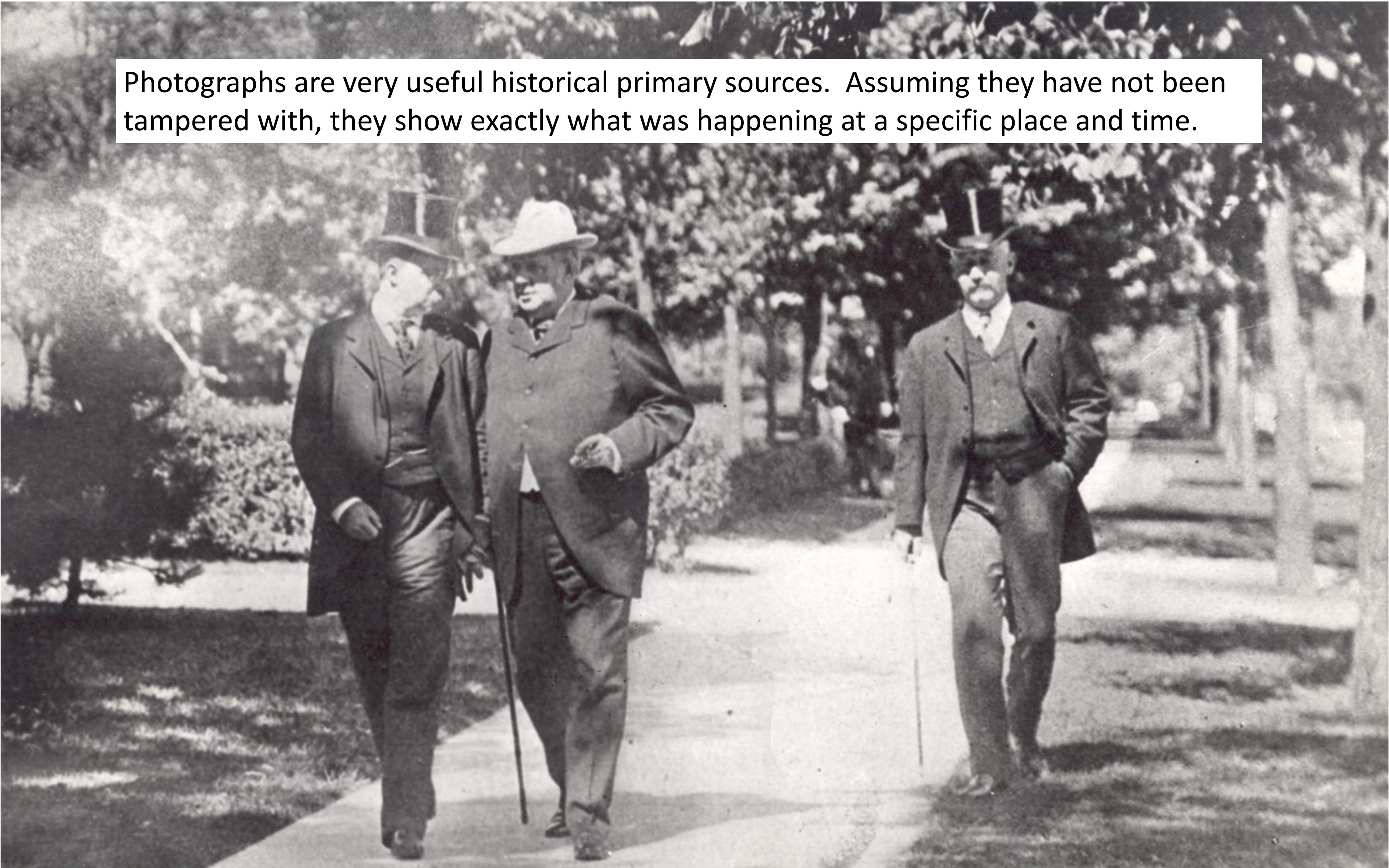


**TR**

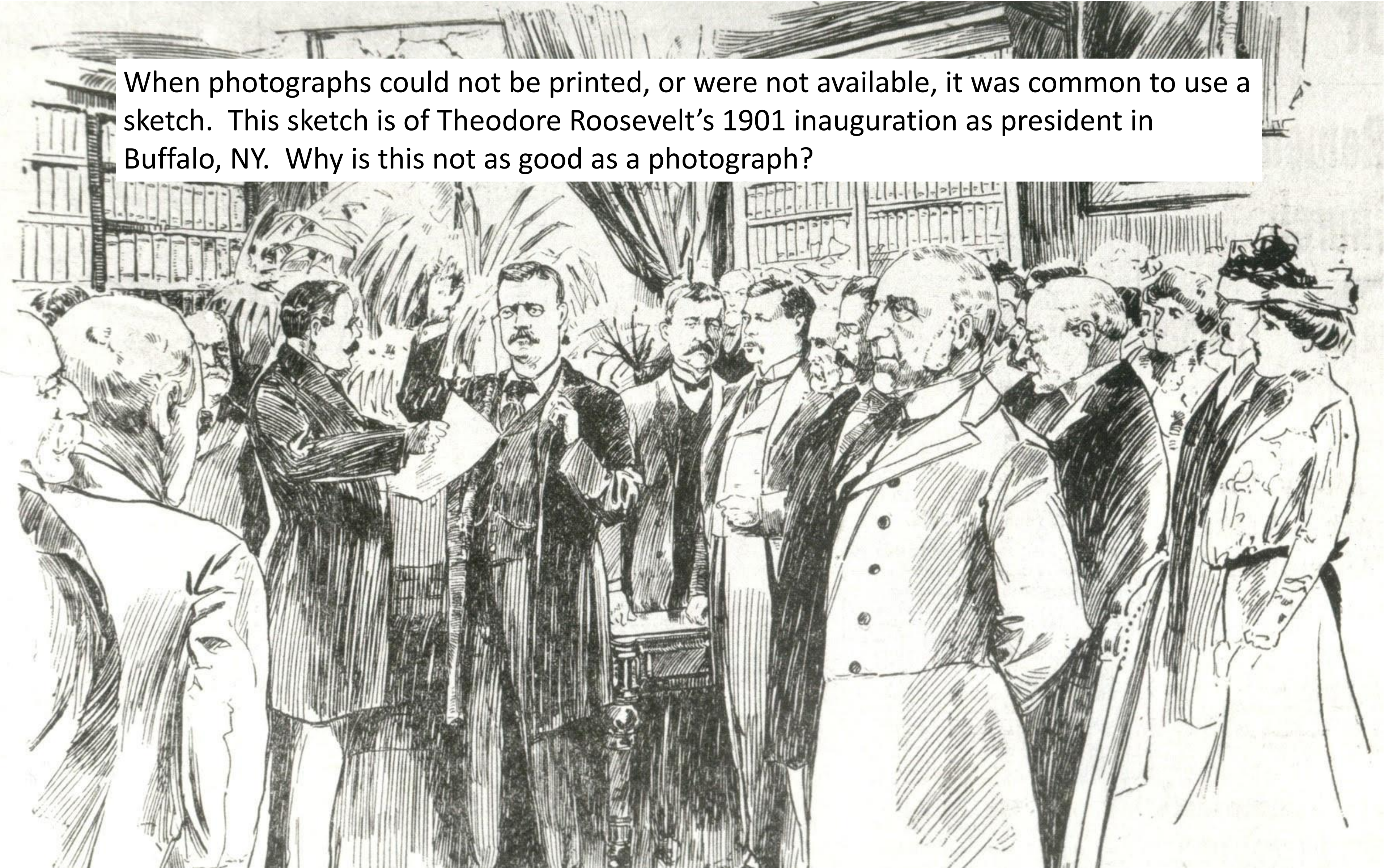
**INAUGURAL SITE**



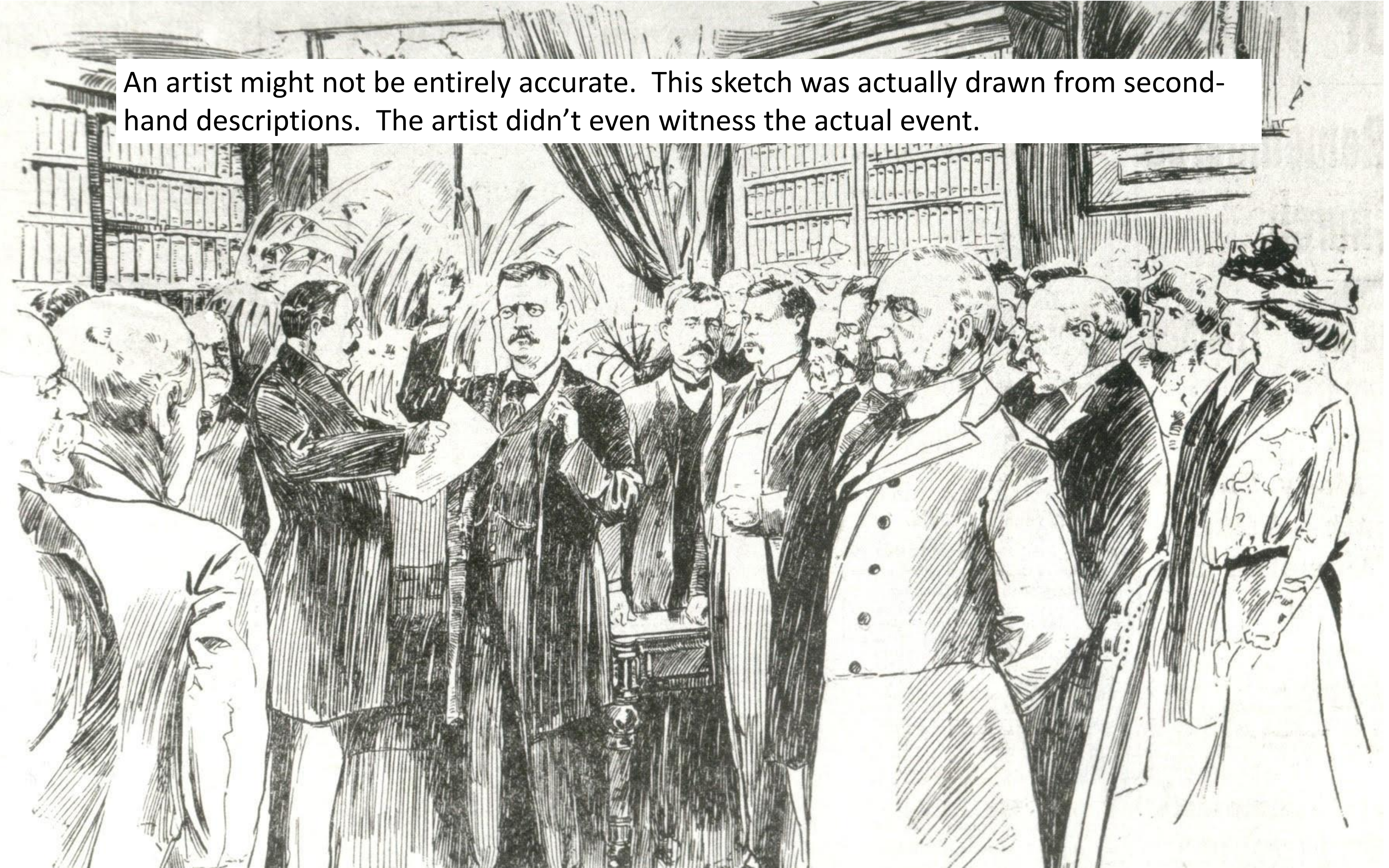
Photographs are very useful historical primary sources. Assuming they have not been tampered with, they show exactly what was happening at a specific place and time.



