I Am Right, You Are Wrong (1991) by Edward De Bono

“Humor is by far the most significant behavior of the human mind.

Humor tells us more about how the brain works as mind, than does any other behavior of the mind—including reason.

It indicates that our traditional thinking methods, and our thinking about these methods, have been based on the wrong model of information system.

It tells us something about perception which we have traditionally neglected in favor of logic.

It tells us directly about the possibility of changes in perception.

It shows us that these changes can be followed by instant changes in emotion—something that can never be achieved by logic.”

Note: Two of De Bono’s books classic bestsellers: The Use of Lateral Thinking (1967) and Six Thinking Hats (1985).

The Act of Creation (1964) by Arthur Koestler

It is a study of the processes of discovery, invention, imagination and creativity in humour, science, and the arts. It lays out Koestler's attempt to develop an elaborate general theory of human creativity.

From describing and comparing many different examples of invention and discovery, Koestler concludes that they all share a common pattern a blending of elements drawn from two previously unrelated thoughts such as analogies, metaphors, parables, allegories, jokes.

In jokes and humor, the audience is led to expect a certain outcome compatible with a particular storyline; a punch line, however, replaces the original narrative with an alternative to comic effect. The structure of a joke, then, is essentially that of bait-and-switch. In scientific inquiry, the two matrices are fused into a new larger synthesis.


Humor “relies on closing gaps of incongruity, a sudden revelation that suddenly allows a situation that highlights a discrepancy to make sense.”

Intended Purpose of Cartoon in RWHC Eye on Health Newsletter

- To highlight what is with what we in rural health believe should be.
- To use incongruities/contrast to help us think in new ways about longstanding issues.
- To see the core of very complex issues.
- To get us out of being always “serious” and more open to reframing an issue.
- To promote reading of the text it accompanies.
Purpose: to contrast the contradictory stereotypes about rural to show the absurdity of both views.

“No. Around here, I’ve never heard of any rural backwater or Lake Wobegon.”

Purpose: the common internal contradiction in many politicians to show one source of the ongoing dysfunction in Congress and many of our state legislatures.

“We’re too dumb to understand why I’m right and you’re wrong, even if I could explain it.”
Purpose: to flip on its head the conventional view of who can most affect a patient’s health.

"Get over the Doc Welby thing, what you do makes a lot more difference to your health than what I do."

Purpose: to highlight the contradiction in current workforce policies that create excess in some communities and scarcity for others.
Purpose: to point out through exaggeration the absurdity of arguments for arbitrarily paying rural providers less.

RWHC Eye On Health

Rural?
Pay them less.
They grow their own vegetables.

Purpose: to point out the absurdity of continuing to not address the roots causes of many health and health care problems.

RWHC Eye On Health

“Sure we can just keep dousing fires, or we can find the kid with the matches.”
Where Bars Trump Grocery Stores

Purpose: to use data (fairly or not) in an unexpected manner to showcase Wisconsin's binge drinking problem.

RWHC Eye On Health

“No need to rebuild old rural hospitals when we have perfectly good Army surplus MASH tents.”

Purpose: to use the contradiction between a federal agency’s public and internal positions to point out its anti-rural bias.
Purpose:
using the contrast between death and health care, the sign points out how a community see’s itself and its risks without a local hospital.

Purpose:
to use one cliche to push back against another; in particular the cliche often used by public reporting agencies to justify their flawed rural reporting.

—“It would be easier to accept the reporting agency’s ‘perfect is the enemy of good’ if they stopped throwing the rural baby out with the bathwater.”
Purpose:
to help people see primary care not as the lessor of two choices but perhaps the greater of two choices.

RWHC Eye On Health

“Yes, I'm a generalist. I chose primary care over being a partialist.”

Purpose:
to elevate the importance of cooperation through exaggeration.

RWHC Eye On Health

“I like it, but ‘Thou Shall Not Fail To Cooperate When Resources Are Scarce’ makes eleven.”