

Richard Scully and Marian Quartly, *Drawing the Line: Using Cartoons as Historical Evidence*. Sydney: Monash University ePress, 2009, 272 pp.

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The editors of this collection of essays by an international group of students of cartoon history suggest that cartoons have often been misused as historical evidence. They argue that good practice requires “the reading the cartoon as text, as a cultural artifact which is neither a passive reflector of reality, nor passively received by readers.” (p. 01.1) This seems a sensible view, and one already embraced by historians of the cartoon, if not always by historians who use cartoons as illustration rather than evidence.

Most of the essays focus on how, and why, cartoons are produced, rather than on how they are read, there being precious little evidence regarding the latter. Collectively, they raise interesting questions such as: Who actually produces the cartoon—the cartoonist, his editors and engravers, or the public he seeks to address? Are the biographical backgrounds of cartoonist important to understanding the cartoons they produce? In societies where the media are subjected to heavy state control or censorship is it possible that cartoons reflect opinion as well as sway it? Why do certain motifs or themes appear repeatedly in a country’s cartoons over long periods? And what is it that actually makes some cartoons funny?

Some authors deal with recurrent themes in cartoons, while others examine the work of a particular cartoonist. In the opening essay, Jamie Agland explores the use of “raving madness” as a political metaphor in caricatures commenting on the Regency Crisis of 1788–1789 brought on by George III’s mental collapse. Fiona Halloran pursues the question of whether Thomas Nast drew cartoons that reflected his own personal views and tastes or whether he treated his audience as a “respected collaborator.” Richard Scully demonstrates how *Punch* cartoonists and editors collaborated to produce pre-World War I images of Kaiser Wilhelm, not as a bloody Hun, but as the sometimes petulant, sometimes impulsive, and sometimes respectful grandson of Queen Victoria.

In an essay on the depiction of “Young Australia” in late-nineteenth-century Australian cartoons as a vigorous, vulnerable, promising, naïve, or precocious youth, Simon Sleight suggests that this motif reflected ongoing demographic and generational change that was producing a “new breed” of Australian. That theme is echoed in an essay by Nick Dyrenfurth and Marian Quartly on the iconography of class conflict in the left-wing Australian press of the period, which depicted bloated capitalists in top hats pitted against muscular young working men (often stripped to the waist).

Three more essays deal with cartoons during and after World War II. Jay Casey provides an insightful survey of American cartoonists who developed a mass readership with a realistic and sympathetic depiction of GIs that appealed not only to the “brotherhood” of soldiers but also to civilian

readers on the home front. Cartoonists like Bill Mauldin and George Baker then went on to pursue highly successful careers in the civilian press after the war. Their uncensored wartime frankness contrasts with the Iraqi cartoonists in Stefani Wichhart's essay, who engaged in the propaganda war between pro-British and pro-Iraqi cartoonists at the time of the Rashid Ali coup in 1941, or the Malayan artist in Cheng Tju Lim's essay who drew pro-Japanese propaganda cartoons in occupied Malaya.

The volume closes with a sobering essay by Marianne Hicks, who argues that the rise of the webcomic and the decline of the daily newspaper may bring about the extinction of the political cartoon. What a shame that would be. Let us hope that she is wrong.

———Peter Duus, Professor Emeritus, Stanford University.

Hiromi Mizuno, *Science for the Empire: Scientific Nationalism in Modern Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009, 288 pp.

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This is an ambitious book that connects a lot of dots. Professor Hiromi Mizuno, a historian at the University of Minnesota, marshals a diverse and cross-disciplinary treasure-trove of Japanese-language sources, from scholarly position papers to science fiction and children's magazines, in creating a framework for the study of the pursuit of science in Japan in the twinned contexts of nationalism and empire-building. Eschewing a linear focus on "official stories" or on conventional readings of both policy-makers and famous litterateurs alike, Mizuno boldly navigates through an illuminating array of sources, hitherto more or less overlooked or un(der)acknowledged in both the Japanese and Anglophone literature on imperial Japan, in demonstrating the "ideal of science-technology" (a hybrid formation) during the modern war years (roughly 1920–1945) and the continuity of that (often disturbingly compromised) ideal with very little alteration during the postwar period. Her concluding chapter is a critical tour-de-force, if condensed, presentation of the essentially seamless continuity of a "Japanist discourse" of science and its dialectical corollary, "nature," ever since the ascendance of "technocracy" over a century ago.

Although Mizuno does not cite them, her social-historical approach reminded me of Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer's innovative and insightful volume, *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution* (1985). In a manner similar to their analysis of English state formation, Mizuno provides a corrective to analyses of Japanese imperialism that privilege economic and military incentives. She focuses instead on the manifold ways in which "the state"—implicitly understood in Corrigan and Sayer's terms as not a singular entity but an opportunistically collusive repertory of agents and