When photographs could not be printed, or were not available, it was common to use a sketch. This sketch is of Theodore Roosevelt's 1901 inauguration as president in Buffalo, NY. Why is this not as good as a photograph?



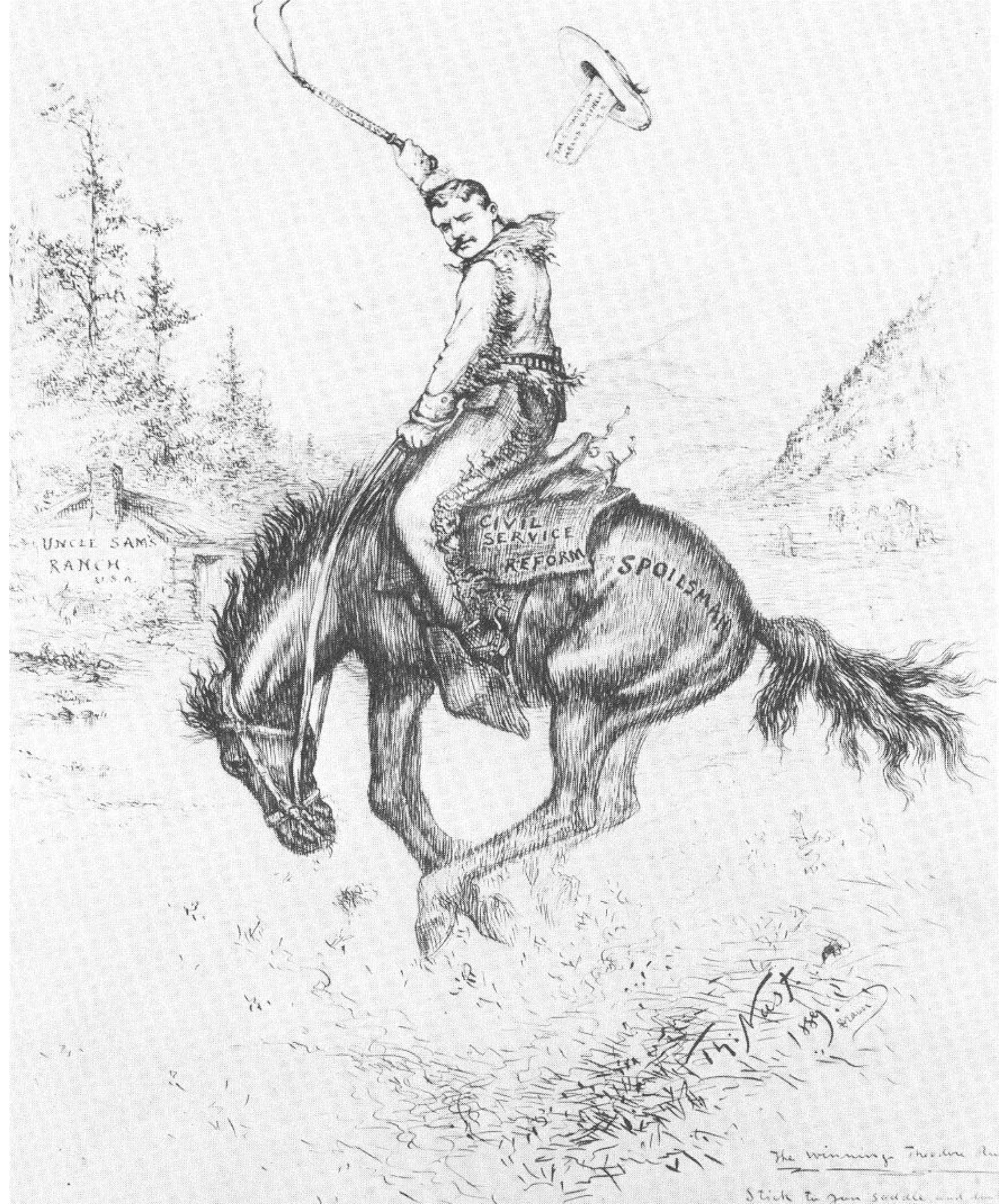
An artist might not be entirely accurate. This sketch was actually drawn from second-hand descriptions. The artist didn't even witness the actual event.



