

Texas Christian University

2015 TCU APSI for English

Satire: What do we want to change?



Jerry W. Brown

jerry@jerrywbrown.com

website: www.jerrywbrown.com

HOW COMEDY AFFECTS US—from Brendan Kenny

1. Comedy is based on irony.
2. Awareness of irony is an intellectual, not emotional process
3. Comedy lifts us out of our emotional responses
4. With emotional defenses down, our mind can see the need for change in a comic character.
5. Typically the comic character is blind to his misperceptions but repeats the rigid behavior.
6. Good comedy allows us to feel superior to the characters.
7. Despite our superior position, we see similarities between the comic characters and ourselves.
8. We sense our own rigidity and blindness are like the comic fool's and note the laughter the comic fool arouses.
9. Comedy acts as a way to change the individual or the society using laughter.
10. Satire, ridicule, burlesque often work in the service of change.
11. Comedy uses exaggeration, understatement, role reversal and generally the devices of irony to make us laugh and compare.

In comedy the appeals are made to the head, not the heart. As audience members the playwright expects us to see the incongruity (an intellectual process) of an action. Comedy, because of this coldly rational appeal, lifts us out of the emotional aspects of an idea. Shaw seizes on this emphasis on the unemotional aspect of comedy (where our emotional defenses of our pet theories are down) and for Shaw comedy becomes a lever for social change.

Comedy is based on the principle that no man knows what he is, that he cannot see his real mirror images but only what he wants to see. Irony and incongruity are the triggers of laughter. These reversals, exaggerations or understatements surprise our mental expectations and make us see things differently, however briefly. In that moment of jarring our expectations with surprise and perhaps delight, the mind is prepared to let go of its former way of seeing and believing.

A good comedy throws a strong emphasis on a character who is simplified in such a way that we can readily see the distortions that have made him a fool in other men's eyes; we can see them, that is, if we understand what is considered normal behavior in the society reflected in the comedy. Norms are therefore, very important in comprehending comedy. Thus, the action

in comedy consists of string of incidents that reveal the fool in situation after situation where he always shows the same distortions, the same variations from what is considered normal behavior. Consequently, the fun of a comedy usually consists of the reactions of the other characters to the continuing stupidities of the principal character until he finally sees how distorted he is or the others decide that it would be heartless to make him face his realities.

Henri Bergson, a French existentialist, believed comedy is successful in changing our perception of who we are in a society. Comedy rarely threatens us emotionally or asks for our emotional support of the comic character. Rather, comedy opens us for an intellectual or perceptual change as we find a comic fool who is unaware of his distorted view of the world. Although we scorn this blindness in the character we realize we share some of those same distorted views. Although we say, I am not like that fool, we know there are times when we might have done or said something foolish by this society's standards. Bergson believes that in seeing the fool's blind repetition of an action, we sense our own rigidity and past reluctance to change. In comedy we see how a character's reluctance to change makes him laughable.

Are there things that comedy should not address? Comedy has no sense of reverence and does not hesitate to take on the serious, the sensitive, or the sacred. It is our emotional attachment to something that makes comedy about it personally impossible.

End of Kenny article

Questions to consider when examining Satire

What or who is the subject of the piece?

What is the example's main message?

How would you describe its tone, or the attitude you feel coming through the work?

Is it funny? How do we determine when something is funny?

In the video clips, how do diction, visual impressions, tone of voice, and body language work to convey a particularly idea or meaning? How would changing one of these key elements change the message?

In the written pieces, how do diction, syntax, imagery and other literary devices work to create the particular idea or meaning? How would changing one of those elements change the message?

Some tools of the satirist

Biting and Harsh

Juvenalian Satire - is biting, bitter, and angry; it points out the corruption of human beings and institutions with contempt, using *saeva indignation*, a savage outrage based on the style of the Roman poet Juvenal.

Sometimes perceived as enraged, Juvenalian satire sees the vices and follies in the world as intolerable.

Juvenalian satirists use large doses of sarcasm and irony.

Invective - Speech or writing that abuses, denounces, or vituperates against. It can be directed against a person, cause, idea, or system. It employs a heavy use of negative emotive language

Sarcasm - From the Greek meaning, "to tear flesh," sarcasm involves bitter, caustic language that is meant to hurt or ridicule someone or something. It may use irony as a device, but not all ironic statements are sarcastic. When well done, sarcasm can be witty and insightful; when poorly done, it's simply cruel.

Middle Ground

Hyperbole - A figure of speech using deliberate exaggeration or overstatement. Hyperboles sometimes have a comic effect; however, a serious effect is also possible. Hyperbole often produces irony at the same time.

