

Satire Unit

"In satire, human or individual vices, follies, abuses, or shortcomings are held up to censure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony, or other methods, ideally with the intent to bring about improvement." - Encyclopedia Britannica

"A Modest Proposal" (1729) by Jonathan

Before reading

About this pamphlet:

- standard _____ format
 - opening that presents the _____ and _____
 - a body that develops the _____ with details
 - a conclusion--states the _____ that would accrue from his proposal.
- Supports a political position through _____.
- Remember that with _____ nothing is quite what it seems due to the _____ used.

Historical Influences—causes

_____ Gains Power over Ireland → _____ Protestant-Catholic
Conflicts → _____ Gains Power → _____ mostly Catholic → _____

Historical Influences—effects

- Laws limit Irish rights to hold government office, purchase real estate, get an education, etc.
- By 1703 the _____ owned 90% of the land
 - Irish worked on farms owned by English.
 - English charged high rent.
 - Irish couldn't afford rent.
 - Therefore... _____
 - Irish are being taken advantage of but DON'T _____ BACK

Author's Purpose: To call attention to abuses inflicted on Irish _____ by well-to-do English
_____. SATIRE= _____ → You should respect everyone.

Author's Background: Swift was _____ but also an _____ native—what does this tell you? _____

Themes:

Exploitation of the Downtrodden

Prejudice

Irish Inaction

Allusions in "A Modest Proposal"

Barbadoes (Barbados): Easternmost West Indies island, settled by the British in 1627. When Swift published "A Modest Proposal" in 1729, the island's plantation owners used slaves to produce sugar for European consumption.

Dublin: The Irish city mentioned in "A Modest Proposal." It is the capital of Ireland.

Flay: Remove skin.

Formosa: Portuguese name for Taiwan, a Chinese-inhabited island off the southeast coast of China.

Mandarin: High-ranking Chinese official.

Papist: Roman Catholic.

Pretender: James Francis Edward Stuart (1688-1766), son of King James II, who ruled England, Ireland, and Scotland from 1685 to 1688.

Psalmazar, George: French forger and impostor who traveled widely under different personas. In one of his most famous schemes, he pretended to be from Formosa (present-day Taiwan), of which little was known in the Europe of his time. In London, he published a book about Formosa in which he wrote that Formosan law permitted a husband to eat a wife if she committed adultery. Psalmazar had never visited Formosa; the whole book was made up. Nevertheless, many Englishmen believed what he had written.

During Reading: Page 502-508

I HIGHLY suggest you fill out the bolded as you read to help you understand ☺ You might even be able to use it on your QUIZ Monday.

"A Modest Proposal"		REAL LIFE
Speaker	An Irish Economist	Jonathan Swift
Audience	The Irish Wealthy	English and Irish
Conditions	Overpopulation Family values Economy troubles Government aid Starvation Disease Poverty	
Solutions (Swift's Proposal)		Tax British Refuse imports to build Have some pride Nationalism Show mercy to tenants Stimulus package? Stop persecuting
Result intended		

After Reading: Done as class work

<u>Arguments for Proposal</u>	<u>Evidence to Support Argument</u>
1. Lessen # of Papists	
2. Gives the poor valuables	
3. Financial gain	
4. Breeders burden lifted	
5. Increase restaurant business and appeal	
6. Increase marriage rate	

READ AND ANNOTATE THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE

In “A Modest Proposal,” Swift makes an absolutely horrible proposal. No one could possibly take him seriously, and yet most of the facts that Swift relates are accurate, and little exaggerated. Ireland was incredibly poor. It was overpopulated, taxed heavily, and periodically stricken by famine. Absent English landlords owned most of the useable land and rented it to Irish tenant farmers or hired laborers to work it. The landlords were then paid for use of the land with the crops they produced. The Irish were so poor, they could not afford to buy the produce of their own country. Starvation was real and government support to help people was virtually nonexistent. Irish manufacturing was in almost the same situation. There was little of it, and English law prevented Irish manufacturers from competing with English companies.