A political cartoon is different from a sketch. It is not meant to realistically depict an actual event. However, a political cartoon is not just meant to be funny (though it may use humor to make a point).



A political cartoon is meant to make the reader aware of a serious political or social issue that the artist feels the reader needs to be aware of. It is just as useful as a newspaper article to communicate and reflect serious information. It just uses pictures instead of words to make its point.



To understand a political cartoon, you need to know the language though.

Langue

语言

Sprache

भाषा

lingua

idioma

اللغة

Език

sprog

γλώσσα

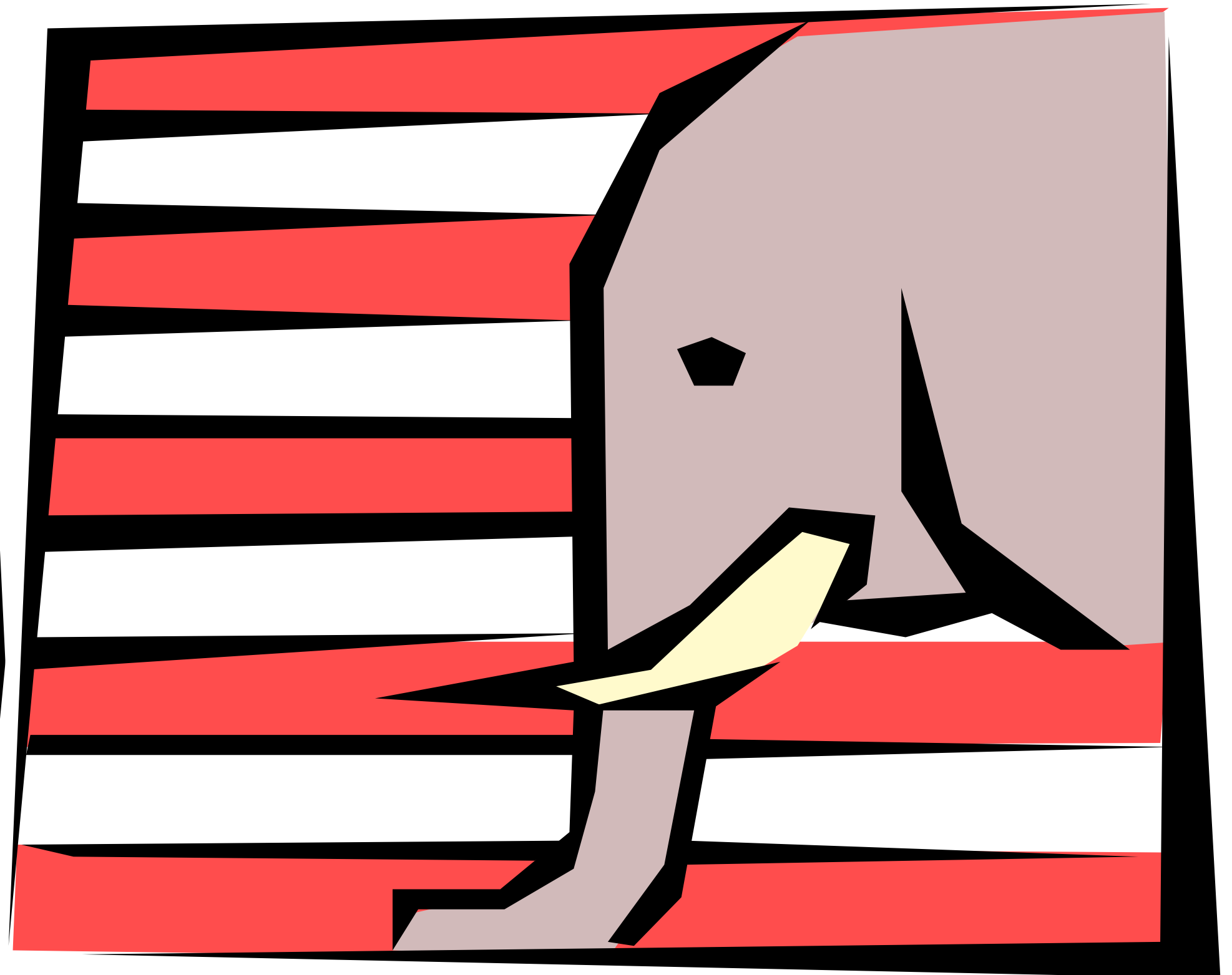
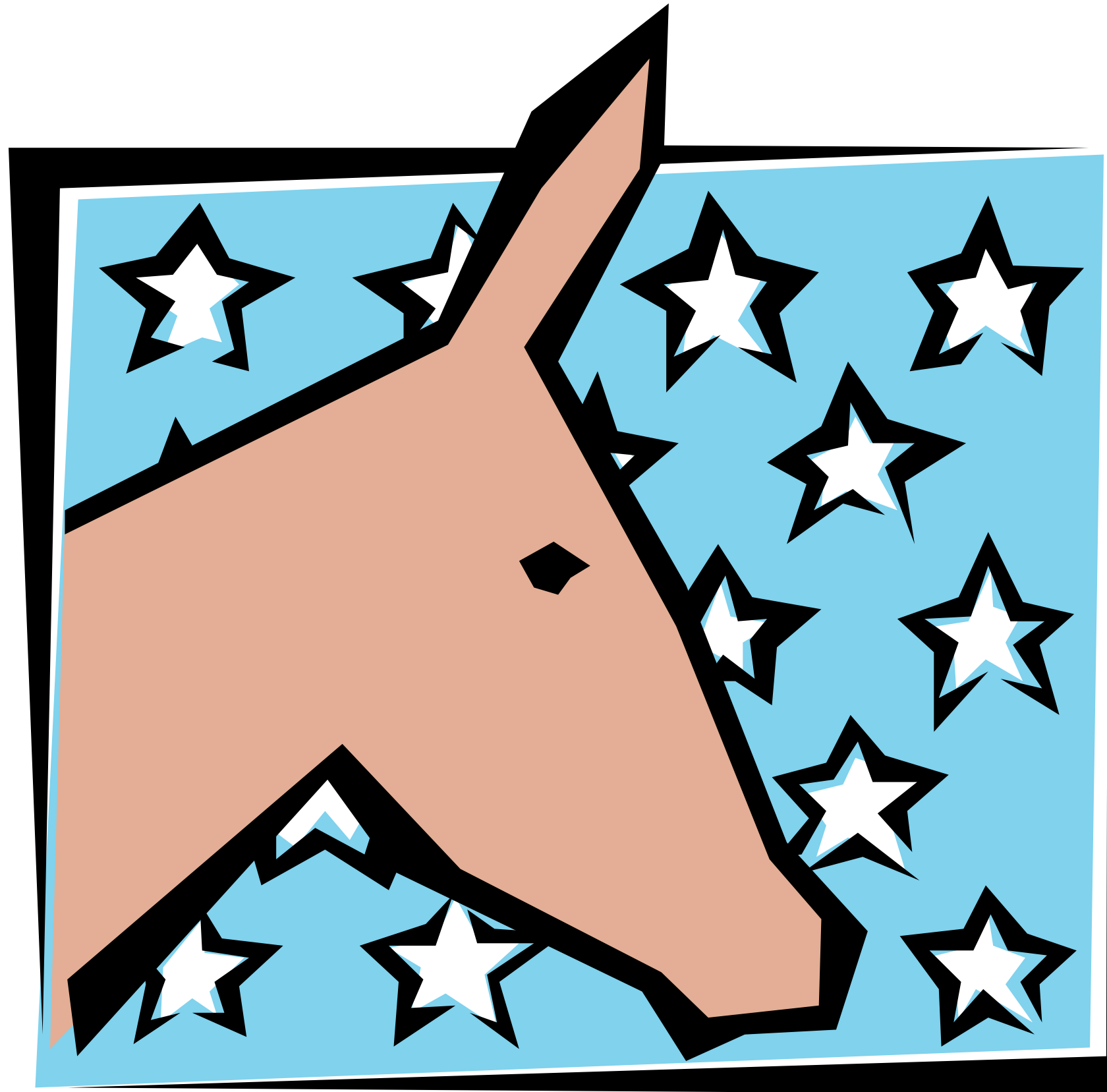
kieli

