

Cartoons for the Classroom

Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Bill of Rights Day is December 15

“If you’re not doing anything wrong, you need not worry.”



Cartoon Courtesy Nick Anderson / Printed in the Houston Chronicle

Talking points

1. Is the political phrase Nick Anderson skewers in his cartoon true? Should we worry? What should innocent people fear if we lose the protections outlined in The Bill of Rights? Why were rights like protection against unreasonable search and seizure specifically written into the Bill of Rights?
2. Read the Fourth Amendment in the Bill of Rights and explain how it applies to the scene in the cartoon. What is the difference between power and authority? Are these agents using power or authority?
3. Is protection against racial and ethnic profiling (Driving While Black, Flying While Arab) specifically prohibited in the Bill of Rights? Is it implied? Explain what “profiling” means. Is it ever permissible for the government to use profiling to prevent a crime?

Between the lines

The First 10 amendments to the Constitution of the United States were ratified as a group on Dec. 15, 1791 and are known as the Bill of Rights.

These amendments limit the powers of the federal government, protecting the rights of the people by preventing Congress from abridging freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of religious worship, the freedom to petition, and the right to keep and bear arms.

Other protections include preventing unreasonable search and seizure, cruel and unusual punishment, and self-incrimination, and guaranteeing due process of law and a speedy public trial with an impartial jury.

Get out your newspaper

Gather a collection of political cartoons from your newspaper dealing with rights and liberties. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and explain the issues addressed and determine the artist’s point of view.

Additional resources

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

Bill of Rights resources
<http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org/BorDay/>

More by Nick Anderson: <http://editorialcartoonists.com/cartoon/browse.cfm/AnderN>