

The Current Situation and Practical Strategies of Literacy Cartoons in New Media Contexts

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Abstract: Rule of law literacy is an important part of citizen literacy. For college students, the level of rule of law literacy and the belief and strength of practicing rule of law are directly related to the harmony, stability and progress of society. Through the script creation, image building, case representation and network communication of the law cartoon, it helps to guide students to deeply understand the scope of application of the law, principles and procedures, and cultivate correct legal concepts and behavior habits.

Keywords: Manga; Franco-Prussian; colleges and universities; Legal literacy in practice

1. Introduction

With the continuous popularization of the concept of the rule of law and the importance of legal education, the legal cartoon, as an emerging form of legal education, has received more and more attention and participation of college students. In 2018, the Opinions of the General Office of the State Council on Promoting the Healthy and Orderly Development of the New Media of Governmental Affairs mentions that, “New government media is an important channel for the Party and the government to contact the masses and serve the masses in the era of mobile Internet, and an important position for guiding network public opinion and building a clear network space^[1]”. As a kind of governmental new media, the legal cartoon has significant effect in promoting governmental affairs openness and governmental affairs publicity, improving students' legal literacy and legal awareness, combining legal provisions with both educational and interesting popular science cartoons, and carrying out the rule of law publicity and education for college students through rich cartoon content, diversified forms of expression, and a strong coverage of dissemination methods, which can help to accelerate the promotion of rule of law construction on campuses.

2. Necessity of rule of law literacy and legal knowledge popularization among university students

Rule of law literacy is an important part of citizen literacy. The level of rule of law literacy and the belief and intensity of practicing rule of law are directly related to social harmony, stability and progress. Therefore, it is particularly important to strengthen the cultivation of university students' rule of law literacy and the popularization of legal knowledge. However, “the growing demand for the rule of law among college students and the effective supply of rule of law education for college students have not yet formed a high-quality dynamic balance. ^[2]” The rule of law is the cornerstone of social stability, fairness and justice. Under the influence of legal knowledge, college students can use legal knowledge to make rational analysis and judgment in social life, safeguard their legitimate rights and interests, and actively participate in social public affairs, which helps to form a good social atmosphere of understanding the law and abiding by the law, and promote social harmonious development, fairness and justice. To make contributions to comprehensively governing the country according to law and building a society under the rule of law.

3. The Advantages of Comics in Cultivating Legal Literacy and Popularizing Legal Knowledge Science

The term “manga” was introduced into China from Japan at the beginning of the 20th century. The expression techniques are exaggerated, and the painting style is mainly simple lines and flat colors. The story content reveals the essence and characteristics of things. Comics have experienced a long

development in China. In the 1920s, Feng Zikai's cartoons were published in Literary Weekly one after another. During the War of Liberation, the exploration of the nationalization and popularization of cartoons conveyed the process of people's fighting to the public through cartoons. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the emergence of a series of comic magazines has brought new vitality to the development of Chinese comics. By 2009, the successful business model of "Zhiyin Manke" has brought comic magazines to the peak. In the same year, Weibo, LOFTER and other network platforms were gradually launched, laying the foundation for the incubation of web comics. With the development of paper medium, on the basis of the original diffusion structure, point-to-point information transmission can evolve into a concentric multi-layer structure anytime and anywhere [3]. With the popularity of smart phones, strip comics evolved from four-panel comics have become the main form of web comics.

3.1. Theory Visualization: A Painting Exploration of Legal Literacy Cultivation and Legal Knowledge Popularization

Comics express story content through vivid images and concise language, and can be categorized into: single-panel comics, multi-panel comics, four-panel comics, comic strips, large comprehensive comics and strip comics according to their form. Compared with other types of comics, strip comics have the following advantages: a graphic and illustrative, reducing the reading threshold. The composition of strip comics is characterized by leaving gaps in the picture, and the slow pace of the story leaves space for readers to think. Compared with boring legal provisions and technical terms, pictures and words complement each other, making abstract legal concepts easy to understand and suitable for users' fragmented reading; second, simple production, easy long-term content output, fitting the update speed of the Internet; third, diverse forms, laying the foundation for the second creation of content. The diversity and extensiveness of comics make it an effective medium for disseminating legal knowledge and realizing the diversified output of legal knowledge.

3.2. Rigorization of comics: the complementarity of comic book plots and scientific knowledge of the law

Caricature is a vivid presentation of dry legal knowledge, and the supplementation of legal knowledge to the content of caricature is also conducive to the stable output of caricature creation. Lu Xun once put forward in "Comic Strip": "Comic strips should be clear to people at a glance, so the most common method is to exaggerate, but not to make a fuss." The main characteristic of caricature is exaggeration, but excessive exaggeration will make the content become claptrap, while serious and rigorous legal knowledge will impose certain constraints on caricature. The material can be taken from real legal cases to provide readers with a vivid and specific perspective, and create a situational learning environment through storyline and characterization, so that readers can actually feel the application of legal knowledge in the scene, and then better understand the legal principles and legal procedures.

