

Dead white males  
and world of warcraft  
episode of south park



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## **Introduction**

The role and function of satirical texts is ultimately to expose the follies and vices that we see today in contemporary society. Satire may be effectively defined as a device used to highlight and the expose the failures of human nature in society.

Two texts in particular, Dead White Males by David Williamson and a particular episode of South Park named ' Make Love not Warcraft' will be spoken upon, one satirising the follies in the educational system through a very arrogant and narrow minded aspect and the other ridiculing those people who play World of Warcraft. Satirical techniques such as caricature, understatements, situational irony and characterization are all used to effectively satirise and expose human vices and hypocrisy.

## **Caricature**

Throughout the Southpark episode ' Make Love not Warcraft' it is evident that it caricatures the stereotypical heavy World of Warcraft players. Through the use of caricature we are able to understand that the social roles of those who partake in the digital game reach a point where they do not leave their keyboard. In this particular text the four main protagonists become increasingly obese, lazy and unsocial. Give an actual example of one of the characters. Explain the caricature - their exaggerated physical attributes and the exaggereated aspects of their personas as WoW players.

The follies of the digital world are intemperately exaggerated within the text to highlight and reinforce the absurdity of the social and physical sacrifices made by some people in the real world in order to be part of the World of

Warcraft. A very visible example of this within the text of 'Make Love not Warcraft' is where one of the main protagonists, Cartman, suggest that they sacrifice all but three hours of their day in order to level up their characters for the following seven and a half weeks in order to face their rival.

This is a clear technique of caricature and parody as they reenact what some might do in the real world.

In contrast, within the text of 'Dead White Males' there is much dramatization surrounding the traditional roles of males and females. Shakespeare argues that from the moment of birth it has been in a males nature to wear boyish clothes and play with toy cars, and in a girls nature to wear skirts and play with dolls. In response to this Swain argues that Shakespeares' theory was incorrect, rather it was society that had invented the nature in which males and females should act.

Angela Judd, the main protagonist in the play questions her grandfather Col on the topic of her father Martin Judd, unemployed and supported by his dominant wife Sarah. Angela quotes: " He didn't fit the traditional male role did he? " In return Col argues: " If you can't stand up for yourself you sink, male or female. " This particular quote by Col reinforces the theory of Swains' that the way in which males and females were taught to act, this links to the satirical technique of caricature.

There is also an element of Inversion within this as the characters have been given opposite roles in order to ridicule. The social roles and behaviours of Angelas' parents are ridiculed as her mother is portayed as dominant over her father.

## **Understatement**

Another satirical technique that is used almost always throughout the South Park series is an understatement. Defined as being the opposite to exaggeration it may be used to address something very casual in a serious manner.

An example of this is found midway through the ' Make Love not Warcraft' episode whereas one of the main protagonists, Cartman, addresses his friend Butters in quite a threatening manner, quoting: " Butters, go buy World of Warcraft, install it on your computer and join the online sensation before we all murder you. " This example of understatement links directly back to the technique of caricature, once again highlighting the absurdity of their immoral social behavior when on the topic of World of Warcraft.

## **Characterization**

Throughout the text of ' Dead White Males' there is a bitter satirical comment on many of today's familiar poses of sexual and political rectitude, it also conveys the topics of deconstruction in human nature and the nature of male and female relationships. Grant Swain, a university lecturer takes our attention in both the first and second scene by lecturing us on his subjective views of society and literature. The satirical technique of characterization portrays Grant Swain as very opinionated, an intellectual fascist who's goal is to indoctrinate not educate.

As the story progresses there are many stereotypes that are formed showing Swain in a very negative light, one of these stereotypes includes that he is an ageing and belittled university lecturer who wishes to achieve a patriarchal and charismatic figure amongst his younger students. It is <https://assignbuster.com/dead-white-males-world-of-warcraft-episode-of-south-park/>

therefore clear that Grant Swain is used in order to satirise the vices of the educational system.

### **Situational irony**

Situational irony, which is also commonly used throughout the South Park series is simply when something happens and as a result the reversal of expectations may occur.

Cartman once again reappears and as before mentioned suggests that the four of them continue to play and level their characters sacrificing all but three hours of their day to the game in order to face their rival, someone who is considered to have no life. Cartman then quotes: ' What do you say guys? You can just hang outside in the sun all day tossing a ball around or you can sit at your computer and do something that matters" To the viewers amazement, they do so, linking to the element of Situational Irony and once again back to caricature as their their social behaviours' alter for the duration of their involvement with World of Warcraft.

In contrast, Grant Swain, being previously portrayed as quite opinionated is also characterized to the reader through the use of situational irony. In the first few scenes of the play Swain quotes " the dominant ideology has constructed a female stereotype" this also links directly back to the dramatization of the traditional roles of sexes. Verbal irony is shown soon after as Angela counters his theory quoting " your average woman may find swaggering macho master far more attractive than intellect".

This in turn sheds Swain in a negative light as being stereotypical, previously referring to himself as an ' average woman', satirising the hypocrisy of

humans and in particular linking back to Swains characterization as an intellectual facist.

## **Conclusion**

All things considered through both texts ‘ Dead White Males’ and ‘ Make Love not Warcraft’ we are able to understand that the roles and functions of satirical texts in contemporary society are crucially important and particularly illustrated through the use of satirical techniques.