

College Admissions Scandal Political Cartoon Analysis

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Admission departments of prestigious academic institutes offer a dodging shortcut to the elite status-seeking parents to get their average and spoiled children in by using their privilege and vice versa. To prove my stance, I have selected an ingenious work drawn by Kevin Kallagher (Kal) on "Admission Scandal" from The Baltimore Sun. Kal is a famous editorial cartoonist for The Baltimore Sun and The Economist. In the selected political cartoon drawing, he symbolizes the unjust ways of admission departments through the technique of visual and verbal imagery. The drawing perfectly conveys the editorial commentary on how rich parents leave no stone unturned to get their spoiled average kids into renowned academic institutes through cheats and bribes. This paper analyzes the theme of unfair shortcut admission departments in prestigious academic institutes offered to overbearing parents while ruining the futures of deserving students. ("Kal Cartoons")

Kal Cartoon On Admission Scandal

I have analyzed the respective hypothesis through the elements of imagery, exaggeration, metaphor, labelling, irony, etc., that the cartoonist Kal has added to unveil the unfair dealings in the educational world. The cartoon Kal has drawn ironically depicts the cracks in the admission departments through the bag full of bribes (dollars). The imagery of a bag full of dollars is to expose the entire admission system of the prestigious schools and colleges that are corrupt. In the collected sample, the cartoonist has perfectly used visual and verbal imagery to persuade the audience about the political discourse of the elite class and their privileges. The use of verbal imagery, such as the phrase “Helicopter Parents”, words like “We are looking for the admission department”, and the symbol “\$”, enhances the representation of the intent of the creator. The drawing beautifully creates a clear picture in audiences’ minds by unveiling the kind of tactics wealthy parents use to get their kids into prestigious institutes. I have noted this technique as a satire on the corrupt education system, which does not provide fair chances to the upright yet poor students equally. Rather, the system looks forward to its own financial interests.

The technique of exaggeration is further spotted to unveil the level of corruption both upper-class and admission departments are undoubtedly overdoing. Kal uses the visual and verbal vocabulary of the oversized bag full of dollars to exaggerate the symbol of money used as a bribe to make a point through a fresh lens. The drawing is black and white in colour, reflecting the primary focus on the seriousness of the matter. For instance, a ‘white bag’ with a ‘\$’ symbol in large font over it conveys the idea of the amount of bribe admission departments are taking to verify the credentials of privileged children.

The technique of labelling is also noted in the drawing to clearly claim what the characters in the collected sample really think and believe. The use of the phrase “Helicopter Parents!!” by the poor class struggling for its rights exposes the mentality of status-seeking parents who always decide for their kids. They do not let their children decide for their academic as well as personal matters, which sometimes leads to mental disability in the kid. In my opinion, the term is used to explain the kind of parents who are so overly involved in their kids’ lives that they can do anything to buy their kids’ way into the most expensive educational institutes by illegally using their privilege. This kind of parents wants their children to follow in their footsteps without considering what their children dream of. They forcefully manage to buy what they want for their children with hooks or crooks, whether it is in their interest or not. This over-hovering sometimes causes depression and anxiety in kids of overbearing parents when they cannot make up for their parent’s expectations.

Moreover, the analogy technique to illustrate the comparison between the upper and lower classes is also observed in the selected political cartoon. The cartoonist Kal compares the upper class’s seeking of ‘opportunity’ from the “helicopter in the air” with a “bag full of dollars” to represent the privileges they use for their own personal interests. The use of the language “We are looking for the admission department” from a character peeping through the helicopter metaphorically exposes the signs of the

corrupt system. The character depicts the reality that through money, rich people can buy their children's academic advantages, too. On the contrary, people standing around and getting disturbed by the dollar tactic represent the poor class who study hard to get on merit for admission to prestigious institutes. However, the chances are given only to the wealthy children of wealthy parents. This brings up the evidence that the dream of a fair chance for children of poor people scatters in the unjust air of corruption, as portrayed in the drawing to highlight the problem of poverty.

To conclude, the techniques implied by Kal verify the hypothesis that the admission game ironically contributes major shortcuts to children of elite parents but frustrates poor kids in the process due to obstruction of justice. Techniques implied by the famous cartoonist Kal, such as labelling, imagery, analogy, irony, and exaggeration, highlight the specific moves of admission systems as well as both the classes (upper and lower class). The metaphorical language characters communicate through verbal text and visual imagery further strengthen the claim that privileged children steal the spot from deserving students. On an honest note, although the 'illegal' struggle of privileged parents reduces the risk of failure for their spoiled children, it raises mental health difficulties when these kids land in the real professional world.

Works Cited

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