

Cartoon clampdown

 blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2007/08/02/cartoon-clampdown/

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The POLIS [Summer School](#) students have turned their multi-national attention to the hottest topic in media studies at the moment: the [Danish Cartoons](#). What surprised me was the alacrity with which this group of largely intelligent and liberal people from around the world were willing to accept self-censorship. Most felt that the cartoons did not deserve publication and the rest seemed to accept the partial glimpses allowed in the British media. I am not a red-blooded freedom of speech man. Indeed, the edition of [Channel 4 News](#) that I played to them only gave the viewer 13 seconds of the actual cartoons to look at. You can view it [online here](#). The BBC only showed 3" filmed in a way that you could not really make them out. But as a journalist all my instincts are to publish and be damned. Most of the Summer School students come from 'open' societies, but it was actually our Danish colleague who was most against their publication.

I wonder if the reason for their reluctance to risk offence stems from a sophisticated form of tolerance, or the complacency of people who take liberal freedoms for granted? As we say here at the LSE, 'discuss'.

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