4. Strategies for the development of legal literacy cartoons for university students

Cartoons fit the user's preference and demand for information in the era of reading pictures, and have a certain influence and persuasive power in publicizing and educating the rule of law, deepening the rule of law mindset and the concept of the rule of law of university students.

4.1. Creative Kernel: Theoretical and Authoritative

The legal cartoons aim to improve the legal awareness and legal literacy of college students, enable them to establish a sound knowledge structure of the rule of law, and cultivate critical thinking and innovation. In the cartoons, real cases are accurately and concisely summarized and interpreted to ensure that the content of the cartoons accurately conveys legal knowledge and is organically integrated with ideological, moral, scientific and cultural knowledge, making it easy for students to combine legal theories with practical situations. The comics are both educational and communicative, and while clarifying the concepts, functions, principles, values and other cognitive issues of the law, they also broaden the dissemination of the concept of the rule of law, tighten the distance between the people and the knowledge of the law, and enable college students to establish the concept of the socialist rule of law, consciously safeguard the authority of the law, and stimulate the heartfelt feelings of trust,

confidence, and respect for the law.

4.2. Rule of law education: long-term and systematic

To strengthen the legal system is important to carry out education, the fundamental problem is to educate people, “in the party and government organs, the army, enterprises, schools and all the people, must strengthen discipline education and legal education”^[4]. College Law comics focus on cultivating college students' legal literacy, legal concept and legal thinking mode, arming students' minds with legal knowledge, improving students' cognitive depth and practice ability of law, guiding students to apply legal knowledge to daily life, and gradually realizing the transformation of teaching knowledge into value orientation.

The creation of popular law comics should be in a certain order and level, starting with basic knowledge and gradually deepening, forming an organic learning system. The content of comics can be graded according to difficulty, starting with simple legal concepts and principles, and gradually introducing case analysis and practical application, so that students can establish a solid legal foundation in the process of continuous learning. The content of law popularization should always follow the policy direction and update the legal knowledge reserve of college students. At the same time, the promotion and improvement of popular law cartoons also need the active participation and feedback of students. They can interact with cartoons through comments, questions, suggestions and other ways to improve students' participation and learning effect, and gradually form a stable and effective system of college students' popular law cartoons.

4.3. Popularization style: sharing and fun

The fun and intuitive nature of comics makes them have a wide audience base, transforming complex legal concepts into interesting stories and images, vividly explaining the depth and breadth of legal provisions, allowing readers of different ages and cultural backgrounds to easily understand the meaning and application of the law, and making the cultural transmission of legal knowledge more efficient. Meanwhile, the characters and plots portrayed in comics are often closely related to real life. For example, caricatures can be created according to legal provisions or real cases, showing the application of the law in real life through the encounters of the main characters, and some short caricature clips can also be produced to explain and illustrate a specific legal issue, helping readers to protect their rights and fight against illegal behaviors in their lives.

5. Practical Exploration of the Creation of Cartoons for the Purpose of Law Enforcement--Taking the Practice of “Misi Art Thinking” Counselor's Studio as an Example

In today's society, the public demand for legal knowledge is increasing day by day. As a vivid and easy-to-understand communication method, science comics have been increasingly practiced and applied on the public platform.

5.1. Multi-dimensional and three-dimensional image building of legal literacy

By creating character images with personalized characteristics, comics can attract readers' attention and better convey legal knowledge. These character images can be superheroes, ordinary people, judges, lawyers, etc., and each character represents a different legal field and duty. Through the image and characterization of the characters, science comics can make legal knowledge more approachable and credible. The “MeisiYixiang” studio has launched two IP images, “Dasi” and “Xiaomei”. As shown in Figure 1.

The design idea of “Dasi” is based on the design theme of beauty, youth and art, with a star headband to show Dasi's bright personality and intelligent mind, and the color scheme of lake green and bright yellow clothes to imply profoundness and wisdom. At the same time, the bright overall color scheme also reflects Dasi's vigorous youthful appearance, and the pockets are decorated with Zhuang brocade patterns, reflecting regional artistic characteristics.

The overall theme of “Xiaomei” is aesthetic education, youth and art, and it chooses lively and bright colors, expresses the designer's rigor and imagination in design through the collocation of a series of scientific and technological elements.



Figure 1: “Dasi”and “Xiaomei” image design (Source: the author drew)

5.2. In-depth case reproduction analysis

In order to improve the effectiveness of popular science comics, in-depth case reproduction and analysis is key. By selecting representative legal cases, the comics can present complex legal concepts and principles to readers in an easy-to-understand manner. The dialogues of the characters illustrate in detail the legal issues and controversies in the cases, helping readers to understand the logic and application of the law. As shown in Figure 2, Figure 3, Figure 4.



