

Satire and comedy assignment

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Satire Satire is a term applied to any work of literature or art whose objective is ridicule. It has significant functions in social and political criticism. Satirical literature exposes foolishness in all its forms, such as vanity, hypocrisy, sentimentality etc. It also attempts to effect reform through such exposure. Satirists, therefore, design a work of literature focusing on human or individual vices, follies, abuses, or shortcomings.

They use satire as a literary technique to combat these vices and shortcomings, and “ to censure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony or other methods” (New Encyclopedia Britannica, 1993, 10, 467).

Satirical works are commonly critical. Hawthorn (2005: 197) states, “ Satire attacks alleged vices and stupidities either of individuals or of whole communities or groups – and its tools are ridicule, exaggeration and contempt. ” However, Sutherland (1958: 2) points out that not all satirical works are equally critical. He argues that: 2 Some works are satirical throughout; in others the satire is only intermittent, one element in a more complex effect. The lines that separate the satirical from the unsatirical are often hard to define, either because the writer shifts easily and rapidly from one mood to another, or because the satirical tone is so rarefied as to be almost imperceptible. In addition to being critical, many satirical texts are humorous. To put it in Feinberg’s words, “ criticism and humor have to be present in a literary work to be called satiric (1967: 60). Thus, it is the nature of satire to be humorous and critical in order to expose follies and vices of individuals and society, and if possible, to do justice to such erroneous practices. Several literary critics state that satire is a protean term that makes it difficult to come up with a fixed definition. In line with this, The New

Encyclopedia Britannica, 2005, 23, 173 states, “ together with its derivatives, it is one of the most heavily worked literary designations and one of the most imprecise. This book even goes to the extent of saying: No strict definition can encompass the complexity of a word that signifies, on one hand, a kind of literature – as when one speaks of the satires of the Roman poet Horace or calls the American novelist Nathanael West’s *A Cool Million* a satire and, on the other hand, a mocking spirit or tone that manifests itself in many literary genres but can also enter into almost any kind of human communication.

Similarly, Feinberg (1967: 18) points out that “ satire is such an amorphous genre that no two scholars define it in the same words. ” However, many literary scholars have attempted to give suitable working definitions based on their own perspectives. This does not exclude the definition stated in the 13 above source that states, “ Wherever wit is employed to expose something foolish or vicious, to criticism, there satire exists, whether it is in song or sermon, in painting or political debate, on television or in the movies. Nor does it disregard what Feinberg says in defining satire as: “ a playfully critical distortion of the familiar (1967: 19). ” It is, therefore, important to mention the varying definitions of satire given by different writers at this point. One of the most widely accepted definitions of satire is the one that is given in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* by Abrams (1981: 167). Abrams defines satire as: The literary art of diminishing a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, indignation or scorn. It differs from the comic in that comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end in itself, while satire “ derides”; that it uses laughter as a weapon and against a butt existing outside the work itself. That butt may be an individual (in “

personal satire”), or a type of person, a class, an institution, a nation or even (as in Rochester’s “ A Satyr against Mankind” and much of Swift’s

Gulliver’s Travels, especially Book IV) the whole race of man. The above definition emphasizes the principal notion of satire as a literary work in which human vice or folly are attacked through such techniques as irony, derision, or wit. Accordingly, it is the nature of satire “ to ridicule man’s naive acceptance of individuals and institutions at face value (Feinberg, 1963: 19). ” It is also acknowledged that satire gives us pleasure, for it presents the subject matter to scrutiny through humorous ways. 14

Robert Harris (2004), points out that the best definitions of satire should be formulated from a combination of its corrective intent and its literary method of execution. He quotes Thrall’s definition as an acceptable definition of satire as follows: A literary manner that blends a critical attitude with humor and wit to the end that human institutions or humanity may be improved. The true satirist is conscious of the frailty of institutions of man’s devising and attempts through laughter not so much to tear them down as to inspire a remodeling.