Political cartoons use a language of *symbols*. These are a fast way to communicate complex ideas.

Any object or character may represent something else symbolically.



What do these represent?



Or this?

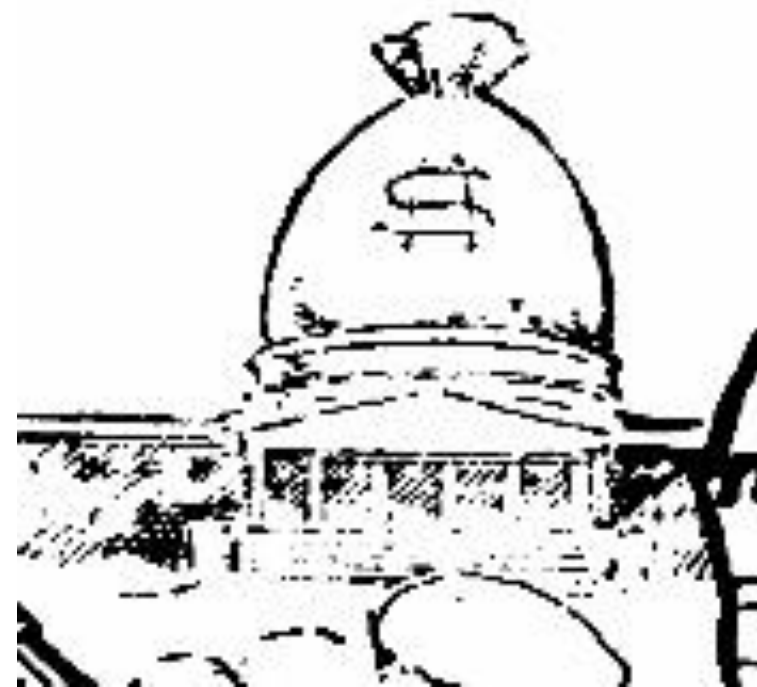


Or this?