Figure 2: “Traffic Safety” cartoon creation 1-3 (Source: The author drew)

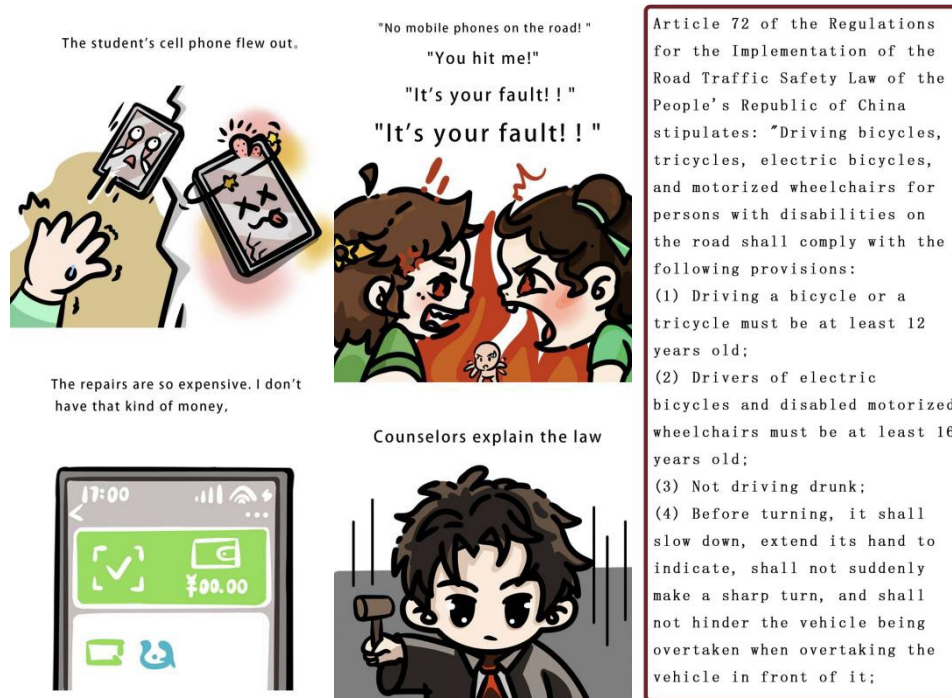


Figure 3: "Traffic Safety" cartoon creation 4-6 Picture (Source: The author drew)

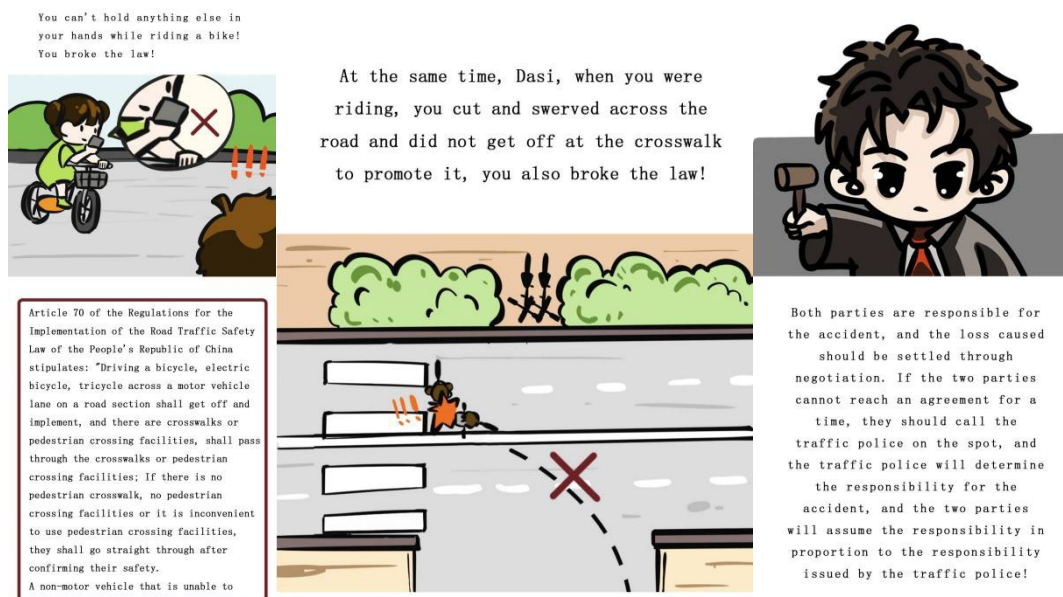


Figure 4: "Traffic Safety" cartoon creation 7-9 Picture (Source: The author drew)

6. Conclusions

"The law is inscribed neither in marble nor in brass, but in the hearts of citizens. [5]" Cultivating the core rule of law literacy of college students in the new era is a long-term and arduous task, which requires the joint efforts of the whole society. Law popularization cartoons have positive effects and application value on improving students' legal literacy and legal awareness. They popularize legal knowledge through rich and vivid visual images, explain the depth and breadth of laws by using real cases in life, expand college students' legal knowledge reserve, form legal thinking, better cope with legal problems, and improve self-protection ability. It will make positive contributions to building a harmonious society and realizing the rule of law in all respects.

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