It is important to note in the above definition that satire involves the fusion of laughter and contempt. Inseparable from any definition of satire is its corrective purpose. Ian Gordon (2002) points out the corrective purpose of the satirist saying that the satirist “ stands in opposition to the current state of affairs, endeavoring to change things either to what they were in a recalled and often mythologized, past, or to what they might be in a preferred, and frequently Utopian, future. It may follow from the above

definitions that the corrective purpose of satire is expressed through a critical mode that includes laughter and contempt. Scholes and Sullivan (1986: 8) define satire based on the view of the world presented in a literary text. They argue, “ A work that presents a fictional world worse than the real world is in the mode of anti-romance, or satire. ” They also suggest, “ The world of satire emphasizes ugliness and disorder. These authors’ claim remind us that the theme of satire can be presented through different techniques in order to maintain standards, reaffirm values, and to come up with reforms in the society. 15 To put it briefly, satire is concerned with the nature of reality. It exaggerates or understates to criticize human follies and vices for it has a corrective purpose. It reveals the contrast between reality and pretense; yet again, it uses comic devices in order to criticize and give us pleasure.

As Feinberg (1967) puts it, “ the sphere of satire is criticism of man and society, a criticism made entertaining by humor and moving by irony and invective. ” For many literary scholars, efforts at defining satire may vary. However, the definitions such as those described above commonly share the view that satire is concerned with the criticism of individual and social evils. Moreover, at the heart of every satire, there exists a corrective purpose that is expressed through critical humor. 2. 2 Characteristics of Satire

Satire, in prose or verse, employs critical humor to expose human wickedness and folly. In reflecting the salient characteristics of satire, Mitchell (2003) argues that satire attacks those institutions or individuals the satirist deems corrupt. In other words, one characteristic feature of satire is that it is concerned with ethical reform. The other characteristics of satire

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according to Mitchell are: It works to make vice laughable and/or reprehensible and thus bring social pressure on those who still engage in wrongdoing.

It seeks a reform in public behavior, a shoring up of its audience's standards or at the very least a wake- up call in an otherwise corrupt culture. Satire is often implicit and assumes readers who can pick up on its moral clues. It is not a sermon. Satire in general attacks types — the fool, the boor, the adulterer, the proud — rather than specific persons. If it does attack some by name, rather than hoping to reform these persons, it seeks to warn the public against approving of them. Satire is witty, ironic, and often exaggerated.

It uses extremes to bring its audience to a renewed awareness of its ethical and spiritual danger. According to Ian Johnston (1998), one characteristic feature of satire is the desire to use precisely clear language to induce an audience to protest. As a result, the language of the satirist is full of irony, paradox, antithesis, colloquialism, anticlimax, obscenity, violence, vividness, and exaggeration. The satirist uses these techniques to describe painful or absurd situations or foolish or wicked persons or groups as vividly as possible.

Johnston argues, “ The satirist believes that most people are blind, insensitive, and perhaps anesthetized by custom and resignation and dullness. The satirist wishes to make them see the truth – at least that part of the truth which they habitually ignore. ” Moreover, Johnston considers morality as an important characteristic of satire. To put it in his words: At the

basis of every good traditional satire is a sense of moral outrage or indignation. This conduct is wrong and needs to be exposed.

Hence, to adopt a satiric stance requires a sense of what is right, since the target of the satire can only be measured as deficient if one has a sense of what is necessary for a person to be truly moral. Satire attacks socially objectionable behavior through humorous ways. It aims at amendment of vices by correction. As Feinberg (1967) writes on the characteristics of satire, its essential qualities are entertainment and its freshness. That is, “ the appeal of satire lies in its literary merit, brilliance, wit, humor, and freshness (7). Satire, therefore, shows old things in a new way to reveal the contrast between reality and pretense through skillful manipulation of language. To put it in Feinberg’s (1967: 16) words: Satires are read because they are aesthetically satisfying as works of art, not because they are (as they may be) morally wholesome or ethically instructive. They are stimulating and refreshing because with commonsense briskness they brush away illusions and second hand opinions.

With spontaneous irreverence, satire rearranges perspectives, scrambles familiar objects into incongruous juxtaposition, and speaks in a personal idiom instead of abstract platitude. It is important to note in the above quotation that satire entertains through humor, irony and invective. Russell and Brown (1967: xviii) also argue that “ where attack is absent or where it tends to turn almost wholly on extreme distortion, what may pass as satire becomes ineffective and does not deserve the name. 2. 3 The Purpose of Satire Harris (2004), highlights that the satirist’s goal is to expose vice and hypocrisy in order to effect reformation. The best satire, according to Harris, <https://assignbuster.com/satire-and-comedy-assignment/>