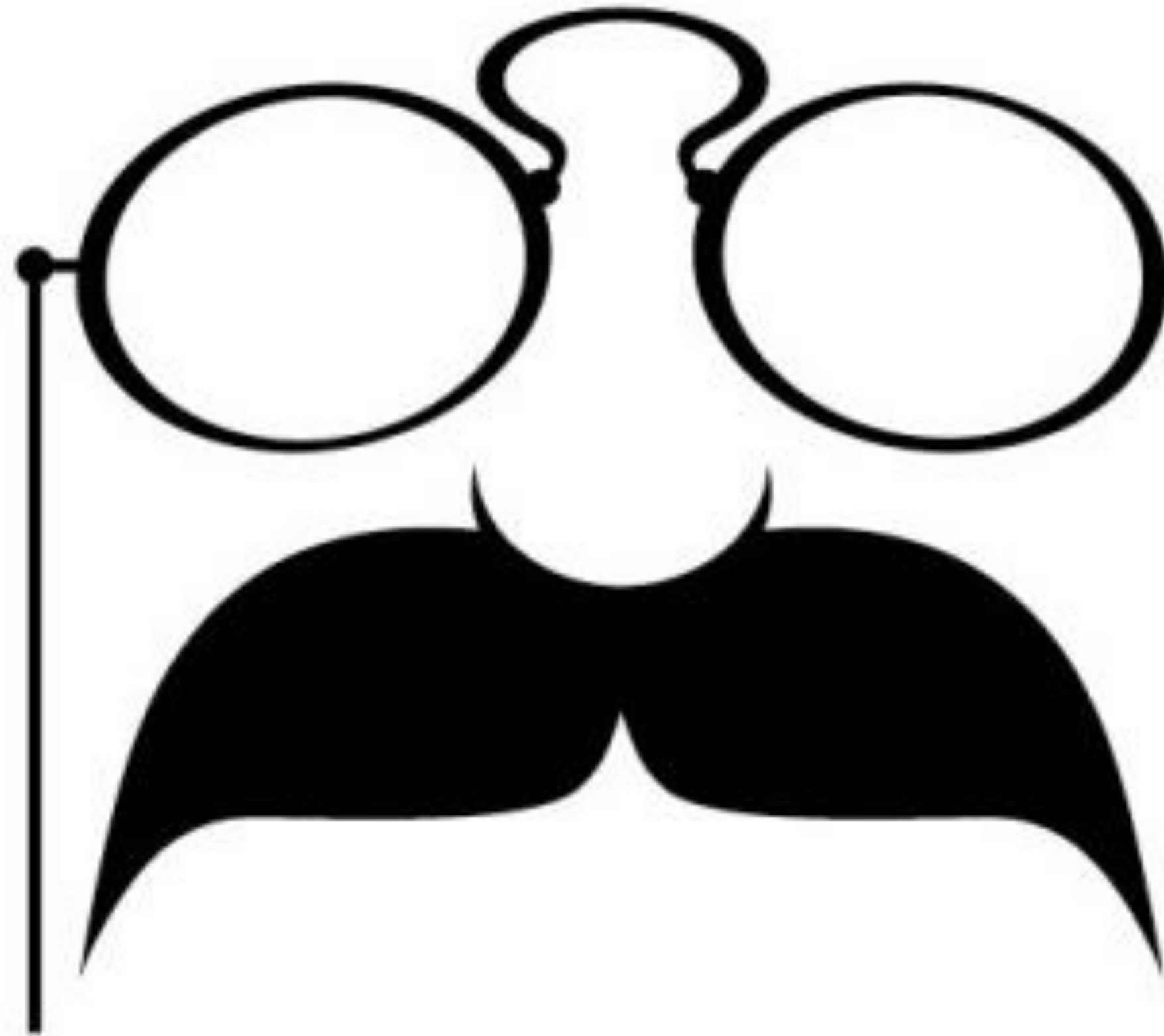


In addition to people, any object may be symbolic of something. Since the artist isn't trying to be realistic, he doesn't need to include details that don't make a point. Look closely! Anything may be important to understanding!

