

Satire in 1984, rape
of the lock and
gulliver's travels



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Satire is defined as a literary genre or form used to ridicule, tease, torment and 'poke fun at', satire can employ irony and burlesque as methods of playfully making fun of a subject while at the same time making an extremely valid and thought provoking point which excites and stimulates the reader with its intellectual wit, militant irony and sarcasm.

When examining satirical texts it is important to understand that there are two forms of satire, Horatian and Juvenalian, both named after the ancient Roman poets Horace and Juvenal, who both claimed to write in the satirical genre, however there are distinct differences between the types of satire each poet used, for example, Horace wrote playfully, often using light hearted humour and good humoured wit to please the reader. Whereas Juvenal wrote much more abrasively, he would often attack some 'evil' in society and savagely ridicule it, using mockery and sharp wit that would offend some and often insult many.

However due to its playfulness and sharp, intellectual wit Horatian satire is far more common in modern day society. Satire can often have multiple meanings which engage the reader, provoking a number of ideas to form in the readers heads, connections between the stories in the texts and events that actually occurred in reality can often be made, for example George Orwell's '1984' tells the story of an all commanding leader 'big brother' who governed in an almost communist way. Orwell is particularly satirizing the Soviet Union, with some references to Nazi Germany.

The poster of Big Brother, by its description, looks similar of both Joseph Stalin and Adolph Hitler. Both these leaders promoted their totalitarian form

of government throughout the WWII. Connections made between the fiction of the text and the reality of actual events and people help the reader to become indulged within the text, a connection between the text and the reader is essential in keeping the readers mind occupied and involved within the story and Orwell's use of satire throughout '1984' helps create these connections between reality and fiction, which is why satire works so well and appeals to so many.

Satire has other purposes as well, originally Pope's 'The Rape of The Lock' was used to show young aristocracy of an upper class English court how foolish they had been in letting an event of such pitiful and harmless actions escalate into a topic of up most outrage within civilised society, even the title of Pope's 'The Rape Of the Lock' is satirical in nature using hyperbole to create a title which, at first seems shocking but when understood reinforces the satirical nature of the whole poem firmly cementing it within the genre.

Pope's mock-epic approach aimed to reverse this escalation by employing hyperbole, epic conventions and an elevated tone to render the whole incident ridiculous, thus using humour to defuse the tension and bring about a reconciliation between Lady Arabella Fermor and her assailant. The entire purpose of Popes' 'The Rape Of The Lock' was to create humour, which in turn gave birth to self reflection helping to calm the situation by bringing an air of 'silliness' to the whole event.

George Orwell's '1984' tells the tale of Winston Smith, a low ranking member of the ruling party in Oceania, led by the seemingly 'god like' figure Big Brother who rules with militant ferocity, enforcing his strict totalitarian

regime, governing all beings within Oceania, his rule is enforced even within the peoples homes, through ' telescreens' that act as Big Brother's eyes and ears ensuring control over the public.

Winston Smith however is different to the average person in Oceania, he feels frustrated by the oppressive and rigid way the party rules and seeks to break free from this system that prevents him from such intimacies as sex and love.

Such oppressions drive Winston to question the fabric of his own nations history, realising that he himself alters historical records everyday to suit the needs of the party, he is able to see that the whole fabric of what he perceives life as being is being completely governed by one leader and his party, the party also forces the implementation of an invented language called Newspeak, which attempts to prevent political rebellion by eliminating all words that have strong connotations with rebellion or that provide any connections with the past.

Winston finally finds an ' escape' in the form of a diary, writing down his deepest thoughts enables Winston to keep his sanity and to rebel in his own way, seemingly harmless to the reader, being found with an object such as a diary would result inevitably in death. Eventually Winston stumbles across a beautiful, dark haired girl who works at the ministry of truth alongside Winston, Julia.

Julia has a hatred for the restricted society in which they live also, however Julia's rebellion is more personal whereas Winston's is more ideological.

