

Romanticism vs. utilitarianism assignment

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The World Is Too Much With Us is a poetic contribution to Romanticism's rebellion against the harsh realities of society during the nineteenth century. He is particularly concerned with the effect that the Industrial Revolution has had on people. He feels that man has lost an appreciation for the beauty of nature and now sees it as something that can be conquered for the sake of profit. He says that our preoccupation with "getting and spending" and material desires blinds us.

We become immune to true's beauty and "It moves us not" because "we are out of tune". He states that he would rather be a "pagan" than a member of this society because pagans found mystery in nature and created mythology out of it. Wordsmith's reaction against the industrial domination of nature is very similar to the thematic battle Of "Fancy" vs... "Fact" in Charles Dickens' Hard Times. This conflict is portrayed in Mr... Grandkid's method of forcing his educational ideals on his students. Mr...

Grinding represents the Utilitarian principle of "maximum efficiency". He believes that "hard facts" and statistics are the only things of value. His system of education has no room for poetry or expression. He thinks that creativity and "Fancy" are a waste of time and distractions from productivity. His main concerns are profit and loss and his only motivation is self-interest. Sissy Jape, "Girl #20", is not accepted in his classroom because she is the direct opposition to what he believes is important in life.

She represents the Romantic principles of creativity, imagination, and a strong sense of self. Mr... Grinding views her as one of his losses because she won't conform to what he believes is socially acceptable. She admits

that she would decorate her room with representations of flowers because she is “fond” of them. He sees her ideas as illogical but her connection to Salary’s circus is an even worse crime. The circus stands for freedom of expression, which is unacceptable because it is not “regulated and governed by fact.” Originally Mr...

Grinding planned to remove Sissy from his school because he sees her as an unfit dent to teach and believes that she will corrupt the other children. When he finds out that her father has abandoned her, he decides to take on the responsibility of molding her into a productive member of Stetson’s society. He feels that it is his duty to strip Sissy of her useless aesthetic ideals and turn her into a fact machine like he did with his own children. The battle between the Romantic values of Sissy and Utilitarian values of Mr... Grinding rage on throughout the novel.

It isn’t until Mr... Grinding sees the errors of his ways when his family falls apart, that he realizes that Sissy was right all along. His whole system of facts falls apart when he sees how horribly it has failed his students (children). His daughter Louisa ends her miserable marriage with Mr... Bounder, a man that she never loved (having never known what love is). His son Tom robs a bank and then frames innocent Stephen Blackball. Then to top it off, Bitter, one of his most successful students, plans to turn Tom in for the sole purpose of gaining a promotion to Tom’s former job.

His whole motivation is based on self-interest and greed, the only feelings that exist in a life void of emotions. This conclusion only further justifies William Wordsworth’s opinion that “we have given our hearts away” and sold our

souls in the name of profit. The Industrial Revolution has caused men to view each other as dollar signs and nature as a resource to be bought and sold. Wordsmith and Dickens both remind us that the hunger for financial gain should not cloud our vision of what life is really all about. " men should make the best of it (life) not the worst".