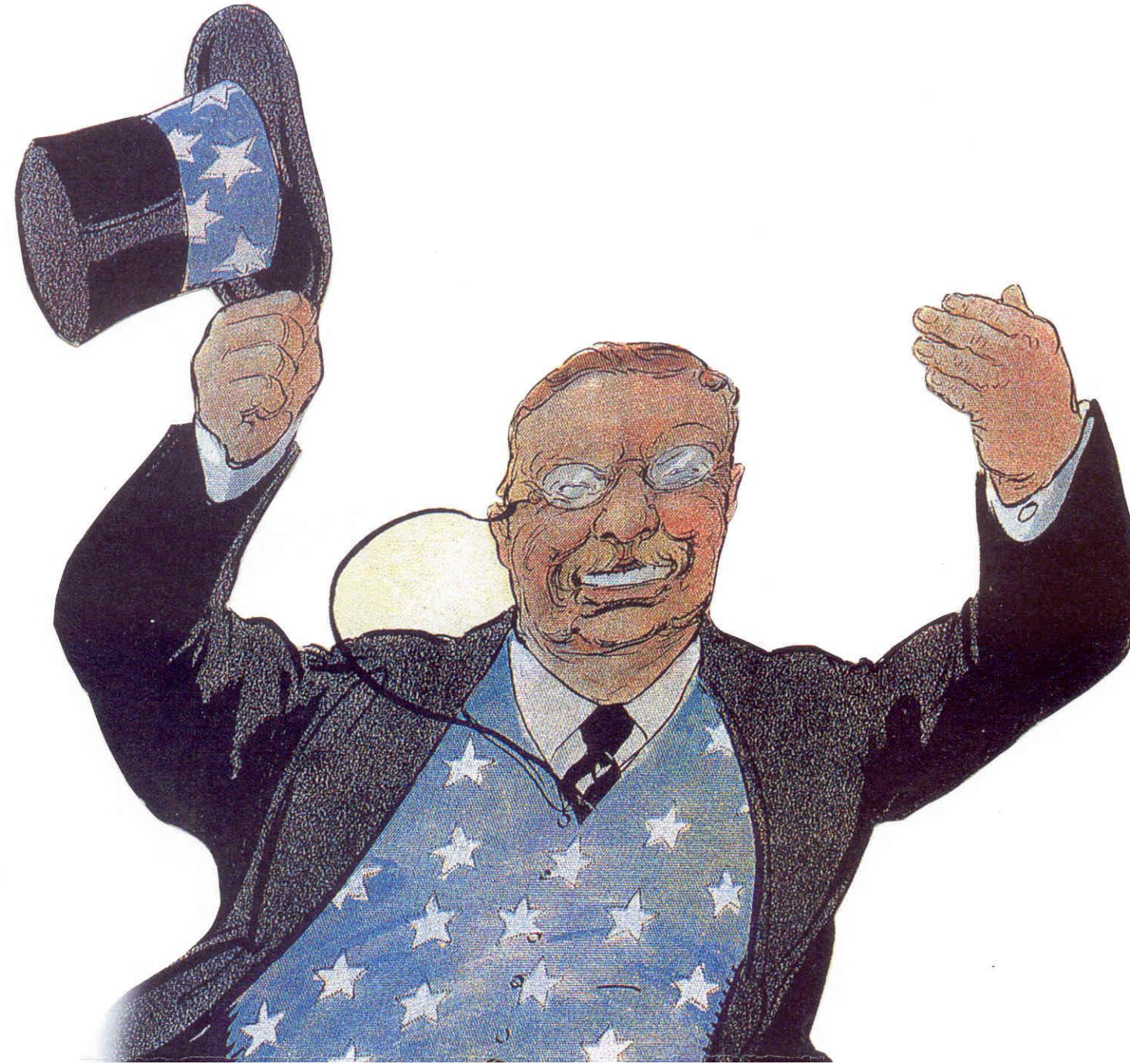


Some characters are a specific type of symbol called a *caricature*. A caricature does not represent a group of people (like Republicans) or an abstract concept (like freedom). It portrays a *specific person* that you are expected to know, such as the U.S. President, the governor, the mayor, etc.

To make sure you recognize the person, certain memorable features of that person are exaggerated.



What past President might this be?



Look for a caption.

This is usually at the bottom. A caption summarizes the message of the cartoon.

