

Satire in gulliver's travels assignment

[Art & Culture](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift makes a satirical attack on society as a whole. He attacks different issues in society such as humanity and western culture, religious perceptions of man through the big and little endians and satirizes politics unremittingly through his depiction of the rival Lilliputian factions. Swift emulates the political scene of his life, with the political scene of Lilliput. The two rival factions in Lilliput, the high heels and the low heels are like those of the two major political parties in Swift's political scene, the Whigs and the Tories. That for above seventy Moons past there have been two struggling Parties in this Empire, under the Names of Tramecksan and Slamecksan, from the high and low Heels on their shoes, by which they distinguish themselves" (Chapter IV). The most subtle criticisms were made on religion. Using the Lilliputians and the Blefuscians, Swift satirically portrays the split between Protestants and Catholicism. The difference between the two sects is where they cut their hard-boiled eggs. The Lilliputians cut their eggs at the little end, and are ' Little-endians', while the Blefuscians cut their eggs at the big end and are ' Big-endians'. .. for the words are these: That all true believers break their eggs at the convenient end. And which is the convenient end, seems, in my humble opinion, to be left to every man's conscience, or at least in the power of the chief magistrate to determine" (Chapter IV). The split between these two sects is a matter of small differences, according to Swift. However, these small differences led to many wars between Catholics and Protestants, particularly during the 30 Years War. The effects of these differences can still be seen today in differences of religion all over the world. Now, the Big-endian exiles have found so much credit in the Emperor of Blefuscu's court and so much private assistance and encouragement from their party here at home that a <https://assignbuster.com/satire-in-gullivers-travels-assignment/>

bloody war hath been carried on between the two empires for thirty-six moons, with various success; during which time we have lost forty capital ships and a much greater number of smaller vessels, together with thirty thousand of our best seamen and soldiers; and the damage received by the enemy is reckoned to be somewhat greater than ours" (Chapter IV).

Western Culture as a whole is satirized when Gulliver travels to Brobdingnag, where he encounters a race of giants, who are much superior to the peoples of Europe in both culture and government. Gulliver, being used to a type of violent, extravagant and cruel society, realizes that these giants are peaceful and fair. Gulliver tries to convince the King of Brobdingnag that European government, society, and history, are in fact the exact opposite of how they are actually portrayed, however the King let Gulliver know he disagrees. I cannot but conclude the Bulk of your Natives to be the most pernicious Race of little odious Vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the Surface of the Earth. " In the final book, Swift focuses entirely on satirizing humanity by criticizing physiological, mental, and spiritual aspects of humans at once. The Houyhnhnms and Yahoos were used as objects of satire (Case 71). Swift uses the Yahoos as an example that humans are more easily identified by vice than virtue.

The behavior of the Yahoo brutes that inhabit Houyhnhnm Land is decadent and irrational, therefore identified as vice. Through their behavior, Swift shows that most of them have parallels in the life of civilized humans. On the other hand, the Houyhnhnms seem to represent virtue and all the perfections that humans seek, but reflect human faults through the

inconsistencies in their behavior. Through this, Swift reveals hypocrisies of ‘ human thought’ (Case 87).

Unlike the Yahoos, the Houyhnhnms seem to be reasonable, rational characters. The good virtues that we as humans try to achieve through out are life time seem to be what they embody (Case 88). Through his journey into other cultures Gulliver’s begins to realize how the world is outside of his comfort zone. When he encounters this realization at the Horse Society, Gulliver begins to understand that all he has learned growing up has been skewed. The idea of man as the superior species is not true.

By actually seeing a life that is without violence or oppression, he understands that power is not all about ‘ domination’ but more about ‘ tolerance’ (Case 89). The horse society has values that are the exact opposite of revenge. The find solace in knowing that violence solves nothing, even though they know they could attack the Yahoos successfully. Gulliver’s realizes his true nature when he witnesses the theft of his belongings. He sees that violence is all he knows and that people are only “ superior” to other species because they blind themselves to all other possibilities.

As human beings, our first instinct is to pleasure our own desires. When something randomly terrible happens to us, our first thoughts revolve around helping ourselves. Swift tries to portray these human tendencies, through the horse society encounter. The story of Gulliver’s Travels is one that pushes the reader’s imagination through the use of satire. The lessons taught through Gulliver’s journey reveals how diverse human nature can be.

It sets up the structure of modern society while slowly revealing all that is wrong with the way in which it is controlled. The story of Gulliver is one that not only looks deep into human culture but also explores the true nature of people as a whole. It shows what potential lies in patience, determination, and perception. The most ironic part of the book is when Gulliver finally returns home. By witnessing all that the world has to offer and being humbled by it, Gulliver desires no more to be there.

Because of his journey, Gulliver no longer views his leaders with the kind of respect he once did and feels ashamed of what he represents to all that he has come across. He realizes from his journey that life is to be lived and deeply explored without losing sight of who you are. People are given the opportunity to travel and become acquainted with other cultures and lifestyles. It's always good to keep and take a sense of pride of what you come from; however, overwhelming that pride can hinder you from experiencing all that the world has to offer.