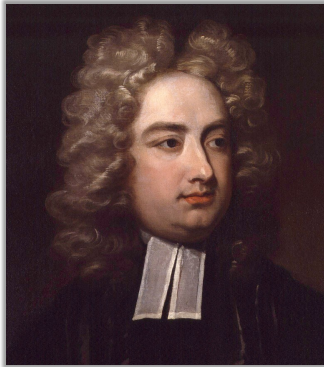
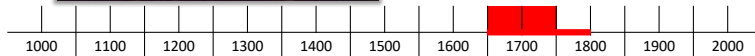


Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)



- born in Dublin, Ireland
- one of the best-known political writers of his day, among both Whigs and Tories
- ordained as an Anglican priest, but returned to Dublin to become dean of St Patrick's Cathedral (Church of Ireland)
- appalled by conditions in Ireland, inspiring "A Modest Proposal"
- one of the most brilliant satirists in English (NAEL C362-64)



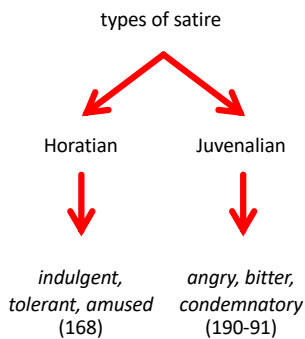
Jonathan Swift's Ireland

- by Swift's day, Ireland had been controlled by England for more than 500 years
- the Protestant Stuarts had established an aristocratic ruling class that essentially governed Ireland's Catholic populace
- absentee English landlords owned most of the land in Ireland, charging exorbitant rents to the Irish Catholic farmers
- the Irish populace was kept in a state of poverty, with most of the Irish revenue flowing to England

As to this country, there have been three terrible years dearth of corn, and every place strowed with beggars; but dearths are common in better climates, and our evils here lie much deeper. Imagine a nation the two thirds of whose revenues are spent out of it, and who are not permitted to trade with the other third.... [T]his is the true state of Ireland in a very few words.

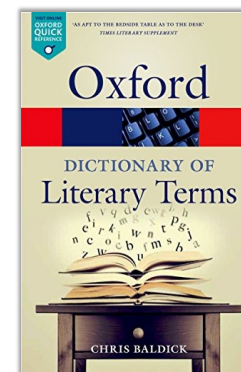
Jonathan Swift. Letter to Alexander Pope, 11 August 1729.

satire



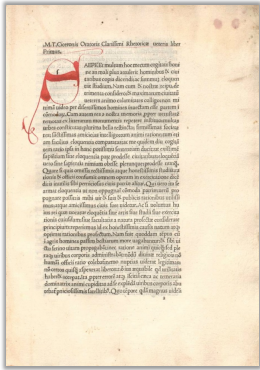
- a mode of writing that exposes the failings of individuals, institutions, or societies to ridicule or scorn
- appeals to a shared sense of "normal" conduct from which vice and folly appear to stray
- can be *direct* or *indirect*
 - **direct**: the satirist directly addresses the reader
 - **indirect**: the reader draws their own conclusions based on characters' actions (Baldick 322)

parody



- Greek for *mock song*
- the imitative and exaggerated use of someone else's words, style, attitude, tone, and/or ideas in such a way as to make them ridiculous
- satirical mimicry
- as a branch of satire, it is often derisive and/or corrective (Baldick 268)

Rhetorica ad Herennium (late 80s BC)



- oldest surviving Latin book on rhetoric, authorship unknown, formerly attributed to Cicero
- addressed to Gaius Herennius, about whom nothing is known
- most popular book on rhetoric in the Middle Ages, a standard textbook on rhetoric in the Renaissance; more than 100 manuscripts still extant
- provides a highly disciplined discussion of rhetoric, including the six-part structure of an oratorical argument (*Wikipedia*)

Swift, A Modest Proposal (1729)

- there are too many impoverished children in Ireland* (511) **Exordium (exordium)** introduces the argument
- logical (logos), emotional (pathos), and ethical (ethos) appeals* (511-12) **Narratio (narration)** states the facts of the issue
- children can be a nourishing food for poor Irish farmers* (512-14) **Partitio (division)** articulates the thesis
- six discrete arguments in favour of this scheme* (514-15) **Confirmatio (confirmation)** presents the arguments
- the "other expedients" are Swift's actual proposals* (515-16) **Refutatio (confutation)** presents the counterarguments
- everyone should be happy with this scheme, even England* (516-17) **Peroratio (conclusion)** concludes the argument

Swift, A Modest Proposal (1729)

	Narratio (narration)	Confirmatio (confirmation)
logos (logical appeal)	"instead of being a charge upon their parents or the parish ... they shall on the contrary contribute to the feeding, and partly to the clothing, of many thousands" (512)	2: "the poorer tenants will have something valuable of their own" (515) 3: "the nation's stock will be ... increased fifty thousand pounds per annum" (515)
pathos (emotional appeal)	"it will prevent ... that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children ... sacrificing the poor innocent babes ... more to avoid the expense than the shame" (512)	5: "this food would ... bring great custom to taverns ... frequented by all the fine gentlemen" (515) 6: "this would be a great inducement to marriage" (515)
ethos (ethical appeal)	"we can neither employ them in handicraft or agriculture; we neither build houses ... nor cultivate land. They can very seldom pick up a livelihood ... until they arrive at six years old" (512)	1: "it would greatly lessen the number of papists" (514) 4: "the constant breeders ... will be rid of the charge of maintaining them after the first year" (515)

Swift, A Modest Proposal (1729)

I did immediately propose [your advice] to Lady Bathurst ... particularly for her last boy, which was born the plumpest, finest thing, that could be seen; but she fell in a passion, and bid me send you word, that she would not follow your direction, but that she would breed him up to be a parson, and he should live upon the fat of the land; or a lawyer, and then, instead of being eat himself, he should devour others. You know women in passion never mind what they say; but, as she is a very reasonable woman, I have almost brought her over now to your opinion.... The more I think upon this scheme, the more reasonable it appears to me; and it ought by no means to be confined to Ireland; for, in all probability, we shall, in a very little time, be altogether as poor here as you are there.

Lord Bathurst. Letter to Jonathan Swift, 12 Feb. 1729-30.

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