“ does not seek to do harm or damage by its ridicule, but rather it seeks to create a shock of recognition and to make vice impulsive so that the vice will be expunged from the person or society under attack or from the person a society intended to benefit by the attack. Thus, satire attempts to effect some changes in the behavior of the target as well as to encourage others not to behave in such a manner. Satire is concerned with justice, morality, and virtue. Maynard Mack (quoted by Harris) states that “ satire asserts the validity and necessity of norms 18 systematic, values, and meanings that are contained by recognizable codes. ” Accordingly, Harris notes that satire has moral and didactic purpose. He writes: Satire is inescapably moral and didactic (in the best sense of that unfortunately slandered word) even when no definite, positive values are stated in the work as alternatives to the gross corruptions depictions by the attack. The satirist does not need to state specific moral alternatives to replace the villainy he attacks because the morality is either already present in the lip service his target pays to virtue, or it is apparent by implication. Likewise, Feinberg (1963: 20) argues that the primary purpose of the satirist is to moralize. Humbert Wolfe (cited by Feinberg) strengthens this idea considering the satirist’s work as “ half-way between a preacher and a wit; he has the purpose of the former, uses the weapon of the latter. ” In other words, what motivates the satirist is the hatred he has for the wrong and injustice as much as his love of the right and the just. Moreover, the satirist holds up human and individual wrong doings to censure in order to make us better. The art of satire is, therefore, “ the delivering of moral judgment and its objective is not to degrade man but to show him how he has degraded himself (Feinberg, 1968: 23). The purpose of the satire, according to Sutherland (1958: 11) is to compel man to what

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they have tried to ignore, and to destroy their illusions or pretenses. As a social critic, the satirist, therefore, makes us see familiar things in a new way compelling us to what we have ignored. Accordingly, any kind of satirical comment may magnify, diminish or distort to tear off the guise and expose the naked truth, or to bring someone to his senses. 19 Abrams (1981: 67) agrees on the corrective purpose of satire.

He says, “ Satire has usually been justified by those who practice it as a corrective of human vices and folly. ” Similarly, Harris (2002) argues that the corrective purpose of satire in exposing individual and human vice and hypocrisy succeeds only to the extent that the audience responds to the attack. Hence, as Sutherland (1958: 20) puts it: Satire is not for the literal-minded. It exists on at least two levels, the overt and the implied; and it can only function properly when the tact, the intelligence, and the imagination of the satirist are met by a corresponding response in the reader. In short, satire attacks erroneous practices of individuals in particular and human beings at large with intent to bring about changes. These changes may have corrective or moralizing purpose. That is, at the heart of every satire there is criticism that is geared towards exposing hypocrisy, pretense, corruptions, and other shortcomings of human beings.

Therefore, satire aims at displaying the critical attitude of the satirist in order to reaffirm values, maintain standards and rectify the follies and vices of the society. 2. 4 Techniques of Satire It has been pointed out earlier that the essence of satire is giving pleasure of criticism by combining or contrasting ideas. Accordingly, satirists use different techniques to convey their

messages. Certain specific literary techniques lend themselves to satire because they can contain a measure both of wit and of humor.

Among them are exaggeration, distortion, understatement, innuendo, simile, irony, metaphor, oxymoron, parable, and allegory (Harris, 2002). On the other hand, Feinberg (1967) lists distortion, indirection, externality, brevity, and variety as major techniques of satire. Other scholars, such as Matthew Hogart, Gilbert Highet and Northrop Frye, add reduction, invective, caricature, burlesque, and reduction ad absurdum to the list.

A brief discussion of the prominent techniques has been presented as follows. 2. 4. 1 Exaggeration Exaggeration is one of the most commonly used techniques in satire. Harris (2002), notes that exaggeration is one of the best ways to get the target to recognize or admit that a vice exists. The satirist exaggerates “ in order to make the unseeing see, and the seeing-but-complacent oppose and expunge corruption. ” Hence, exaggeration as a satirical technique plays an important role.

To use Feinberg’s (1967: 108) words: The exaggeration of satirists is not as purposeless as it tries to appear. What the satirist exaggerates is the bad, the foolish, the hypocritical; what he minimizes or omits is the good, the sensible, and the honest. The resulting scene is not only exaggerated but heavily biased-against the victims of the satirist’s attack. In other words, the satirist uses exaggeration to describe painful or absurd situations or foolish or wicked persons as vividly as possible.

