

# Review of a modest proposal and usage in society

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The poor has always been on the bitter end of society. They always needed someone to stand up for them and be able to empower them. Jonathan Swift's purpose in his essay "A Modest Proposal" was to draw attention to the impoverished population of Ireland and find social change. However, Swift made it in a creative way by using sarcasm and satire with his approach. Through this unique style, readers will be intrigued and attracted to ponder about the written literature.

Although this was intentionally written for the Irish population in the 1700s, this could also apply to the present, as the population rises, inflation happens, and resources become scarce. As the rich get richer, they blame all the problems in their society towards the poor. They abuse them through harder labor, taking their land, and making their lives miserable. The poor becomes even more powerless than before. The rich become even more greedy and neglect the ones who are inferior to them.

Jonathan Swift employs pathos to appeal to the readers' emotions to hook them to listen to his strange proposal. He uses plenty of rhetorical irony, sarcasm, metaphor, and satire to persuade the abusive upper echelon to think about what they are doing and find a solution to put an end to their tyranny.

Swift starts with rhetorical irony by proposing to eat all the children of Ireland to "save Ireland." He wants to kill the children so that others will have better lives. He uses metaphor by personifying them and describing them like food such as "delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked or broiled" (Swift 410). Simile was also used by Swift

as he tries to compare the children to sheep, black cattle, swine and other farm animals (411). The impression leaves the readers with shock because of the morbid words that Swift uses. Swift does not mean the words literally but he is trying to draw attention to the problem. The rich have been taking advantage of the poor by hoarding all the food, land, and money. Social welfare was disregarded and the lives of the poor did not matter to them.

Swift uses another simile by comparing the description and the characteristics of a pig to a fat child. He says that it is “ No way comparable in taste or magnificence to a well-grown, fat, yearling child, which roasted whole will make a considerable figure at a lord mayor’s feast or any other public entertainment” (414). He describes how delightful it is to eat a child and one can even eat it in feasts; thereby, enjoying its scrumptious taste with company. He illustrates it as something that is perfectly acceptable socially and will soon become a norm in their culture.

Eventually, Swift ends with powerful pathos:

“ I profess, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavoring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than the public good of my country, by advancing our trade, providing for infants, relieving the poor, and giving some pleasure to the rich” (416).

He was trying to construct a dramatic ending by playing around with emotions. He says that he has no personal interest in this and simply wants everybody to succeed and have a better life which in reality, if taken literally,

it will make things even worse. If they follow Swift's proposal by disregarding the poor, Ireland will be paralyzed economically because there will be no one to do the important jobs that the poor people do.

Swift sarcastically illustrates how the less fortunate are thrown around and are at the disposal of the rich just like food or commodity. He even said that they can be sold and fortune can be made out of them:

“ Thirdly, Whereas the maintenance of 100, 000 children from two years old and upward, cannot be computed at less than 10s. a-piece per annum, beside the profit of a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among ourselves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture” (413).

The poor are imperative to society. They do all the hard and important jobs such as farming, gathering food, fishing, construction, and all the other laborious activities and yet, they get treated harshly. Ireland will be in trouble all the more without them because no one will do their crucial tasks.

Swift's words were very enjoyable but at the same time full of meaning. It serves as a wake-up call on how to treat those who are less fortunate. The rhetorical devices used were clever and wise that one's eyes will be opened throughout the essay. At the end of the day, Swift highlights how selfish mankind can be. People tend to discriminate those below them and take advantage of them knowing that they cannot fight back. Swift took the helm

and stood up for those being maltreated by proposing a message to the upper class through the use of rhetorical devices.