Ireland’s industry, like its agriculture, served only to help the English.

While the Irish suffered, no one did anything about it. Ireland was a colony of England and was dominated by England’s wealth, military might, and government. It had a legislature, but it was controlled by England. Moreover, the legislature seemed incapable of using the power it did have. Swift had made several practical and serious proposals to the Irish legislature that would have helped improve conditions in Ireland—he describes these suggestions in “A Modest Proposal.” All of these ideas were rejected. The Irish seemed unwilling to even try to help themselves.

DIRECTIONS: *Answer the following questions based on the material you have just read and on “A Modest Proposal.”*

1. In what way were the English responsible for the suffering in Ireland?

2. In what way were the Irish responsible for the suffering in their own country?

3. In “A Modest Proposal,” the narrator believes his proposal “will not be liable to the least objection.” As he presents his case, it becomes clear that all parties have become dehumanized—the Irish and the English are indifferent to suffering and the dignity of human life. Who do you think has become the more dehumanized, the English (to eat babies) or the Irish (to be eaten)? Do the historical facts support Swift’s interpretation? Explain.

A Modest Proposal For the US System of Education Questions

1. What does Megan Pankiewicz compare students in schools to?
2. What is she literally saying about schools?
3. What is her tone?
4. What change in schools is she trying to inspire?

A Modest Proposal For the US System of Education Assignment

Create a satirical piece using the educational “hot topic” you’ve been assigned. You may draw a cartoon, write a proposal, or create a multimedia presentation (video, PowerPoint, etc.). Make sure that you use satirical elements and creativity to inspire the change you wish to see in our educational system. You will be presenting these ☺

Completed project	Elements	Total Points							
Cartoon	Pictures, graphic, satirical elements, clearly seen from a distance, relates to research project	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 0 10px;"> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 </div>							
Proposal	At least 300 words, typed, MLA format, satirical elements, relates to research project								
OR Multimedia	5-7 minutes, or 10 frames (PowerPoint), satirical elements, relates to research project								
Creativity	Colorful, well thought out, unique elements, relates to research project	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 0 10px;"> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 </div>							
Style	powerful satire that evokes reaction, done neatly, inspirational	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 0 10px;"> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 </div>							
Time/thought	Neat, clean, legible, evidence of higher order thinking	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 0 10px;"> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 </div>							
Presentation	Prepared, speaks clearly, relates satire to project and offers an explanation, uses outline	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 0 10px;"> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 </div>							
Peer evaluation	Completed	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 0 10px;"> 1 2 3 4 5 </div>							
		Total points _____ / 55 points possible Letter Grade _____							

Template for Presentation outline:

- I. Introduce yourself (be unique; grab attention; don't bore us to death)

- II. Introduce your project
 - a. Project you chose

 - b. Why you chose that one (and because it took less time is not a good thing to say)

 - c. What your inspiration was

- III. Explain your project in detail (put details in logical order)
 - a.

 - b.

 - c.

IV. Explain how it is satire; use specifics (elements of satire you used etc.)

V. Ask if anyone has questions (Wait and then answer)

VI. Thank your audience (be unique)

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DEMAND WARS IN EASIER-TO-FIND COUNTRIES

Washington, D.C. (SatireWire.com) — A delegation of American high school students today demanded the United States stop waging war in obscure nations such as Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and instead attack places they've actually heard of, such as France, Australia, and Austria, unless, they said, those last two are the same country.

"People claim we don't know as much geography as our parents and grandparents, but it's our fault," Josh Beldoni, a senior at Fischer High School in Los Angeles, told the Senate Armed Services Committee. "Back then they only had wars in, like, Germany and England, but we're supposed to know about places like Somalia and Massachusetts."

"Macedonia," corrected committee Chairman Carl Levin of Michigan.

"See?" said Beldoni.

Beldoni's frustration was shared by nearly three dozen students at the hearing, who blamed U.S. military for making them look bad.