On top of that, as a “ dispassionate observer of humanity and the irate attacker of particular individuals (Knight, 2005)”, the satirist employs <https://assignbuster.com/satire-and-comedy-assignment/>

exaggeration to make his observation and attack effective. 2. 4. 2 Distortion

The technique of the satirist, as indicated earlier, consists of a playfully critical distortion of the familiar. Distortion refers to “ changing the perspective of a condition or event by isolation (separation from its ordinary surroundings) or by stressing some aspects and deemphasizing others (Harris, 2002). Hence, the satirist distorts in many ways. For instance, he 21 may minimize the good qualities of the person or institution that he is attacking. For example, in *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726), Swift exposes humanity in all its baseness and cruelty using this technique. Sa tirists may also magnify the bad ones making isolated instances seem typical. 2. 4. 3

Indirection and Invective One often-used satiric technique is indirection. Many literary critics agree that the quality of satiric representation is effective when the attack is indirect.

David Worcester (cited by Feinberg, 1967: 93) remarks that satire is “ the engine of anger rather than the direct expression of anger. ” Similarly, Sutherland (1958: 20) points out that twentieth century satire relies more and more on the indirectness of irony, innuendo and fantasy. Accordingly, the indirectness of satire helps the satirist to make his or her attack tolerable by making it entertaining. As Johnston (1998) suggests satires that are very direct are boring and ineffectual. Unlike indirection, invective is very abusive.

It is an open insult used occasionally for shock effect. It usually lacks irony in order to attack a particular target. According to Johnston, it is the least inventive of the satirist’s tools. Besides, “ the danger of pure invective is that one can quickly get tired of it, since it offers limited opportunity for inventive wit. ” 2. 4. 4 Burlesque Burlesque refers to ridiculous exaggeration in

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language, usually one that makes the discrepancy between the words and the situation or the character silly.

To use Johnston's example, to have a king speak like an idiot or an ordinary worker speak as a king is burlesque. Similarly, a very serious situation can be burlesqued by having the characters in a literary text speak or behave in ridiculously inappropriate ways. In other words, burlesque creates a large gap between the situation or the characters and the style with which they speak or act out the event. 22 2. 4. 5 Irony Irony is a systematic use of double meaning where meaning of words is opposite of the literal or expected meaning.

It is a stylistic device or figure of speech in which the real meaning of the words is different from the literal meaning. As Muecke (1969: 3) puts it, "irony may be a weapon in satirical attack." Likewise, Johnston (1998) notes that irony brings two contrasting meanings into play. Consequently, it becomes "satiric when the real meaning appears to contradict the surface meaning." It should, however, be noted that irony is not confined to satire.

To put it briefly, satirists use a variety of literary devices. They may use various techniques, such as those described above, in order to say two or more things at one time, and to compare, equate, or contrast for satirical purposes. Moreover, these techniques provide variety, conciseness, and opportunity for employing wit and humor. In explaining the use of satirical techniques, Harris (2004) writes the following about satirical techniques:

The satire must be presented in a manner that will bring action, and in a world of complacent hypocrites, irony, with its various means of

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presentation, is essential; the message cannot be derived without it, if the message is to have any tangible effect. In a two-word abstract, the purpose of satire is the correction or deterrence of vice, and its method is to attack hypocrisy through the ironic contrast between values and actions. The aforementioned quotation highlights that the techniques the satirist uses have to serve the purpose the satirist has in mind.

It is an indispensable quality of satire to employ appropriate techniques. Furthermore, Hawthorn (2005: 197) remarks that the satirist is concerned with drawing our attention to what he or she is attacking rather than to create characters, situations and events that are believable in and for themselves. That is, “ a novelist may include satirical elements in works that do not, overall, merit the term ‘ satirical novel’ (and indeed most novelists do). Therefore, literary works that are not usually categorized as satirical (novel or short story) may use the major weapons of satire in order to diminish a set of beliefs by making it appear ridiculous. Finally, based on the techniques the satirist employs satire can be divided into formal or direct and informal or indirect (Abrams, 1981: 168). Abrams also distinguishes two types of formal satire, namely Horatian satire and Juvenalian satire, whereas the Menippean satire is indirect.

On the other hand, Juvenalian satire is harsher; more pointed, and often attacks particular people with an invective attack. Horatian satire is mild and gentler. To put it in the words of Abrams (1981: 169): In Horatian satire the character of the speaker is that of an urbane, witty, and tolerant man of the world, who is moved more often to wry amusement than to indignation at the spectacle of human folly, pretentiousness, and hypocrisy, and who uses

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a relaxed and informal language to evoke a smile at human follies and absurdities ometimes including his own. In Juvenalian satire the character of the speaker is that of a serious moralist who uses a dignified and public style of utterance to decry modes of vice and error which are no less dangerous because they are ridiculous, and who undertakes to evoke contempt, moral indignation, or an unillusioned sadness at the aberrations of men. 24 2. 5

The Nature of Comedy Comedy, according to Abrams (1971: 26), is a form of literature that is designed to amuse by use of wit, humor, criticism or ridicule.

