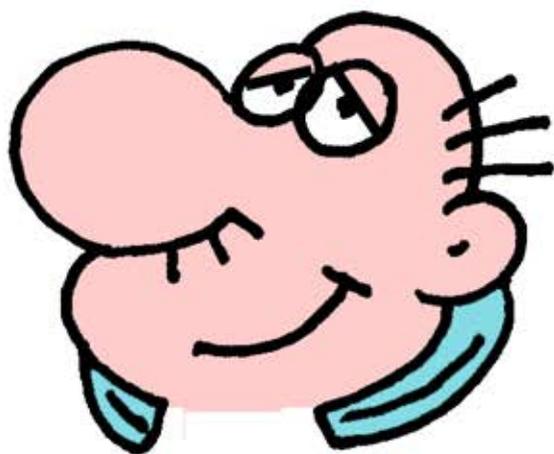


The Dry Bones Academy of Cartoon Advocacy is produced and maintained by the Dry Bones Project (see [www.reportorg.org](http://www.reportorg.org) and [www.DryBonesProject.com](http://www.DryBonesProject.com))

# THE DRY BONES GUIDE TO ONE-LINERS AND CARTOONS

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THIS IS A GUIDE TO A SPECIFIC AND TIME-HONORED  
FORMAT USED IN COMEDY, WIT, HUMOR, AND CARTOONS;  
THE ONE-LINER.



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## **Cartoons and One-Liners**

The one-liner format is used by comedians and cartoonists. It consists of two parts.

The first part is a “set-up”.

The set-up is usually what appears to be a straight-forward and easy to understand statement.

The second part is the “punch line”.

The punch line radically transforms the meaning of the set-up.

If the new transformed meaning expresses what we secretly believe to be the “truth” we laugh.

This two-part format works equally well for stand-up comedians and for advocacy cartoonists.

We will begin by analyzing a number of One-Liners by comedians.

Then we will examine the use of the form in Political cartoons.

***I am not a member of any organized religion.  
I am a Jew.***

**-Al Franken**

Franken's punch line transforms the meaning of the set-up, by turning it into a "secret sentence" which asserts that Judaism is chaotic and disorganized. This one-liner is funny to a Jewish audience which secretly believes it to be true. A holocaust-denying antisemite who believes Jews to be powerful controllers of the media and international manipulators would not find the one-liner to be "funny"

***My wife made me join a bridge club.  
I jump off next week.***

**-Rodney Dangerfield**

Dangerfield's punch line transforms the meaning of the set-up by converting what seemed to be his wife's positive wish into a wildly negative one.

***If you can't join them, beat them.***

**—Mort Sahl**

Mort Sahl's one-liner breaks the pattern. Instead of a set-up which is transformed by a punch line he presents us with complete reversal of the adage "If you can't beat them, join them". The necessary transformative function of the one-liner is changing the unspoken original.

***I don't want to gain immortality by my humor.  
I want to gain immortality by not dying.***

**—Woody Allen**

Allen's punch line transforms the meaning of the set-up by converting what is the figurative use of the word immortality to its literal meaning.

***He may not be able to sing,  
but he sure can't dance.***

**-Abe Burrows**

The “surprise shock punch line in Abe Burrows’ one-liner transforms the meaning of the set-up by converting the traditional form of “He may not...But he sure can...”

***I'm not a good lover,  
but at least I'm fast.***

**—Drew Carey**

Drew Carey’s one-liner uses the same traditional form of “He may not...But he sure can...: But his punch line surprises us by transforming his set-up sentence into an understatement!

***On one issue at least, men and women agree:  
They both distrust women.***

**—H.L. Mencken**

Mencken’s set-up leads us to believe that he is about to deliver a positive comment on the “war between the sexes” and then he hits us with an anti-female libel which, to most delivers a “secret sentence” which we believe to be true.

***I shot an elephant in my pajamas.  
How he got in my pajamas, I'll never know.***

**—Groucho Marx**

The surprise punch line in Groucho’s one-liner transforms the meaning of the set-up by making us believe that we grotesquely misunderstood the “simple” statement that he made.

