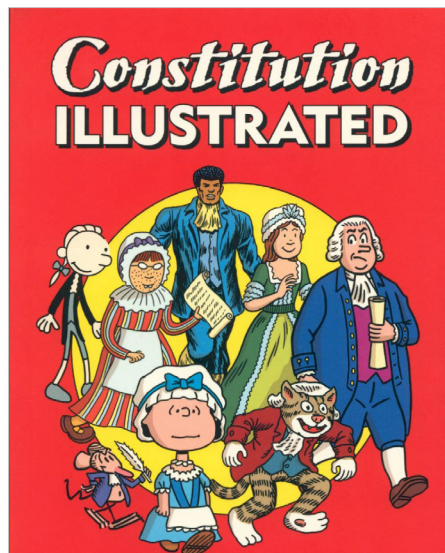


Reviews

Sikoryak, R. 2020. *Constitution Illustrated*. New York: Drawn & Quarterly. 118 pp.

Fans of comics and cartoons will revel in the creative deployment of characters from the funny pages throughout *Constitution Illustrated*. Artist R. Sikoryak is a contributor to *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times Book Review* and is the author of several illustrated books. In his latest work, he has concocted an ingenious ploy to enliven the text of the Constitution. Each page features a different section of the Constitution being recited by cartoon characters. Sikoryak has imitated the style and borrowed the characters of dozens of cartoonists. Readers will find favorites both classic and contemporary, from Bud Counihan's *Betty Boop* and Chester Gould's *Dick Tracy* to Alison Bechdel's *Dykes to Watch Out For* and Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor*. Aficionados will have fun figuring out the artist being imitated on each page, and a helpful index provides a key to the source of each drawing for those who aren't able to recognize the myriad cartoonists represented.

Each phrase or sentence of the Constitution appears in a speech bubble spoken by a different character. By carefully selecting just the right cartoon characters to portray the words in each section, Sikoryak has created a set of light-hearted tableaux to help readers engage with this weighty text. So, for example, Bugs Bunny stands on a staircase, waving goodbye to a departing Daffy Duck as Daffy recites Amendment XX, which outlines the terms of the president and vice president. Olive Oyl and Popeye, standing aboard a ship, are spitting mad as they take a turn with Article I, Section 9, regarding taxation, while a



(Left) Artist R. Sikoryak enlivens a founding U.S. document with 4. (Right) Characters from *Batman & Robin Adventures* illustrate Amendment XIV, Section 3, (Image Copyright R. Sikoryak, Used with permission from Drawn & Quarterly)



nonplussed Bluto awaits payment on the dock. To illustrate Article III, Section 3, which concerns treason, Sikoryak placed Boris and Natasha in 18th century garb, awaiting the verdict of bewigged and robed judges Rocky and Bullwinkle.

The book includes articles and amendments that were subsequently modified or repealed, thereby adding to the cartoon character tally. Happily for the reader, this means that Homer Simpson ushers in Prohibition with Amendment XVIII, while characters from *Pearls Before Swine* celebrate its repeal under Amendment XXI. A notes section at the book's end lists the revisions and a chronology provides the dates of the Constitution and its amendments. A brief bibliography concludes the volume.

Constitution Illustrated is certainly not the first book to take a well-known text and set it to cartoons. R. Crumb, for instance, illustrated *The Book of Genesis*, which features the complete text of the first book of the Old Testament accompanied by his lurid drawings. Sikoryak previously published *Terms and*

Conditions, based on the iTunes Terms and Conditions agreement, in which Steve Jobs pops up as a character in various comics and graphic novels. One hopes that we can look forward to more of these types of text/comics mashups by Sikoryak or other artists. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* by Roz Chast, anyone?—Gwen Sinclair (gsinclair@hawaii.edu), Chair of Government Documents and Maps, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library.

RIGHTS! Civil and Human Rights Law Portal

On September 1, 2020, LLMC, a nonprofit Minnesota-based consortium of law libraries, launched the open-access portal RIGHTS! (<http://www.llmc.com/rights/home.aspx>). If you are looking for primary materials such as current constitutions, human/civil rights acts, Non-Governmental Organizations' websites, advocacy organizations, and other resources specifically dealing with injustices regarding marginalized parties, this is the place to look. Their

stated mission is preserving legal titles and government documents, while making copies inexpensively available digitally through its on-line service, LLMC-Digital (<http://www.llmc.com/about.aspx>). The original intent was to focus on primarily US and Canadian sources, as seen by the dropdown navigation on the left of the site, but the site also includes other international sources. The page opens at the “Civil and Human Rights Law Portal—Global,” which includes links to various government organizations, judicial information, non-governmental organizations, research and education resources and various documents from different countries. The RIGHTS! site can also be reached through the parent page (<http://LLMC.com>) with the link to RIGHTS! Located in the right-hand column. The RIGHTS! Portal is

sponsored by the Vincent C. Immel Law Library at Saint Louis University.

To move into the sections on the United States or Canada, there are drop down navigation boxes on the left of the page. The user may select either of these two countries, and from there, select a state or province to find more specific information. Each of the country pages include the same category breakdown seen on the “Global” page: Gateways, Governmental Organizations, Judicial, Non/Intra-Governmental Organizations, Research and Educational Resources, and Documents. When the user selects a specific province or state, the page then moves to a more limited list with some of these categories.

Overall, this is a well-organized site with large amounts of useful information, but its biggest drawback is navigation. The only way to return to the

“Global” information is with the back button on the browser. Also, once you select a specific province or state, it is difficult to switch to the other country successfully. You are dependent on the browser buttons more than the navigation dropdowns, as they don’t seem to work quite as expected.

This site is excellent for browsing, but I was unable to find a way to search for a specific agency or government organization. Currently, this is not a problem as there are only the three options: Global, Canada, and United States, so finding what you want is not difficult. As this site expands in scope, hopefully expanded navigation will follow.
—*Dominique Hallett (dhallett@astate.edu), Government Information and STEM Librarian, Arkansas State University*