He defines it as: a work in which the materials are selected and managed primarily in order to interest and amuse us: the characters and their discomfitures engage our delighted attention rather than our profound concern, we feel confident that no great disaster will occur, and usually the action turns out happily for the chief characters. Abrams also notes that even though comedy is commonly applied to dramas, the comic form also occurs in prose fiction and narrative poetry.

In whichever form it appears comedy attempts to arouse and satisfy human instinct for mischief. In line with this, Fowler (1973: 31) has the following to say about the materials of comedy: “ Comedy in itself is neither morally useful nor immoral: it can perpetuate and extend misconceptions as well as ridicule them. Sometimes, however, dramatists use the irresponsible instinctual speed of comedy to lead the audience to a more complex intellectual awareness. ” According to John Morreall (<http://www.dbu.edu/mitchell/comedytr.htm>) there are many characteristics that make up a comedy. One among them is the fact that comedy is more imaginative, <https://assignbuster.com/satire-and-comedy-assignment/>

stressing playfulness. For this reason, comedy tends to look for a variety of answers and does not need to solve everything. Secondly, comedy tends to call attention to the incongruities in the order of things, be it political, social, or religious. Thirdly, comic characters are often “ ironic and disengaged from the situation; they tend to respond with wit, imagination, or cynicism. 25 The other characteristic feature of comedy is that its language is fluent and articulate. To put it in Fowler’s words: “ Characters do not feel a need to develop exploratory, stretching uses of language to account for themselves and the world around them, but are satisfied that the relationships between them and the world are simple and comprehensible (1973: 32). ” It is also the nature of comedy to reveal playfulness. Even if it has its serious side, the comic vision tends to treat large portions of life as not quite so serious. However, satiric comedy, according to Abrams (1971: 27) “ attacks the disorders of society by making ridiculous the violators of its standards of morals or manners. ” In addition to this, comedy involves exaggeration, incongruity, and contradictions as techniques. It also uses contrast between social order and individual, suspension of natural laws, and comic premise to provide structural and thematic unity for comic dialogue. Many argue that producing pleasure through laughter is the primary nature of comedy.

On the other hand, Sypher (1991: 148) states that the pleasure caused by the laughter of comedy is not a pure enjoyment. He further notes that it is not a pleasure that is exclusionary esthetic or altogether disintegrated. “ It always implies a secret or unconscious intent, if not of each one of us, at all events of society as a whole. ” Therefore, comedy may have a critical intent.

Hence, comedy is not always a naive joke; nor is it always seriously stuffed with didactic moral issues.

It expresses the characteristics of men in the ordinary circumstances of everyday life. As Sypher (1991: 149) puts it: the comic is not always an indication of a fault, in the moral meaning of the word, and if critics insist on seeing a fault, even though a trifling one, in the ludicrous, they must point out what it is here that exactly distinguishes the trifling from the serious. 26

2. 6 The purpose of Comedy Comedies usually tend to focus on the larger community and spend more time paying attention to the interaction between groups.

As a result, they often question tradition and those in authority. Comedy, according to Eric Trumbull, serves the purpose of looking at the world in which basic values are asserted but natural laws suspended in order to underscore human follies and foolishness. That is, in comedy we are usually being asked to laugh at our common human foibles and ourselves. Besides, comedy reminds us our inescapable human limitations. Sypher (1991: 241-2) discusses several social meanings of comedy.

He points out that in its earliest days comedy is an essential pleasure mechanism valuable to the society. To put it in his words: Comedy is a momentary and publicly useful resistance to authority and an escape from its pressures, and its mechanism is a free discharge of repressed psychic energy or resentment through laughter . . . The ambivalence of comedy reappears in its social meanings, for comedy is both hatred and revel,

rebellion and defense, attack and escape. It is revolutionary and conservative. Socially, it is both sympathy and persecution.

