

# Misanthrope's satire



**ASSIGN  
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? Sarah Newsome 3-19-10 2nd Period Misanthrope Response The gossip session Moliere reveals in The Misanthrope among Acaste, Clitandre, and Celimene is that of a double satire. This conversation exemplifies Moliere's satirical attitude towards the hypocrisy of individuals as well as a society which accepts, even forces, such falsehoods. He is equally critical of Acaste's impliant rectitude as he is of the other characters' sense of falsehood.

However, Moliere's greatest satire focuses on the society which instigates both extremes as he carefully crafts each character and their dialogue. Moliere develops the characters of Philante and Eliante with the perfect balance of honesty and forgiveness so the satirical focus is on the corrupt society rather than the characters. Philante's character is one of exculpation and acceptance, especially involving his fellow men and his selfless friendship with Alceste.

Nonetheless, he is not afraid to suggest the idea of moderation when speaking the brutal truth as he stands up to Alceste by saying. "...you have a way of bridling at whatever people say; whether they praise or blame, your angry spirit is equally unsatisfied to hear it. " Similarly, the observant Eliante notices the nature of Celimene as a -gossip queen and even comments on it aloud when she says to Philante, " The conversation takes its usual turn, and all our dear friends' ears will shortly burn. In such a simple sentence Moliere is able to speak through Eliante and Philante to express his condemnation of Celimene, Acaste, and Clitandre by admitting that dishonesty is constructed and accepted by society. Additionally, Moliere satirizes society by speaking through them in order to recognize that while

not all people are hypocrites, society is the greatest threat as it accepts the false hypocrisies that do exist.

Without the encouragement of suitors such as Acaste and Clitandre, Celimene would have less reason to degrade others. Likewise, without a society so accepting of falsehoods, Alceste would have less reason to be so cynical and disapproving of humanity. Therefore, although Moliere is equally critical of Acaste's impliant rectitude as he is of the other characters' dominating acceptance of untruth, the author's greatest amount of satire is focused on the society when compels both extremes.