

Foreword by Will Durst

I know. I know. I know. Don't think I don't know. Cuz I know. It's depressing out there. Madmen rattling "nukular" sabers. Icebergs the size of Delaware breaking off into the Atlantic. Infectious diseases assaulting our chickens. Politicians with the same connection to reality that banana slugs have to the Great Salt Flats of Utah—posing as actual people. It's enough to drive a sane man to drink really bad beer. Not that there is such a thing.

Chin up, people. No matter how dark the clouds of the day's news might appear, they provide a silver lining that graces the palettes of some of the bravest, most exceptional artists working in

America today. And yes, I'm talking about those ink-stained wretches wielding ballpoint lances on the front lines of the humor wars – the editorial cartoonists of America.

These folks, who should be enshrined in the Smithsonian as national treasures, have been called the canaries in the coal mine of civilized society. A bit of an anachronism, perhaps, since miners haven't carried canaries for about 140 years.

It might be more accurate to say cartoonists are the goldfish in the hot tub of liberty. The ferrets in the air-conditioning ducts of democracy. The E. coli on the seasoned curly fries of freedom.



This book you hold in your hot, little hand is all the proof required that now is not the time to bemoan the loss of the best lineup of political humor targets since South America jump-started the process by tossing eggs at Richard Nixon. That time will come soon enough—the third week of January 2009. Until then, sit back, relax, and take the lush blanket of hilarity these cartoonists have woven and wrap it around your shoulders, luxuriating in its wit and fecundity. As an added bonus, if you hold this book close to your head, you can smell the fecundity.

Will Durst is a political comedian who has performed around the world. He is a familiar pundit on television and radio.

Artwork by Brian Fairrington