"I totally support our soldiers and all that, but I am seriously failing both geography and studies because I keep getting asked to find Croatia or Yemvrekia, or whatever bizarre-o country we send troops to," said Amelia Nash, a junior at Clark High School in Orlando. "Can't we fight in, like, Italy? It's boot-shaped."

Chairman Levin however, explained that Italy was a U.S. ally, and that intervention is usually in response to a specific threat.

"OK, what about Arulco?" interrupted Tyler Boone, a senior at Bellevue High School in Wisconsin. "That's a country in *Jagged Alliance 2* run by the evil Queen Deidranna. I'm totally familiar with that place. She's a major threat."

"Jagged...?" said Levin.

"Alliance. It's a computer game."

"Well, no," Levin answered. "We can't attack a fictional country."

"Yeah right," Boone mumbled. "Like Grenada was real."

The students' testimony was supported by a cross-section of high school geography teachers, who urged the committee to help lay a solid foundation for America's young people by curtailing any intervention abroad.

"Since the anti-terror war began, most of my students can now point to Afghanistan on a map, which is fine, but those same kids still don't know the capitals of Nevada and Ohio," said Richard Gerber, who teaches at Rhymony High School in Atlanta. "I think we need to cut back on our activities overseas and take care of business at home, and if that means invading Tallahassee (Fla.) or Trenton (N.J.) so that students learn where they are, so be it."

The hearing adjourned after six hours. An estimated 2,000 more students were expected to hold a march in the nation's capital, but forgot which city it was in.



"Shouldn't we, as Americans, get to decide where wars are?" asked sophomore Kate Shermansky.

so not

the

social

Fla.

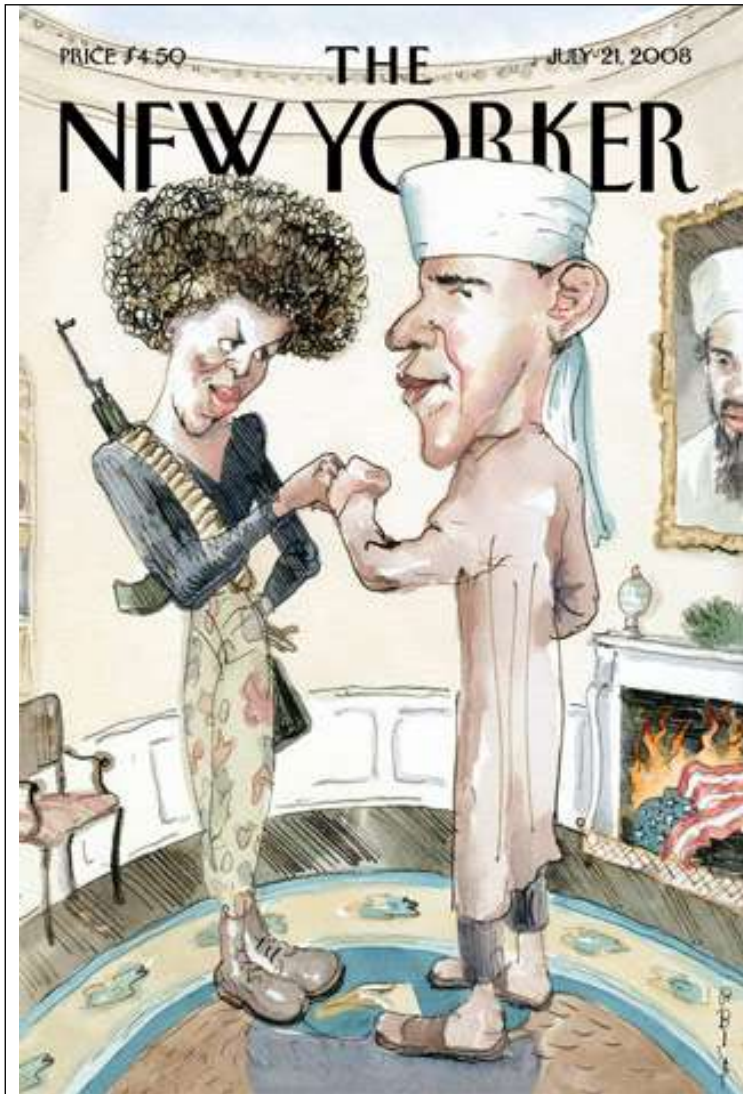
Questions after Reading Article

Summary:

Is it satire?