Understatement - The ironic minimizing of fact, understatement presents something as less significant than it is. The effect can frequently be humorous and emphatic. Understatement is the opposite of hyperbole.

Irony - The contrast between what is stated explicitly and what is really meant; the difference between what appears to be and what actually is true. Irony is used for many reasons, but frequently, it's used to create poignancy or humor.

Parody - A satiric imitation of a work or of an author with the idea of ridiculing the author, his ideas, or work. The parodist exploits the peculiarities of an author's expression--his propensity to use too many parentheses, certain favorite words, or whatever. It may also be focused on, say, an improbable plot with too many convenient events.

Light and Humorous

Wit - In modern usage, wit is intellectually amusing language that surprises and delights. A witty statement is humorous, while suggesting the speaker's verbal power in creating ingenious and perceptive remarks. Wit usually uses terse language that makes a pointed statement.

Horatian Satire - is gentle, urbane, smiling; it aims to correct with broadly sympathetic laughter. Based on the Roman lyrical poet Horace, its purpose may be "to hold up a mirror" so readers can see themselves and their world honestly. The vices and follies satirized are not destructive; however, they reflect the foolishness of people, the superficiality and meaninglessness of their lives, and the barrenness of their values.

Caricature - A representation, especially pictorial or literary, in which the subject's distinctive features or peculiarities are deliberately exaggerated to produce a comic or grotesque effect. Sometimes caricature can be so exaggerated that it becomes a grotesque imitation or misrepresentation.

THE COMEDIC LADDER

Comedy of Ideas (high comedy):

1. Characters argue about ideas like politics, religion, sex, marriage.
2. They use their wit, their clever language to mock their opponent in an argument.
3. This is a subtle way to satirize people and institutions like political parties, governments, churches, war, and marriage.

Comedy of Manners (high comedy):

1. The plot focuses on amorous intrigues among the upper classes.
2. The dialogue focuses on witty language. Clever speech, insults and 'put-downs' are traded between characters.
3. Society is often made up of cliques that are exclusive with certain groups as the in-crowd, other groups (the would-be-wits, desiring to be part of the witty crowd), and some(the witless) on the outside.

Farce(can be combination of high/low comedy):

1. The plot is full of coincidences, mistimings, mistaken identities.
2. Characters are puppets of fate—they are twins, born to the wrong class, unable to marry, too poor, too rich, have loss of identity because of birth or fate or accident, or are (sometimes) twins separated , unaware of their double..

Low Comedy:

1. Subjects of the humor consist of dirty jokes, dirty gestures, sex, and elimination.
2. The extremes of humor range from exaggeration to understatement with a focus on the physical like long noses, cross eyes, humped back and deformities.
3. The physical actions revolve around slapstick, pratfalls, loud noises, physical mishaps, collisions—all part of the humor of man encountering an uncooperative universe.

THE COMIC PARADIGM

Comic Problem:

Romantic: (Shakespeare)—focus is young couple trying to overcome blocking agent and get together

Satiric: (Ben Jonson)—the blocking agent itself is the focus, not what is wrong with it

Comic Climax:

Comes when confusion is at a peak, decisions must be made, solutions must be found

Comic Catastrophe:

Resolves the problems from the beginning and sets things right on all levels

Individual and relationships are reconciled, married, fixed, made healthy, social order reestablished.

Comic Education and Change:

At least some characters learn something about themselves, society, the way to live, the way to love.

Education improves them and their world

Or audience is educated and that will change the world

Comic Characters:

They are usually not as deep as tragic characters, usually stock characters.

Comic Language:

Comic language is one of the most important elements in humor and extends from elegant and witty language to puns to bawdy humor. Comic language is used in showing a character either to be the master of comic language or to be mastered by it. When a character is master of comic language, we admire his skillful use of satiric language, slicing things apart. When a character is mastered by comic language, we laugh loud and hard at his accidental puns and misuse of language.

Irony deals with opposites; it has nothing to do with coincidence. If two baseball players from the same hometown, on different teams, receive the same uniform number, it is not ironic. It is a coincidence. If Barry Bonds attains lifetime statistics identical to his father's it will not be ironic. It will be a coincidence. Irony is "a state of affairs that is the reverse of what was to be expected; a result opposite to and in mockery of the appropriate result." For instance:

- If a diabetic, on his way to buy insulin, is killed by a runaway truck, he is the victim of an accident. If the truck was delivering sugar, he is the victim of an oddly poetic coincidence. But if the truck was delivering insulin, ah! Then he is the victim of an irony.
- If a Kurd, after surviving bloody battle with Saddam Hussein's army and a long, difficult escape through the mountains, is crushed and killed by a parachute drop of humanitarian aid, that, my friend, is irony writ large.
- Darryl Stingley, the pro football player, was paralyzed after a brutal hit by Jack Tatum. Now Darryl Stingley's son plays football, and if the son should become paralyzed while playing, it will not be ironic. It will be coincidental. If Darryl Stingley's son paralyzes someone else, that will be closer to ironic. If he paralyzes Jack Tatum's son that will be precisely ironic.

