

Modest proposal by jonathan swift



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A Modest Proposal by Jonathan Swift, was written and published in 1729. A Modest Proposal was written as a juvenalian satirical essay. This work was one of the oldest versions of a satire. A satire is the use of exaggeration to shed light on someone's stupidity or mistake in either writing or film. In this particular work, Swift is targeting poverty in Ireland, who was under English Rule. Jonathan Swift, who recently became politically involved in the 1720s, did not agree with how the wealthy English community acted so careless to the low-socioeconomic population of Ireland.

These poor populations thought having kids would improve their rate of success by multiplying their amount of chances to make money. Swift thought to seek change and create a somewhat humorous way to catch the eye of the English public and reveal the issues of the overpopulation and poverty in Ireland. In A Modest Proposal, Swift is enraged about the poverty in his country so he wanted to create a radical answer to shed some light on this major issue. Jonathan Swift uses exaggeration, irony, and humor or shock to reveal the political issues and create his own solutions.

Jonathan Swift, when writing A Modest Proposal, uses the effective literary device exaggeration. Swift capitalizes this implausible method when he first gives his idea to eat the children of the poor and feed them to the rich and wealthy. I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout. (Jonathan Swift page 455). In this quote, Swift even goes to the extent of stating different types of ways to cook the infant. Swift

even touches on a few dishes a chef may have in mind to use the cooked meat of a newborn in.

If that wasn't enough for the point to get across, Swift also uses the idea of exploiting the amount of meals a person could get full a full and healthy baby. Swift also drags this idea to state how the right season to eat the child and wait for a certain amount of days before consumption. He states, A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends; and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter. (Jonathan Swift page 456). Swift is using the type of exaggeration to truly maximize the gain the wealthy would get from this radical idea. Swift also creates an idea for using the non-consumable parts of a hefty child which in itself covers all parts of the baby that could be sold for profit to benefit from.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which artificially dressed will make admirable gloves for ladies, summer boots for fine gentlemen. (Jonathan Swift page 456). This quote helps Swift's case because he offers another innovative way for involve the poor for jobs and at the same time providing new fashion for the rich. Jonathan Swift uses exaggeration to create this far fetched idea and make it real. Of course it sounds crazy to create a promotions towards cannibalizing young children, but Swift figured that if being under English rule for over 500 years and not being heard, he had to think of a deranged idea to grab attention of the reader. Swift's idea to catch attention with exaggeration

made all readers uncomfortable because he created a beneficial way to eat humans and gain economically in doing so.

Although the satire may come across to most readers as a essay about how people could benefit from selling and eating children, Swifts goal was to depict some metaphorical irony of how the the Protestant English are treating the Catholic Irish. The first depiction we see of Irony is in the title A Modest Proposal, the use of the word modest is to provide that the proposal is actually calm and nothing special. However, reading an essay about how cannibalism can improve a countries economy is nearly the exact opposite of modest. Swifts use of this word to represent a sarcastic argument the his audience as a way to show how unruly the conditions that Irish have faced for centuries of undermining events that have taken place. Swift develops this character to show the point of view of the two groups at a subtle war with each other.

When he opens with, It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors, crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for an alms. (Jonathan Swift pages 454) He is depicting the Irish poverty that is taking place and showing how ironic the carelessness the English have over them. The Protestant English wanted to diminish the Catholic society and this opening sentence shows how the were treated inhumanely.

Swift shows us how the streets are becoming more and more crowded by the beggars and the closed-minded Proastant society cant see past the

negligence of conversion. Swift also touches on how the Protestant population treated the underdeveloped Catholics as Animals when he wrote, ...although I rather recommend buying the children alive and dressing them hot from the knife, as we do roasting pigs. (Jonathan Swift page 456). When swift touches on this he is claiming that why not eat the spawn of a Catholic mother as the same as a well presented pig. Swifts use of Irony gives his readers a sense of how deficient the Catholic label was under the rule of the protestants.

Swift chose to use the shock value or humor to not only to create this point of eating the Catholic children to help the poor make money and to please that rich with this new food market monopoly, and stop the overarching problem of overpopulation, but to hopefully spawn a change to happen. Swift has created an essay disguising the relationship between two different socioeconomic groups, the English and Irish. His intentions when writing this essay was never for the literal plan to fall through just to make the English aware of how the increased numbers of the poor Irish has created a major issue.

To create this shock value Swift provides information about the Catholic reproducing at a faster rate than the Protestant. Considering the new invention of birth control, the Catholics still had jumps in population because birth control was against their religion. Therefor, this created the idea of Shock value for Swift. I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a

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fricassee or a ragout. (Jonathan Swift page 455). Swift wrote this with the intention of shocking his readers by developing this plan to eat the children, but what makes even more shocking is the idea of putting human meat into everyday dishes. Swift was trying to create this appealing response just to invoke an unsettling feeling in the English.

When writing A Modest Proposal, Swift creates a untelling plan to save the penniless Irish. He wrote this essay in such a way that would shock surface level readers, but have an underlining grievance towards the treatment the English have been given. In writing in this particular style, Swift created a standard political satire for centuries to come.

With this typical style of writing, this could help the society we live in today, especially with illegal immigration. For example, if someone were to right about how the unemployment rate in America is staying the way it is because the illegal immigrants work for whatever pay they can get, there would be an underlying theme of racism in America. It would truly shake the grounds, that the government stands on when creating this type of work because closet racism is the problem with immigration not crime rate or overpopulation. Swift made a way for the underdog to speak and his lesson still applies to the society we live in today.