If yes, what **folly** (*foolishness*) or **vice** (*serious flaw*) is being ridiculed? Are there several follies or vices ridiculed?

Satirical Cartoon Study

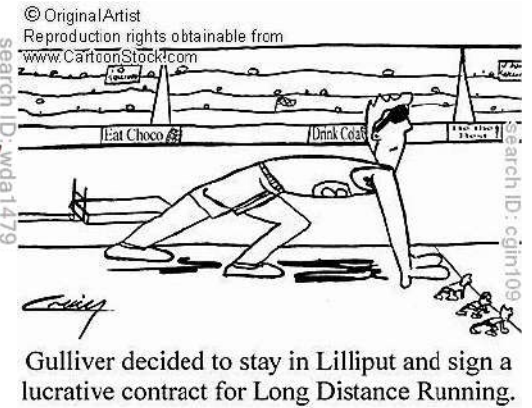
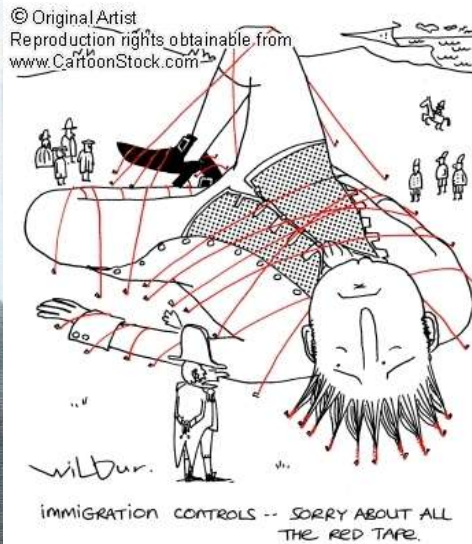


This image drew considerable backlash after it was published.

1. Note a few things that people might have been upset with.
2. Who (or what) do you think this satirical cartoon was intended to ridicule?

3. Read this comment:

"Our cover 'The Politics of Fear' combines a number of fantastical images about the Obamas and shows them for the obvious distortions they are. The burning flag, the nationalist-radical and Islamic outfits, the fist-bump, the portrait on the wall -- all of them echo one attack or another. Satire is part of what we do, and it is meant to bring things out into the open, to hold up a mirror to the absurd."



Cartoon Analysis Guide

Symbolism	<p>Cartoonists use simple objects, or symbols, to stand for larger concepts or ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any symbols in the cartoon Analyze the meaning of the symbols 	
Exaggeration	<p>Sometimes cartoonists overdo, or exaggerate, the physical characteristics of people or things in order to make a point. Facial characteristics and clothing are the most commonly exaggerated characteristics—often called caricatures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any exaggeration Analyze the purpose of the exaggeration 	
Labeling	<p>Cartoonists often label objects or people to make it clear exactly what they stand for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any labels Explain why that person/object is labeled Analyze how the label clarifies meaning 	
Analogy	<p>An analogy is a comparison between two unlike things. By comparing a complex issue or situation with a more familiar one, cartoonists can help their readers see it in a different light.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the cartoons main analogy by naming the two different situations/people/ideas etc that are compared. Explain how this clarifies meaning 	
Irony	Irony is the difference between the way things are and the way things should be, or the way things are expected to be. Cartoonists often use irony to express their opinion on an issue.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the iron present in the cartoon. Analyze what point the irony might be intended to emphasize. Explain how the irony make the purpose more effective 	

What is the issue in the political cartoon?

What is the cartoonist's opinion of the issue?

Do you agree or disagree with the cartoonist? Explain your response.

Do you find the cartoon persuasive? Explain your response.

