Understanding Satire

Humor For The Intelligent
Sort...Will you get it?
Satire Defined

- One of the oldest forms of literature and one of the most durable

- A constructive art that seeks not merely to destroy but to rebuild; aim is to inspire reform

  - humor + criticism = inspired reform
Satire Defined

- Actually very conservative
- Cherishes a sound society, good traditions, and wise, viable institutions
- Values the general welfare and the public good
- Audience is reasonably intelligent, educated and rational
  - No point in appealing to fools, they won’t get it
Satire Versus Sarcasm

**Satire** – blend of criticism and humor for the purposes of **CORRECTION OR IMPROVEMENT**

**Sarcasm** – simple abuse consisting of a series of insults
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<th>Question</th>
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<td><strong>1.</strong> What institutions, practices, and/or groups are being satirized?</td>
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<td><strong>2.</strong> What method(s) does the author employ in constructing his satire?</td>
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What institutions, practices, and/or groups are being satirized?

1. A group or organization
2. Individuals
3. A “sort” or type of person
4. A social class
5. A prevailing philosophy
6. Social manners
7. Modern progress
8. Mankind
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What is the **tone** of the satire?

- **Horatian** – this form aims to correct through broad laughter
  - cheerful
  - urbane
  - tongue-in-cheek
  - optimistic
  - warm
  - witty
  - gentle
  - chiding
What is the **tone** of the satire?

- **Juvenalian** – this form aims to reforms through mocking ridicule
  - cutting
  - bitter
  - angry
  - contemptuous
  - grim
  - sardonic
  - harsh
  - indignant
Satire and POV

- Often employs a special kind of narrator called a *mask* or *persona*
  - This is the character through whom the action is observed or related
  - **NOT NORMALLY TO BE CONSTRUED AS THE AUTHOR’S VOICE**
  - Often has the presence of a character that serves as the “norm” or the standard against which we measure the other characters
Satire and POV

**Formal & Direct**
- Satiric voice speaks in first person

**Informal & Indirect**
- Characters themselves reveal their folly & ridiculousness through their own actions, words and thoughts
Three **Golden** Satire Questions

1. **What institutions, practices, and/or groups are being satirized?**

2. **What method(s) does the author employ in constructing his satire?**

3. **What is the tone of the satire?**
"Sports Unable To Heal Small Town Following Tragedy"

1. What institution, practice and/or group is being satirized?

2. What method(s) does the author employ in constructing his satire?

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