grants. If you have questions or ideas, contact Bill: william.timpson@colostate.edu

Using Humor As Nonviolent Action

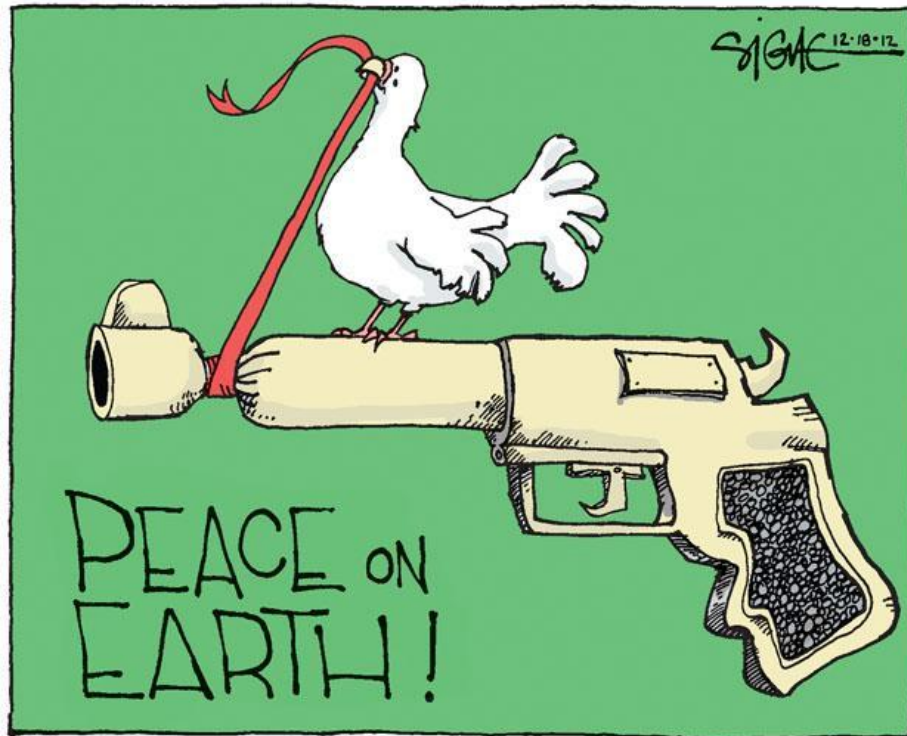
In the *Peace Science Digest*, July 12-19, 2018, was an article titled, Using Humor As Nonviolent Action. As they write: “During U.S. President Donald Trump’s recent state visit to the U.K., protesters carried an inflatable baby Trump blimp to bring humor to their protest of his domestic and foreign policy. Humor, in various forms, has a long tradition in protest movements.”

“Humor, in the forms of chants, performances, satire, cartoons, theatre, jokes, memes and puns has a long tradition in protest movements. It acts as a vehicle to communicate ideas as well as to foster a sense of community – it can cut across linguistic barriers, and increase the resonance of the message. All protests have a target, something or someone to galvanize others to action. The goal of the crowdfunded inflatable is to annoy the famously thin-skinned president. The six-meter tall balloon depicts Trump as a snarling baby in a nappy with tiny hands and mobs. Its purpose is not to change laws or policies, nor to influence his decisions. It is meant to mock and to undermine, suggesting the president is infantile, full of hot air, cartoonish and ridiculous.”

“Humor is empowering because it establishes those who are in on the joke and those who are the object of it. The balloon signifies an attempt to take back control and to undermine Trump. Whether he is aware of the balloon – and surely this media-obsessed president will be – is neither here nor there because mocking Trump is not just about annoying him. It fosters a sense of belonging between protestors and invites others to join.”

When I asked my class of first year Honors students what they thought of this use of humor, the reactions were mixed. Some could see a level of disrespect that could hamper the good will that someone like Bishop Desmond Tutu advocated in building trust between previously deeply divided groups as South Africa began to move past the apartheid era of state sponsored segregation and oppression. Other saw the U.S. Veterans for Peace authors we have been reading applauding this kind of protest and enjoying its playful nature.





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