***A girl phoned me the other day and said... 'Come on over, there's nobody home.' I went over.***

***Nobody was home.***

**-Rodney Dangerfield**

Dangerfield's one-liner uses the same mechanism as Groucho's previous one-liner transforms the meaning of the set-up but it adds a twist by making us believe that it was not only us, but also Dangerfield himself, who grotesquely misunderstood the "simple" statement that "the girl" made.

***My VISA card was stolen two months ago, but I don't want to report it.***

***The guy who took it is using it less than my wife.***

**—Johnny Carson**

The set-up in Carson's one liner is more than just a statement. It is a statement that raises a question. Our response is to ask ourselves why he "doesn't want to report" the theft of his Visa card. The punch line transforms the set-up into the traditional joke concept that his wife is an out of control spender of his money. That anti-wife joke concept is as familiar as the long list of anti mother in law "jokes"

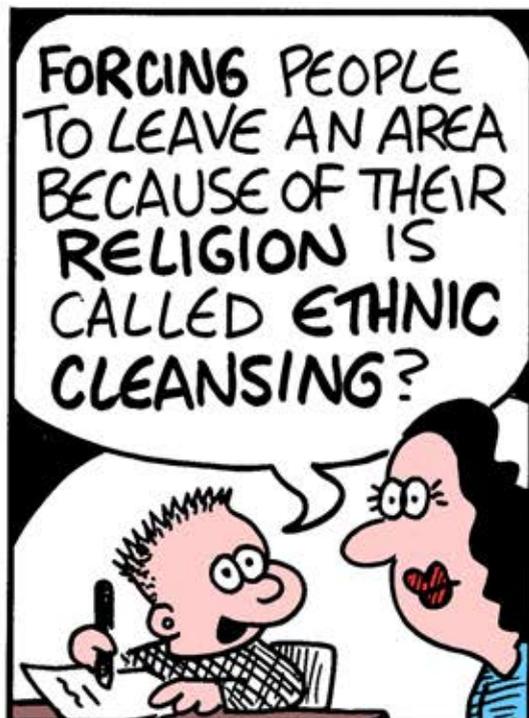
In the following pages we will examine the use of the one-liner format in political cartoons.

THE CRIME OF ETHNIC CLEANSING DOES NOT APPLY TO EVERYONE. THIS CARTOON USES A MOM HELPING HER KID WITH HIS HOMEWORK TO MAKE ITS SIMPLISTIC POINT.

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HOMWORK

THE SET-UP IS IN THE FIRST TWO PANELS



THE PUNCH LINE IS DELIVERED IN THE LAST TWO PANELS.



A PIECE OF NEWS THAT MOST MAIN STREAM MEDIA DID NOT REPORT. SO I DID THIS CARTOON TO REPORT IT.

# Dry Bones

THE SET-UP IS THE TEXT SPOKEN BY THE WOMAN ON THE LEFT

THE PUNCH LINE IS BOTH THE TEXT SPOKEN BY THE WOMAN ON THE RIGHT AND THE IMAGE OF THE WOMEN BEING HIDDEN IN BURQAS.

THE UN SAYS THAT THE WORLD'S TOP VIOLATOR OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS IS ISRAEL! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?

I DON'T KNOW. I'LL HAVE TO ASK MY HUSBAND!



I FELT THE NEED TO DEAL WITH AN EU TACTIC THAT I FOUND SHOCKING. THE SET-UP WAS THE REPORTING OF THE NEWS. THE PUNCH LINE WAS THE DRAWING. FOR CLARITY I CHOSE TO WRITE JEW INSTEAD OF THE GERMAN "JUDE"

# Dry Bones

THE SET-UP

THE EUROPEAN UNION PLANS TO BAN ALL PRODUCTS PRODUCED BY JEWS IN THE WEST BANK.

ALL SUCH "JEWISH" PRODUCTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO CARRY A SPECIAL LABEL.

MAY WE SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING DESIGN FOR THE LABEL?

THE PUNCH LINE



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MURDEROUS TERRORIST ATTACKS THAT ARE LAUNCHED AGAINST ISRAELIS WHILE "NEGOTIATIONS" ARE IN PROGRESS ARE EXPLAINED AWAY SO AS NOT TO STOP THE "PEACE" TALKS. THIS CARTOON ATTACKS THAT CONCEPT.

## Dry Bones

THE SET-UP IS IN THE FIRST THREE PANELS



THE PUNCH LINE IS DELIVERED IN THE LAST PANEL