

# Cartoonist Offers Laughs Pro Bono

by Marilyn Smith

Is there room for humor in the delivery of legal services and the pro bono world? The answer from Stu Reese is absolutely yes. Reese is an entertainment lawyer from San Diego who represents cartoonists, many of whom have nationally syndicated cartoons. In addition to being a lawyer, Reese has his own talent and passion for producing cartoons. He started creating his own cartoons as a student at Harvard Law School, and began producing a weekly online legal cartoon column in early 2002.

While his cartoon repertoire focuses on all aspects of the legal profession, Mr. Reese has found an interesting niche in the legal services and pro bono community. So far, he has produced two batches of cartoons on pro bono and legal services, with themes

that include volunteerism, equal justice and the moral commitment required for public service. In his cartoons, he pokes fun at the huge case loads of legal service providers, the need for selflessness on the part of volunteer attorneys, the personal satisfaction attainable through pro bono work, and the David and Goliath-like battles that legal aid and pro bono organizations face everyday.

Mr. Reese makes sure that his humor is for lawyers, and not against them. While he licenses

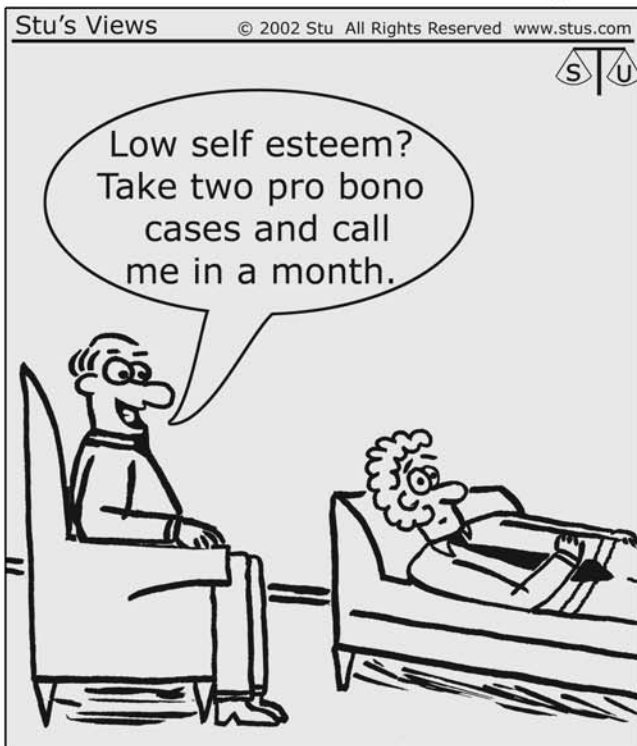
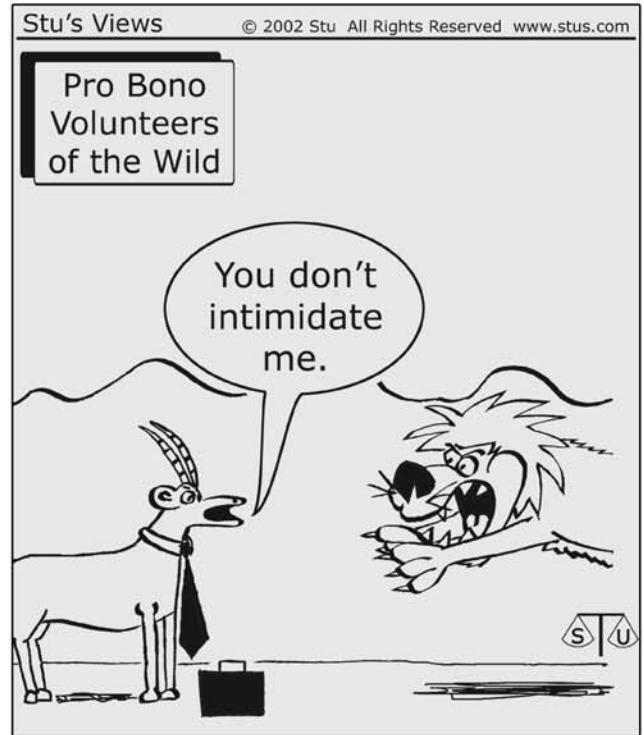
other categories of his cartoons—such as bankruptcy—for a fee, he is determined to distribute pro bono and public service humor for free to anyone who uses it for a public service purpose. So far, he has heard from dozens of legal service organizations, pro bono providers, bar associations, professional groups and law firms who want to use his cartoons for newsletters, recruitment, and thank-you notes to volunteer lawyers.

Lori Thompson,

pro bono co-coordinator for the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, sees the cartoons as a positive force for the pro bono community: "The pro bono work of paralegals and attorneys is often a very serious business. Pro bono services allow low-income members of our community to rebuild and move forward with their lives. The cartoons provide a much-needed humorous outlet for those involved in the pro bono trenches. They also show that pro bono work can be challenging, humorous, and inspiring—which is a great recruitment tool."

To learn more about the cartoons, go to Reese's website at: [www.stus.com](http://www.stus.com)

**Marilyn Smith** is assistant counsel to the ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service.



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