

Essay on humanities

[Religion](#), [God](#)



1 . Socrates suddenly awakes and finds himself in medieval France. At a bookstore he buys a copy of Montaigne and reads “ Of Cannibals” and “ Of Coaches.” Would he agree with Montaigne’s ideas? If so, with what would he agree? With what would he disagree? In writing your answer, be sure to describe Socrates’ (or Greek) philosophy and what was different in Montaigne’s time.

Despite the disparity between the early modern Europe and the ancient Athens, it is possible to find some affinities underlying the ideas of Socrates and Montaigne. However, if Socrates suddenly awoke and found himself in medieval France, he would have fewer followers. He would certainly have doubts over Montaigne’s ideas in “ Of Cannibals” and “ Of Coaches”.

Montaigne in “ Of Cannibals” hits on the egocentric European faith in the superiority of Western culture and states how the ignorant, and barbarous cannibals can still lead a simpler and harmonious life with the nature. The cannibals may eat one another, but have no words for treachery, avarice, and other vices. Unlike Europeans, the Cannibals find it unnecessary to conquer new territory. The easy going triumphs over the forces of violence in the essays of Montaigne display his own way of yielding to those who have power over him. Socrates, standing for justice for his fellow men is not a simple defiant heroism. Socrates and Montaigne approach each other as mirror figures. Montaigne finds the idea of Socrates heroism fascinating, but at the same time is aware of the limits and what can be achieved and what cannot.

Montaigne is bitter about the moderns and how each one of us gives in more to the lip service and end up doing what everyone else is doing. Socrates

moral superiority will find no place or use in the modern world. The moderns may read Socrates or praise him dutifully, but may not necessarily follow his example. This is because different times call for different beliefs and behaviors.

Although Socrates is the inspirational model for Montaigne, he is providing the groundwork for a new moral figure to be considered in the slumbering French body politic. There are a number of attitudes and commitments that are central to Montaigne's moral and political thought about modern liberalism. Also known as "the French Socrates", Montaigne believed that the search for truth was worth dying for. Like Socrates, he stresses on a dialogical nature of thought so as to keep the discussion going by asking questions and never concluding. Montaigne looks upon Socrates as the finest example of humanity and is a champion in the peculiar political and social bias.

2 . St. Augustine is given a copy of Pope's "Essay on Man." Would he agree or disagree? What do they have in common? What is different? Be sure to discuss both the ideas of St. Augustine's "Confessions" and Pope's poem. St. Augustine is one of the towering figures of medieval philosophy whose authority and enduring are seen to influence well into the modern period. Augustine's "Confessions" is a diverse blend of philosophy, theology, and critical interpretation of the Christian Bible. Confession reflects how he arrived at his knowledge of God and his Christian beliefs. He constantly praises the God, who directed his path mercifully, and brought him out of misery and error. According to Augustine, evil exists because of our free will bestowed to us by God and the wrong choices made.

Pope's Essay on Man is an optimistic view that makes a rationalistic effort to justify the ways of God. The major ideas in Essay on Man shed light on infinite wisdom of god, attainable virtue, and creation of the world that is the best of all. This is an attempt to justify the ways of God to Man, and a hint that the man himself is not the center of all things.

Though not explicitly Christian, the Essay makes a tacit assumption that man falls and that he must seek his own salvation. It is an attempt to justify the ways of God to Man and a warning to mankind that he is not the center of all things as he seems to believe.

If St. Augustine is given a copy of Pope's " Essay on Man", he would certainly agree with what Pope has to say about God, man and the world. Confessions like Essay on Man, concerns about the nature of man and his place in the universe. In Pope's world as well as Augustine, there is an important place of God, and he is all in all beneficent. The limited intellect of man is not enough to understand the grand scheme of things and order in the universe. Man is only a tiny portion of this order and can experience only partial truths.

Augustine would agree to the way Essay on Man concerns itself with the nature of man and with his place in the universe; to human society and to the social hierarchies. Admitting to one's sins and accept sufferings can help a man in his pursuit of happiness in this world.

3. We call Pope's " Rape of the Lock" a ' mock-epic.' What does this term mean and why do we call it this? Compare and contrast a ' mock-epic' to a real epic using the example of EITHER " The Aeneid" or " The Iliad."

Pope's " Rape of the Lock" is described as a ' mock-epic" that refers to an elevated heroic style on a trivial subject. Rape of the Lock is a typical

example of this where the main purpose is to attack the vanity of women. The relationship between the sexes is not seen to exist in harmony, but as a war among both sexes fighting for supremacy. The poem is perhaps the finest example in the genre of mock-epic and has long been considered one of the soberest of literary forms. The main incident in *The Rape of the Lock* is about theft of a lock of hair and the squabble that arises between two families because of that theft. The work is really entertaining, and the literary form both exaggerates and ridicules to expose truths about society. The finesse and delicacy of how Pope's carefully aimed criticisms and fine judgments are made in the poem are truly remarkable.

The Iliad is a real epic composed by Homer that talks about the assertive and forceful assets of a woman. The epic talks about the ways of strong female figures and the significance of women lies not in themselves, but the way they illuminate the men around them. This is in sharp contrast to Pope's *Rape of the Lock* where one enters the world of trivialities. Homer loses the effect of dramatic irony in his attempt to make his characters educated about their own futures. However, Homer does not sacrifice drama completely as his characters are made more compelling. They move forward knowingly because they have no real choice.

The Rape of the Lock is measured one of the greatest satirical poems, and Alexander Pope is one of the foremost British authors of the 18th century. *Iliad* is the original known work of European literature, and this shows that the European literature peaked pretty early.

4. Swift's "A Modest Proposal" and Pope's "Rape of the Lock" are both considered satire. What does this term mean (using definition and different

examples, including concepts like wit and humor)? Compare and contrast Swift's essay with Pope's poem and the purposes of a satire.

Satire is a practice used by writers to depict and condemn foolishness in a society or a person with the help of humor and exaggeration. The purpose behind is to show mirror to humanity and try to improve it by disapproving its idiocies. The characters used in a satire are fictional that stand for factual people. The comical piece of writing exposes the shortcomings of an individual or a society and hopes the criticism will improve the characters and the society.

Swift's "A Modest Proposal" is an ironical effort to find out an easy way to convert the famishing children of Ireland into useful members of the society. The proposal is about poor and undernourished children how they can be sold in the meat market, and this could solve the issue of overpopulation and unemployment. This would reduce the expenses of child-bearing for the poor families while improve the life experiences of the wealthy. The author offers recipes for preparing this new meat, and how selling and eating children will leave a positive effect on family morality, as well as, contribute to the overall economic well-being of the nation. The use of the word 'modest' in the title highlights the false modesty in the proposals displayed by the British ruling class toward their Irish subjects. It mocks the inability of the Irish people to stand up for themselves and against the exploitation of the English.

When comparing Jonathan Swift's A Modest Proposal and Alexander Pope's, The Rape of the Lock, both are witty satires. However, they differ in their intention, style and mood. The Rape of the Lock creates an impulsive, melancholy mood over the irrationality of fighting over a lock of hair. The

word "rape" and all its inferences bring to mind an atrocious crime of violation. Both works mock the social and political values of the society. Swift grabs attention of the society by offering an illogical proposal to a sensitive subject that the society can relate to. Swift writes in a mathematical and analytical style that draws attention to the insensitivity of upper society. The Rape of The Lock in comparison is a little more lighthearted but still scornful.