

# Cartoonist trains eye on America's culture

**Mission Accomplished: Wicked Cartoons by America's Most Wanted Political Cartoonist Khalil Bendib**

Interlink Books Paperback; \$17.95;  
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By Kam Williams  
Sentinel-Voice

"Mission Accomplished is about point of view. The cartoons invert the U.S. media reality. ...by focusing on disputes and debates in human terms. For the typical American, this book's point of view is a world turned upside down. The modern-day princes and potentates, the wealthy investors and powerful politicians, are stripped of their pretensions and placed in context of their effects on vast numbers of individual human beings. Bendib's cartoons scramble a deck that has been stacked by the demagogues and crusaders who feel they must diminish the humanity of others to exalt their own. No wonder he can lay claim to being "America's most censored political cartoonist."

— Excerpted from the Foreword (p. vi) by Norman Solomon

Long gone are the times when our syndicated cartoonists could be relied upon to challenge the status quo in a thought-provoking fashion likely to shake the masses out of the doldrums. The reason for this unfortunate development is due to the fact that, by-and-large, the mainstream press is comprised of conglomerates who share the same interests as the corporations and politicians whose behavior deserve to be monitored and then

satirized.

Consequently, the bulk of the cartoonists currently in circulation are ones who either approach issues from their employer's perspective or avoid controversial material entirely. This, for instance, helps explain how the country ended up mired in Iraq without seriously ever questioning the basis for the invasion.

Similarly, it makes it easy to understand how FEMA's ineffective response in the wake of Hurricane Katrina could remain unquestioned for months on end.

Fortunately, Khalil Bendib is an exception to the rule and his work stands in sharp contrast to most of his colleagues. This inventive Muslim-American artist routinely weighs-in with clever, iconoclastic cartoons on subjects ranging from war profiteering to New Orleans to racism to healthcare to the criminal justice system to the Middle East.

Trademark Bendib can be found in his lampooning of the 2004 presidential election in Ohio as "separate but equal" with side-by-side tableaus in which votes are collected in ballot boxes in White precincts, but in trash cans in Black neighborhoods.

He returns to this theme frequently to illustrate the country's 21st century form of segregation, such as his drawing of a hospital where a "Whites Only" sign has been replaced by one reading "Insured Only" — just the sort of honest, hard-hitting cartoons called for in this Orwellian Age where doublespeak and disinformation have become the order of the day.



# Protect the Las Vegas Dream!

There's a lot riding on the ongoing negotiations between the Culinary Union and the big casino companies.

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Culinary members are fighting for fair contracts that protect the Las Vegas Dream of decent wages, home ownership and a better life for all families in Las Vegas.

If the big casino companies have their way, that Las Vegas Dream will disappear.

We're fighting to protect the Las Vegas Dream for everyone!

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Culinary Workers Union Local 226, 1630 S. Commerce St, Las Vegas NV 89102  
www.culinaryunion226.org

## Lawyer: Rock cleared in Georgia paternity case

SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP) - A lawyer for Chris Rock said recently that a court-ordered DNA test proved Rock is not the father of a 13-year-old boy whose mother tried to sue the comedian for support earlier this year.

Rock's attorney, John Mayoue of Atlanta, said a Bulloch County judge sent results of the paternity test to lawyers on both sides of the case.

"The results of the test are that Chris Rock is not the father of this child," Mayoue said. "It is conclusive."

The mother, however, disputed the test results.

Kali Bowyer, who lives in Bulloch County west of Savannah, tried in March to file a paternity lawsuit against Rock seeking child support and medical coverage for her son, Jordan. She withdrew the lawsuit after court officials told her it was outside

the southeast Georgia county's jurisdiction because Rock is a New Jersey resident.

However, Rock asked the Georgia court in April to start paternity proceedings to resolve the case.

Bulloch County Superior Court Judge John R. Turner ordered DNA testing on Rock and the boy June 8.

Rock and his wife, (See Rock, Page 10)

## 50 Cent: I'll quit if outsold by West

NEW YORK (AP) - 50 Cent believes his new album will outsell Kanye West's upcoming disc, and he's betting his solo career on it. Both 50 Cent and West have albums due out Sept. 11.

50 Cent, who has sold better than West, has been riled by forecasts that sales of West's "Graduation" could rival those for his "Curtis" CD.

"Let's raise the stakes," the 31-year-old rapper told hip-hop website SOHH.com in an interview posted Friday. "If Kanye West sells more records than 50 Cent on September 11, I'll no longer write music. I'll write music and work with my other artists, but I won't put out any more solo albums."

An e-mail sent to West's publicist wasn't immediately returned.

50 Cent, whose real name is Curtis James Jackson, has been publicly disparaging of West before. In 2005, he suggested the 29-year-old rapper's popularity was only possible because of 50's own success.

But they recently collaborated in the studio. Their work, though, isn't scheduled to appear on either new album.

50 Cent's last full-length solo album, "The Massacre," was the best-selling disc of 2005 and sold more than 1.14 million copies in its first week of release. The same year, West's "Late Registration" opened by selling more than 860,000 copies in its first week.