"If I were in charge of the networks"

excerpt from George Carlin's book, *Brain Droppings* – (irony)

SHOUTS & MURMURS

JUST IN TIME FOR SPRING

BY ELLIS WEINER

Introducing GOING OUTSIDE, the astounding multipurpose activity platform that will revolutionize the way you spend your time.

GOING OUTSIDE is not a game or a program, not a device or an app, not a protocol or an operating system. Instead, it's a comprehensive experiential mode that lets you perceive and do things firsthand, without any intervening media or technology.

GOING OUTSIDE:

1. Supports real-time experience through a seamless mind-body interface. By GOING OUTSIDE, you'll rediscover the joy and satisfaction of actually doing something. To initiate actions, simply have your mind tell your body what to do—and then do it!

Example: Mary has one apple. You have zero apples. Mary says, "Hey, this apple is really good." You think, How can I have an apple, too? By GOING OUTSIDE, it's easy! Simply go to the market—physically—and buy an apple. Result? You have an apple, too.

Worried about how your body will react to GOING OUTSIDE? Don't be—all your normal functions (respiration, circulation, digestion, etc.) continue as usual. Meanwhile, your own inboard, ear-based accelerometer enables you to assume any posture or orientation you wish (within limits imposed by Gravity™). It's a snap to stand up, sit down, or lie down. If you want to lean against a wall, simply find a wall and lean against it.

2. Is completely hands-free. No keyboards, mice, controllers, touch pads, or joysticks. Use your hands as they were meant to be used, for doing things manually. Peeling potatoes, applauding, shooting baskets, scratching yourself—the possibilities are endless.

3. Delivers authentic 3-D, real-motion video, with no lag time or artifacts. Available colors encompass the entire

spectrum to which human eyesight is sensitive. Blacks are pure. Shadows, textures, and reflections are beyond being exactly-like-what-they-are. They are what they are.

GOING OUTSIDE also supports viewing visuals in a full range of orientations. For Landscape Mode, simply look straight ahead—at a real landscape, if you so choose. To see things to the left or the right, shift your eyes in their sockets or turn your head from side to side. For Portrait Mode, merely tilt your head ninety degrees in either direction and use your eyes normally.

Vision-correcting eyeglasses not included but widely available.

4. Delivers "head-free" surround sound. No headphones, earbuds, speakers, or sound-bar arrays required—and yet, amazingly, you hear everything. Sound is supported over the entire audible spectrum via instantaneous audio transmission. As soon as a noise occurs and its sound waves are propagated to your head, you hear it, with stunning realism, with your ears.

Plus, all sounds, noises, music, and human speech arrive with remarkable spatial-location accuracy. When someone behind you says, "Hey, are you on drugs, or what?" you'll hear the question actually coming from behind you.

5. Supports all known, and all unknown, smells. Some call it "the missing sense." But once you start GOING OUTSIDE you'll revel in a world of scent that no workstation, media center, 3-D movie, or smartphone can hope to match. Inhale through your nose. Smell that? That's a smell, which you are experiencing in real time.

6. Enables complete interactivity with inanimate objects, animals, and Nature™. Enjoy the texture of real grass, listen to authentic birds, or discover a flower that has grown up out of the earth. By GOING OUTSIDE, you'll be astounded by the number and

variety of things there are in the world.

7. Provides instantaneous feedback for physical movement in all three dimensions. Motion through 3-D environments is immediate, on-demand, and entirely convincing. When you "pick up stuff from the dry cleaner's," you will literally be picking up stuff from the dry cleaner's.

To hold an object, simply reach out and grasp it with your hand. To transit from location to location, merely walk, run, or otherwise travel from your point of origin toward your destination. Or take advantage of a wide variety of available supported transport devices.

8. Is fully scalable. You can interact with any number of people, from one to more than six billion, simply by GOING OUTSIDE. How? Just go to a place where there are people and speak to them. But be careful—they may speak back to you! Or remain alone and talk to yourself.

9. Affords you the opportunity to experience completely actual weather. You'll know if it's hot or cold in your area because you'll feel hot or cold immediately after GOING OUTSIDE. You'll think it's really raining when it rains, because it is.

10. Brings a world of cultural excitement within reach. Enjoy access to museums, concerts, plays, and films. After GOING OUTSIDE, the Louvre is but a plane ride away.