Eventually Winston discovers a third character who he believes to be '
<https://assignbuster.com/satire-in-1984-rape-of-the-lock-and-gullivers-travels/>

against the system' a mysterious and sophisticated member of the inner party called O'Brien, O'Brien confirms eventually that he is a member of the whispered 'brotherhood' and Winston is entrusted with a book which reveals the politics and ideas of a previous life Winston has never experienced.

However a twist of fate reveals that O'Brien is in fact working for the ministry as a spy and so Winston and Julia are taken to the feared 'room 101' where they are tortured and released back into society in an almost brainwashed state, fully accepting Big Brother's rule and the lifestyle of which the party governs.

The subtext of the novel is where we find our satire, Orwell's '1984' is more a satirical daydream than a prediction, Orwell never actually thought that one day society would actually be like '1984' but instead is toying with an idea, a kind of 'what if' scenario, showing how if left unhindered how a communist society could develop into a society where even free thought is a criminal offence punishable by death, where love and sex and individualism are illegal.

Orwell's use of satire is far from 'funny', by definition satire is used to 'mock', to 'poke fun at', '1984' in this sense does not fit into the satirical genre, however it is the exaggeration of the rules and regulations of '1984's' society and the use of hyperbole to exaggerate the way in which the world may one day be governed that earns '1984' its place with the satirical genre.

Throughout 1984 mood and atmosphere is created through various descriptions, however a dismal atmosphere is created throughout, and our <https://assignbuster.com/satire-in-1984-rape-of-the-lock-and-gullivers-travels/>

strongest indicator to an atmosphere of bleakness and dreariness is the lack of colourful descriptions, every scene described by Winston is bleak and cold, dark colours are used to reflect dark scenes, for example, ' Outside, even through the shut window-pane, the world looked cold.

Down in the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there seemed to be no colour in anything, except posters that were plastered everywhere. The use of adjectives such as ' cold', and phrases such as ' there seemed to be no colour in anything' possibly reflect Winston's feeling rather than the actual scene that is outside his window, by describing the harshness of the blue sky and the way the light creates no colour in the surrounding objects may be Orwell's attempt at pathetic phallacy, reflecting Winston's emotions and feelings toward his pitiful existence in Oceania.

1984' is written in the third person narrative, which was very common for Orwell's works, Orwell always wrote clearly and concisely barely ever using long, complicated words, this means his works are much more accessible to a larger audience which may be part of the reason why his poo novels have been read and enjoyed by so many.

Throughout ' 1984' we discover two main types of people and each can be differentiated by the way they speak, the ' respected society' made up of Winston and all other party members speak using ' Newspeak', a language put forth by the party, ' Newspeak' was used not only to provide a medium for expression that was proper and correct to the devoted followers of ' Ingsoc' (ingsoc is the term used in 1984 for English socialism) but to make all

other methods of thought impossible, also 'Newspeak' meant books written in 'oldspeak' were unreadable and so ideas and views from a past life could never be learnt about, preventing any attempt at anyone re-calling a time that was different, where people were free and where 'the party' did not exist. Example of 'newspeak' phrases include, 'blackwhite', which is the ability to accept whatever "truth" the party puts out, no matter how absurd it may be. Orwell described it as "... loyal willingness to say black is white when party discipline demands this.

It also means the ability to believe that black is white, and more, to know black is white, and forget that one has ever believed the contrary. " Our second group of people in '1984' make up 80% of the Oceanic population and our named the 'proles' derived from proletariat, these people live relatively unregulated in '1984' and use 'oldspeak' (an informal and frowned upon method of speaking in 1984, the example used is a kind of cockney slang) the use of their colloquial language I love bum differentiates them from English socialist society and these people provide Winston with one of the only insights as to what the years before Big Brother were like as all historical records have been altered beyond recognition.

