

We The People  
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We the People 321 Pickering's Passing



**Good day to you.** By now you will know that Australian political cartoonist Larry Pickering has passed away at home with his family by his side on the Gold Coast. He was 76 and had battled cancer for a few years insisting the lung cancer had nothing to do with smoking. I didn't know him well but I was a co-speaker at a few public rally's over the years and acknowledged his unique talent and barbed offerings. I regularly visited his web site, the Pickering Post and while I didn't like some material, I always warmed to his disobedient irreverent cartoons. He was an exceptional and talented cartoonist and drew his outrageous '**pen ultimate**' musings of Australian and international politicians, extracting the absolute nonsense and futility they often represent. Pickering was a self proclaimed atheist so for him there was no hope at life's end and I wonder what he is saying now at the pearly gates when, to his shock, Saint Peter tries to find his name in the great tome. No doubt he will see the funny side and using an angelic quill, start drawing.

Over the years there are many memorable Pickering cartoons but it's a quote from PM Julia Gillard that rests in my mind, where she said his web site was "**vile and sexist**" and that made me laugh as she was describing herself but never knew it. What irony. Pickering was a larrikin and that's a word you don't hear a lot of these days, mores the pity. I think being a larrikin is now politically incorrect as it apparently denotes a bigoted misogynistic racist white privileged homophobe. Larry Pickering turned PC into an **anti-art form** much to the teeth gnashing of the left wing lesbian equal opportunity transgender feminist politicians. He shone a light on the stupidity of it all and how PC is strangling our society and culture. After the attacks on the Charlie Hebdo office in Paris Pickering was placed under protective custody after drawing **Mohamed on a spit roast skewered by a pencil**. Simply brilliant. Remember Tony Abbott, depicted as a scrawny white fella on the beach with budgies flying out of his togs or a startled Malcolm Fraser losing his pants. In fact all the polties got a serve from 'Doctor Death' Kevin Rudd to 'Electricity Bill' Shorten along to an evil looking Sarah Hanson Young and the ubiquitous Bob Brown and his cabin in the woods. There was simply no lack of talent or targets for Larry Pickering and in a way I think that's good because it's the ultimate embodiment of free speech. The Church came in for its fair share to and sometimes rightly so but for the most part true Christians aren't bothered by one mortals myopia. That's the sad part about Pickering's passing in that he felt no hope at life's end but his earthly legacy is a pretty good one when it comes to drawing and my own sadness is that he didn't turn his attention to Teflon Tom or double speak Dixon where there's opportunity a plenty.

At times I felt sorry for people like Larry's Peter FitzSimons who wears the red bandana forever trying to be important but never quite getting there or Muslim women in burqas' who stumble around in many of his cartoons being led by heavily set bearded men with goats. His cartoons and pictures constituted the great leveller and often said what the populace thought but couldn't say. Indeed the pen is mightier than the sword but then ultimately the sword wins in death as it has with Larry Pickering and may God rest his soul and his Magna Carter of drawings and insight.

**Until next time this is Kent Bayley**