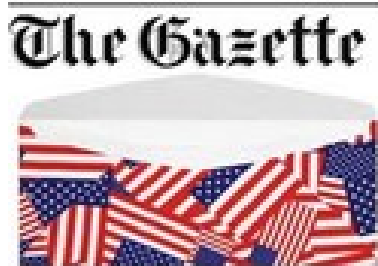


<http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/spip.php?article762>



A few parodies of Norman Rockwell's "Freedom From Want" painting.

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In 1943, during the Second World War, Norman Rockwell painted the Four Freedoms series, which was inspired by a speech by Franklin D. Roosevelt, in which he described four principles for universal rights : *Freedom from Want, Freedom of Speech, Freedom to Worship, and Freedom from Fear.* The painting that we shall describe speak in this article is probably the most famous.

It represents a happy middle class family about to eat the traditional Thanksgiving turkey. The title "[OURS...to fight for FREEDOM FROM WANT](#)" means that being able to eat to one's content (especially in this painting) is a type of freedom, and a fundamental right worth defending.

[http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L173xH225/Freedom_from_Want_small-44f22.jpg]

All Americans are familiar with Norman Rockwell's works . Because of their high visibility, his paintings are an easy choice as parodies. They can be transformed with a few simple changes.

This altering is successful because the public knows what is being manipulated and can appreciate the resulting humor or change in mood of the painting.

We have chosen three exemples to show you how these modifications to the initial painting communicate cultural and societal issues.

[<http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L253xH320/rockwell-redneck-2-a4145.jpg>] "**We're rednecks, we don't know our ass from a hole in the ground**" (Randy Newman)

1) This painting, represents a family belonging to a social group which is often the target of all sorts of jokes : "**rednecks**", (rural, conservative, southerners) . We notice that the turkey has been replaced by KFC chicken (a classic redneck treat !) , everybody is drinking Budweiser beer and smoking, and the grandmother is wearing a very low cut T. shirt - quite unlike the modest blouse and apron of the original painting. No doubt Norman Rockwell would have been shocked if he could have seen the transformations of his work !

[<http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L400xH300/rockwell-simpsons1-7c4ff.jpg>]

2) This illustration represents the famous **Simpsons** (the symbol of the typical suburban uneducated middle class family). The children are playing with the food, the grandfather is sleeping during the Thanksgiving dinner, and Homer as the slob that he is, is eating out of the plate.

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[<http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L234xH300/mad-lindsay-nicole-britney-paris-234x300-19160.jpg>]

3) In this parody, which is the front-cover of an issue of **the famous American satirical magazine "Mad"**, Norman's characters around the Thanksgiving table have been removed by four girls (*Lindsay Lohan, Nicole Richi, Britney Spears and Paris Hilton*) who are either drinking, smoking or throwing up on the table. It illustrates the terrible manners of some American stars, whose claim to fame seems to consist solely in their capacity to behave as immature spoilt brats and to make a mess of their lives.

So we see that whereas Norman Rockwell's painting gave his fellow Americans an idealized portrait of their country, these parodies mostly show the vices and flaws of the contemporary American society