Orwell gained most of his influences from the world around him, for example during the Second World War Orwell commented on the fact that British socialism would never see it through the war and predicted that a democratic society would cease to exist if Britain lost, of course later Orwell admitted himself to be wrong, however we can't help drawing connections between Orwell's prediction of the loss of democracy and the loss of democracy and creation of Big Brothers totalitarian regime in '1984'.
<https://assignbuster.com/satire-in-1984-rape-of-the-lock-and-gullivers-travels/>

Of course Orwell had many literary influences as well, Orwell praised writers such as Shakespeare, Swift, and Dickens in a letter he wrote in 1940, Swift among many was a brilliant Satirist, and this may be where Orwell gained influence for many of his satires, such as 'Animal Farm' and of course '1984'. Orwell famously wrote, "If I had to make a list of six books which were to be preserved when all others were destroyed, I would certainly put Gulliver's Travels among them. [1]

'Gulliver's travels' seem so apt an influence for Orwell, many comparisons are noticeable between both texts, of course the satirical natures of both novels, however strong connections can also be drawn between plots, Orwell and Swift both refer to loan men who face adventures and perils. However Gulliver's travels has a slightly less 'dull' tone throughout, 'dull' not in the sense of the authors plot or indeed any of the novel, however dull in the sense of the 'dull' and 'dreary' descriptions purposefully created by the writer to reflect Winston's feelings and to hyperbolize the effects of a totalitarian system. Gulliver's travels employs a range of extensive punctuation to create a mood that is upbeat and entertaining throughout, for example.

The enemy discharged several thousand arrows, many of which stuck in my hands and face; and besides the excessive smart, gave me much disturbance in my work. My greatest apprehension was for my eyes, which I should of infallibly lost, if I had not suddenly thought of an expedient. 'As we can see, the repeated use of punctuation forces the reader to read Gulliver's words in a dramatic tone, creating a sense of adventure which keeps the reader indulged throughout, we are also able to notice from this extract that <https://assignbuster.com/satire-in-1984-rape-of-the-lock-and-gullivers-travels/>

Swift is much more inclined to use a much larger range of vocabulary in his writing whereas Orwell sought fit to use basic words that enabled him to clearly state his point which was a quality that he admired in many writers of his time.

Gulliver's travels tells the tale of Lemuel Gulliver a highly educated man who's business fails forcing him to turn to the seas for adventure and profit, shipwrecked Gulliver finds himself washed up upon a deserted Island known locally as Lilliput, only to discover the islands inhabitants are in fact just inches tall and Gulliver himself out sizes them tremendously, the novel then goes on to follow Gulliver on his famed travels around the globe where he encounters giants in Brobdingnag, next Gulliver finds himself in Leputa where although the country is inhabited by scientists and academics, there research is impractical and their inventions inane, the inhabitants seem totally out of touch with reality, After visiting the Luggnaggians and the Struldbrugs, the latter of which are senile immortals who prove that age does not bring wisdom, he is able to sail to Japan and from there back to England.

Written in the first person narrative, Gulliver's travels is an accurate account of fictional events, however it is written so skillfully and so precisely, that, at times the reader can be lead to believe that the events that take place upon the travels of Lemuel Gulliver could actually be real. Satirical in genre, 'Gulliver's travels' satirises the role of governments in the different countries he visits, similar to the way Orwell satirised the socialist governemnt created by Big Brother, Swift pokes fun at emerging governments especially in

Brobdingnag where the emerging government gives birth to important
<https://assignbuster.com/satire-in-1984-rape-of-the-lock-and-gullivers-travels/>

characters in the history of the world as we know it, for example characters such as Julius Caesar.

In Alexander Pope's 'The Rape Of The Lock' Pope employs a mock epic style to satirise the society of the elite, especially the way in which a group of fashionable young gentry escalated something quite small into something of diabolical proportions, Pope's quick witted word play and playful style of writing played its part in casting a spell of peace and harmony over the situation, giving birth to self reflection which made Pope's chosen audience of the time laugh at their own expenses.

Pope was very subtle in the way he 'mocked' as satire dictates he must do, Pope made sure he made clear his intentions were not to poke fun at for the benefit of a wider audience for his personal gain but for the purpose of entertaining the young gentry at their own expense with up most respect and care, 'yet you may bear me witness, it was intended only to divert a few young ladies, who have good sense and good humour enough to laugh. '

When the poem was first published in 1712 readers were captivated by its brilliance: its perfect couplets and the world of glamour and wealth it depicted, no-one had ever written like this before, for the first time ordinary people could take a glimpse of the fragility of upper class life in England.