

A Few Funny Stories

Drawing Attention author Stu Heinecke is a noted marketer, but also a nationally published cartoonist, whose work appears in countless marketing campaigns, occasionally *The Wall Street Journal* and hopefully, soon, in *The New Yorker*. Where did he get his inspiration to become a cartoonist? From sneaking copies of *Playboy* from his father's dresser drawers as a mischievous kid.

We've always heard humor is good for us and now there's proof. A reader once laughed so hard at one of Stu's cartoons he passed a kidney stone.

One of Stu's mailings once caused a big stir in Atlanta. Former Deputy-District-Attorney-turned-successful-lawyer Fred Tokars had just given a statement asking the press for fair treatment in their coverage, particularly *The Atlanta Constitution Journal*, amid allegations he was responsible for the contract murder of his wife. The following day, an envelope arrived at the D.A.'s office, bearing a cartoon by Stu showing two executives in a corner office, scowling at a newspaper spread across the desk, one complaining to the other, "*Have you seen the latest issue of the Journal? It's all, 'Fred Tokars this, Fred Tokars that,' and nothing about us.*" The letter was forwarded to "*the Journal*," as it's locally known, where the reporter discovered it was nothing more than a subscription offer from *Small Business Reports*. The next day, the mailing was front-page news and the cartoon widely faxed all over town. The campaign went viral before the term "viral marketing" had ever been coined.

Recipients of Stu's personalized cartoon mailings sometimes find them a bit too believable, as in the case of Fred Smith from New Jersey, who called the *Forbes* circulation department in a panic. "How many of those things were mailed?" he asked. He was referring to the mailing featuring a Leo Cullum-penned cartoon showing a mom reading a bedtime story to her daughter, who demands, "*Enough about the three bears. Tell me the story again about how Fred Smith made a killing in the stock market.*" The perplexed staff member replied, "About a million." It was all cleared up when she explained that each recipient found their own name in the captions of the mailing. The caller was relieved, because he thought the magazine had just alerted a million people that he actually had just made a killing in the stock market. A similar thing happened with Senator Feingold and a mailing for *Scientific American*. The piece featured a cartoon showing three scientists in a control room at the SETI Institute, one scientist explaining to another, "*So far, our search for intelligent life has turned up a couple of false alarms and someone named Russ Feingold from Milwaukee.*" His staff called asking to purchase the original art, but their interest quickly waned when they realized his copy of the cartoon had simply been personalized.

Stu once met California Governor Pete Wilson by sending a hastily-drawn cartoon on a bar napkin, delivered by waiter. The Governor came over to Stu's table, introduced himself and his wife Gayle. Months later, Stu sent a framable cartoon print to the Governor, along with a note saying, "You probably don't remember me..." In fact, they had the napkin framed and hung over their mantle. Stu sent another print to President Bush (Sr.) featuring an executive practice-putting in his office, with the assistant poking her head in the door, asking, "*Would you mind if President Bush plays through?*" It prompted a note from the President explaining that his golf game had indeed been suffering lately and thanking Stu for the print. We're pretty sure it wasn't a form letter, either.



Drawing Attention *by* Stu Heinecke

How to unleash the incredible power of cartoons in marketing, advertising, sales promotion, job search, VIP contact campaigns and more

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