Comedy also serves the social purpose of affirming the security of any group already unsure of itself. With this regard, Sypher says, “ the comedian banishes doubt by ridicules and is the diplomatic artist (244). ” He further notes that comedy can relieve the stress between compelling ideals by laughter. In other words, comedy may enable us to “ adjust” incompatible standards without resolving the clash between them. Finally, here is how Sypher (1991: 245) describes the use of comedy in helping us with our disillusion: 7 Comedy can be a means of mastering our disillusion when we are caught in a dishonest or stupid society. After we recognize the misdoings, the blunders, we can liberate ourselves by a confident, wise laughter that brings a catharsis of our discontent. We see the flaws in things, but we do not always need to concede the victory, even if we live in a human world. If we can laugh wisely enough at ourselves and others, the sense of guilt, dismay, anxiety, or fear can be lifted.

Unflinching and undaunted we see where we are. This strengthens us as well as society. To put it briefly, apart from the pleasure that we get from it, comedy enables us to laugh at evils and errors of human beings.

Consequently, it serves the purpose of psychological compensation. In other words, comedy helps us escape from the vices and follies of individuals and societies making us laugh at the imperfections of the world around us. Not only that, but comedy can also be quite in accord with stern morality.

It should, however, be noted here that what distinguishes satire from comedy, as Fowler (1973: 167) put it, is “ its lack of tolerance for folly or human imperfection. ” 2. 7 Satire and Comedy Satire and comedy often shade into each other in ways that make an exact borderline difficult to draw. Like satire, comedy has a corrective purpose. The New Encyclopedia Britannica (2005, 23, 151) highlights that “ the comic artist’s purpose is to hold a mirror up to society to reflect its follies and vices, in the hope that they will, as a result be mended. Correspondingly, Johnston shares this view of the corrective purpose of comedy. He argues that satire is a particular use of humor for overtly moral purposes. According to him, satire seeks to use laughter “ not just to remind us of our common often ridiculous humanity, but rather to expose those moral excesses, those 28 corrigible sorts of behavior which transgress what the writer sees as the limits of acceptable moral behavior. ” One characteristic feature of satire, as indicated earlier, is criticism and humor.

That is, the technique of the satirist consists of a playful critical distortion (Feinberg, 1967: 19). Although not everything humorous may be satirical, Harris (2004) states that satire uses humor to make the attack funny. To put it in his words: Satire, like all literature and poetry, must be intellectually rewarding, be reasonably well written, and especially must entertain in order to survive- and in the particular case of satire, in order to be received at all. The basic mood of attack and the disapproval needs to be softened to some extent and made more palatable; wit and humor serve this end by making the criticism entertaining, and even attractive. The satirist’s major objective is unmasking or exposing human follies, vices and shortcomings. As Sypher

(1991: 242) put it, “ certainly the laugh of the satirist is often a sneer; and there is an undercurrent of satire in most comedy. ” As a result, when the satirist uses comic elements, it will only be for the purpose of criticism. In other words, wherever wit is employed to expose something foolish or vicious to criticism, there satire exists.

Sutherland (1958: 7) strongly argues that comedy, like satire deals with the common errors of our life. He says, “ If we can agree that it is the satirist’s intention – to expose, or deride, or condemn – that distinguishes him from the writer of comedy, then we shall probably find that much of what has conventionally been referred to as comedy should more probably be called satire. ” On the other hand, the tone of satire may vary in different works 29 eventhough the elements of attack and humor is associated with the efnition of satire. In line with this, Russell and Brown (1967: xviii) argue “ many satirical works are so playful or whimsical as to preclude the idea of attack, and many other satires, even some acknowledged to be great, lack humor and tend to become ponderous. ” However, satire and comedy are not exactly the same. Abrams (1981: 167) argues that satire “ differs from the comic in that comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end, while satire “ derides”; that is it uses laughter as a weapon, and against a butt existing outside the work itself. What sets satire apart from comedy, according to Ian Johnston, is that in satire there is a clear and overt didactic intention. On the other hand, normal comedy aims at producing laughter at our common follies and ourselves. In line with this, Feinberg (1967: 101) has the following to say: Uncritical humor is not satire, nor is all satire humorous. But since satirists use all the comic devices for the purpose of criticism, to see how

satire works it is necessary to examine four basic techniques of humor: incongruity, surprise, pretense, and catering to the superiority of the audience. In general, there is a common agreement among literary critics that satire uses comedy for the effect of criticism. Besides, as Sutherland (1958: 10) puts it, “ we must be prepared to find the writer of a comedy losing his moral neutrality and slipping into satire, and the satirist occasionally loosening his control over the reader and relaxing into comedy. “