Draw a political cartoon that COUNTERS this political viewpoint (shows the opposite view point).



Draw a political cartoon that REFLECTS your point of view on a related topic. Remember to use the techniques you have learned about.



Attach your political cartoon to this analysis page and turn both in ☺

•

***Harrison Bergeron* By Kurt Vonnegut (you will need to put your answers on a separate sheet of paper)**

1. What does the elimination of advantages, difference, and competition suggest about the nature of the changes place?
2. Is this possible in America? Explain

Characters

• **PARODY:** ideal society divorced from common sense—somewhat a parody of the “perfect household” persona from the 50s.

1. Describe Hazel. Why isn’t she handicapped?
2. Describe George. How does he feel about his handicaps?
3. How do television, radio and mass media of today function like his handicap? Give specific examples.

HINT: Consider Neil Postman’s statements in his book *Amusing Ourselves to Death* “this ensemble of electronic techniques called into being a new world— a peek-a-boo world, where now this event, no that, pops into view for a moment, then vanishes again. It is a world without much coherence or sense [...] like the child’s game of peek-a-boo entirely self contained. But like peek-a-boo, it is also endlessly entertaining” (77).

4. Describe Harrison. What is significant about him?
5. What element(s) of satire is used to describe him (circle all that apply):
Irony Extreme Exaggeration (hyperbole) Parody Ridicule Sarcasm
6. Explain your circles

The dance—and its’ abrupt end

1. What is the significance of the dance? (think symbolically)
2. How is the audience **supposed** to react to the abrupt end?
3. How **did** you react?
4. How do you **expect** Hazel and George to react
5. How do Hazel and George react?
6. What element of satire is that?

Theme

What is Vonnegut targeting with his satire? What is his purpose?
How can you CONNECT this to “Voyage to Brobdingnag”?

To Alexander Pope
September 29, 1725 From [*The Correspondence*](#) Of Jonathan Swift

[...]I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities, and all my love is toward individuals: for instance, I hate the tribe of lawyers, but I love Counsellor Such-a-one, and Judge Such-a-one: so with physicians—I will not speak of my own trade—soldiers, English, Scotch, French, and the rest. But principally I hate and detest that animal called man, although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so forth. This is the system upon which I have governed myself many years, but do not tell, and so I shall go on till I have done with them. I have got materials toward a treatise, proving the falsity of that definition *animal rationale*, and to show it would be only *rationis capax*¹. Upon this great foundation of misanthropy, though not in Timon's manner, the whole building of my Travels is erected; and I never will have peace of mind till all honest men are of my opinion. By consequence you are to embrace it immediately, and procure that all who deserve my esteem may do so too. The matter is so clear that it will admit of no dispute; nay, I will hold a hundred pounds that you and I agree in the point.[...]

1. Underlying all of Swift's religious concerns, underlying his apparent conservatism, which was really a form of radicalism, was his belief that in Man God had created an animal which was not inherently rational but only capable, on occasion, of behaving reasonably: only, as he put it, *rationis capax*.

Some people believe that Swift showed great misanthropy through his works. How does this letter *prove* or *disprove* misanthropic notions?

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY!!!!!!

- Write an essay in which you CONNECT Swift's writing to something historical, personal or media related.
- If you choose historical, you may NOT choose the religious schism between the Catholics and the Protestants. Be more creative.
- Use at least two SPECIFIC quotes from either of Swift's works (*Gulliver's Travels* or "A Modest Proposal"). You must cite these quotes in MLA format (author's last name and page number).
- Your essay must be **at least** 400 words and must explore a connection between Swifts work and something outside the text.
- This essay is worth 40 extra credit points and is due NO LATER THAN next Friday 3/26/10.
- Use your QRC charts to help guide you. I will be here after school next Tuesday and Thursday to assist with the essay.
- You do not have to type the essay. HOWEVER, you must write neatly in BLUE OR BLACK ink and you must take the time to make sure that there are no glaring errors and you're not scratching things out. FRESH, NEAT handwritten essays are acceptable.