**THE FAUNAL NATURALIST AT WORK**  
From the *Traveler* (Boston)

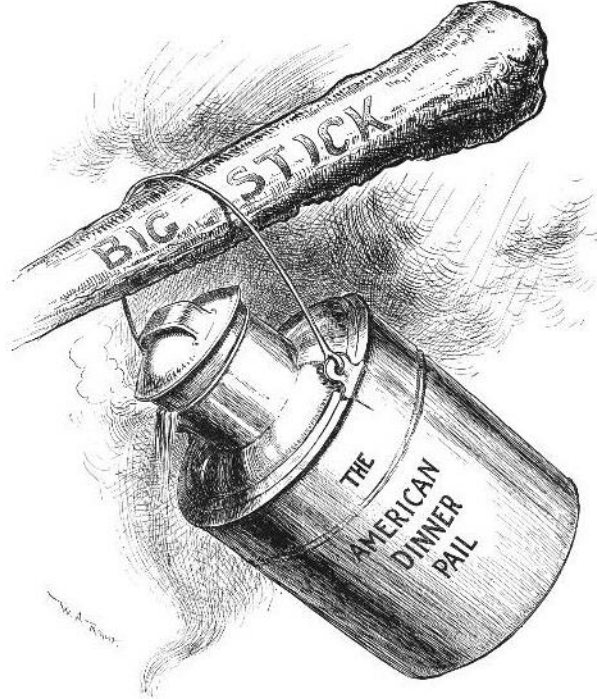
**THE WORLD'S CONSTABLE.**

**ROOSEVELT'S BIGGEST GAME**

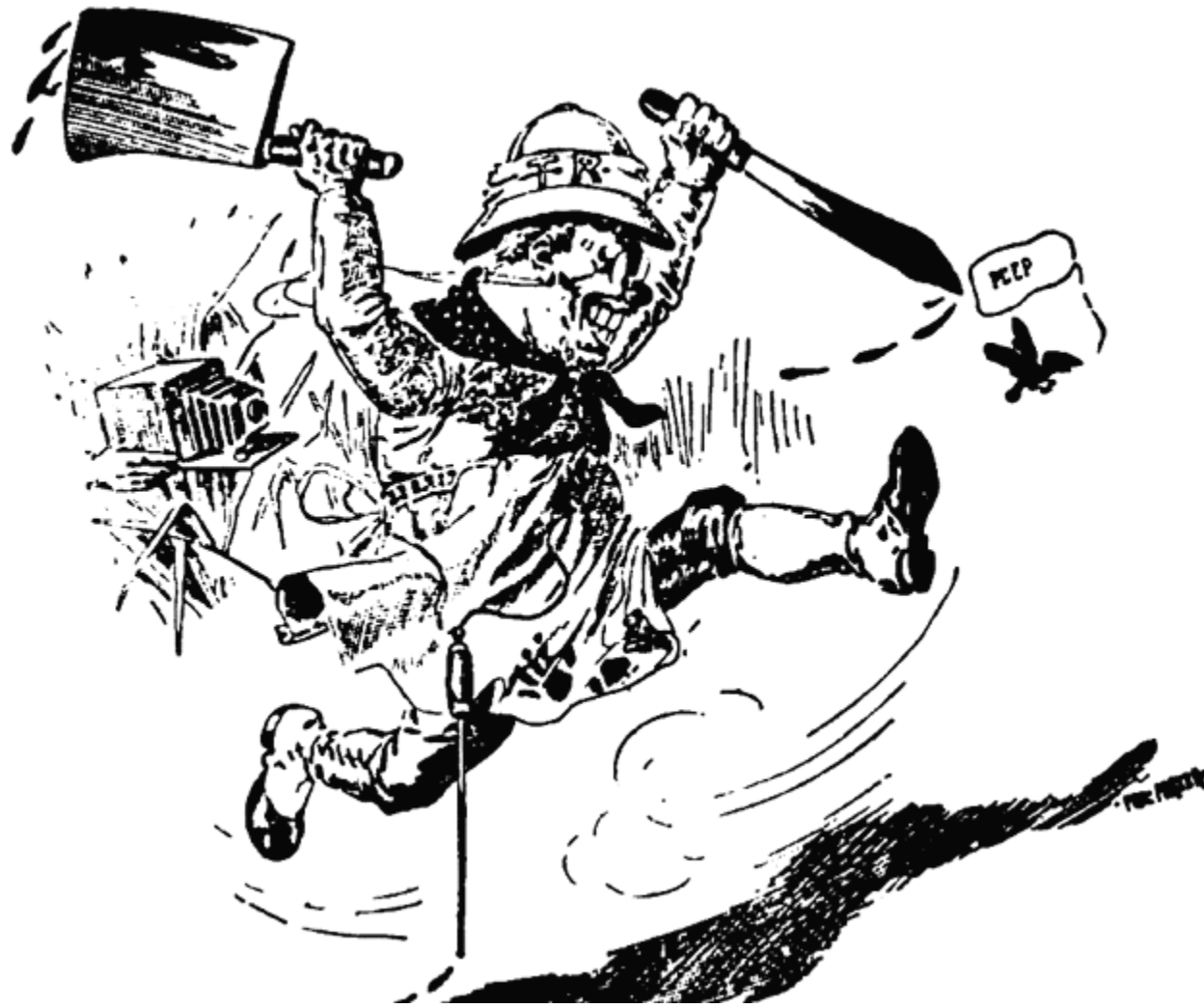


Look for labels.

They help to identify characters and symbols.



What actions are taking place? Who is doing it? What does it mean?



Is there anything unusual about how characters are dressed? Is it different from how you would expect them to look? Why are they dressed that way? What is the artist trying to say about the character?



If the artist plays with scale, what does that mean? What is the artist suggesting when one character is drawn larger than others?



THE WORLD'S CONSTABLE.



After careful study, ask yourself what  
the cartoonist is trying to say.

Do you agree?

Why or why not?

Political cartoons are still commonly used to offer commentary on events taking place in the world we live in. They appear in newspapers, but also online.

You may find political cartoons today about the President, Congress, or other political leaders. They might also be about social problems, entertainment figures, current events, or anything else that is going on around us.

Remember though, that even when they are funny, they are meant to also raise awareness of serious issues.