11. Provides access to everything not in your home, dorm room, or cubicle. Buildings, houses, shops, restaurants, bowling alleys, snack stands, and other facilities, as well as parks, beaches, mountains, deserts, tundras, taigas, savannahs, plains, rivers, veldts, meadows, and all the other features of the geophysical world, become startlingly and convincingly real when you go to them. Take part in actual sporting events, or observe them as a "spectator." Walk across the street, dive into a lake, or jump on a trampoline surrounded by happy children. After GOING OUTSIDE, you're limited not by your imagination but by the rest of Reality™.

Millions of people have already tried GOING OUTSIDE. Many of your "friends" may even be GOING OUTSIDE right now!

Why not join them and see what happens? ♦

Baby Cakes by Neil Gaiman

A few years back all of the animals went away.

We woke up one morning, and they just weren't there anymore. They didn't even leave us a note, or say goodbye. We never figured out quite where they'd gone.

We missed them.

Some of us thought that the world had ended, but it hadn't. There just weren't any more animals. No cats or rabbits, no dogs or whales, no fish in the seas, no birds in the skies.

We were all alone.

We didn't know what to do.

We wandered around lost, for a time, and then someone pointed out that just because we didn't have animals anymore, that was no reason to change our lives. No reason to change our diets or to cease testing products that might cause us harm.

After all, there were still babies.

Babies can't talk. They can hardly move. A baby is not a rational, thinking creature.

And we used them.

Some of them we ate. Baby flesh is tender and succulent.

We flayed their skin and decorated ourselves in it. Baby leather is soft and comfortable.

Some of them we tested.

We taped open their eyes, dripped detergents and shampoos in, a drop at a time.

We scarred them and scalded them. We burned them. We clamped them and planted electrodes into their brains. We grafted, and we froze and we irradiated.

The babies breathed our smoke, and the babies' veins flowed with our medicines and drugs, until the stopped breathing or their blood ceased to flow.

It was hard, of course, but necessary.

No one could deny that.

With the Animals gone, what else could we do?

Some people complained, of course. But then, they always do.

And everything went back to normal.

Only...

Yesterday, all the babies were gone.

We don't know where they went. We didn't even see them go.

We don't know what we're going to do without them.

But we'll think of something. Humans are smart. It's what makes us superior to the animals and the babies.

We'll figure something out.

2000 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Question 2

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In the following passage from *The Spectator* (March 4, 1712), the English satirist Joseph Addison creates a character who keeps a diary. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-organized essay, analyze how the language of the passage characterizes the diarist and his society and how the characterization serves Addison's satiric purpose. You may wish to consider such elements as selection of detail, repetition, and tone.

MONDAY, *eight o'clock*.—I put on my clothes and walked into the parlour.
Nine o'clock, ditto—Tied my knee-strings and washed my hands.
5 *Hours ten, eleven, and twelve*.—Smoked three pipes of Virginia. Read the *Supplement* and *Daily Courant*. Things go ill in the North. Mr. Nisby's opinion thereupon.
One o'clock in the afternoon.—Chid Ralph for mislaying my tobacco-box.
10 *Two o'clock*.—Sat down to dinner. *Mem.*: Too many plums and no suet.
From three to four.—Took my afternoon's nap.
From four to six.—Walked into the fields.
15 Wind S.S.E.
From six to ten.—At the club. Mr. Nisby's opinion about the peace.
Ten o'clock.—Went to bed, slept sound.
TUESDAY (*being holiday*), *eight o'clock*.—Rose
20 as usual.
Nine o'clock.—Washed hands and face, shaved, put on my double-soled shoes.
Ten, eleven, twelve.—Took a walk to Islington.
One.—Took a pot of Mother Cob's mild.
25 *Between two and three*.—Returned; dined on a knuckle of veal and bacon. *Mem.*: Sprouts wanting.
Three.—Nap as usual.
From four to six.—Coffee-house. Read the news. A dish of twist.¹ Grand Vizier² strangled.
30 *From six to ten*.—At the club. Mr. Nisby's account of the great Turk.
Ten.—Dream of the Grand Vizier. Broken sleep.
WEDNESDAY, *eight o'clock*.—Tongue of my shoe-buckle broke. Hands, but not face.
35 *Nine*.—Paid off the butcher's bill. *Mem.*: To be allowed for the last leg of mutton.
Ten, eleven.—At the Coffee-house. More work in the North. Stranger in a black wig asked me how stocks went.
40 *From twelve to one*.—Walked in the fields. Wind to the south.
From one to two.—Smoked a pipe and a half.
Two.—Dined as usual. Stomach good.
Three.—Nap broke by the falling of a pewter dish.
45 *Mem.*: Cookmaid in love, and grown careless.
From four to six.—At the coffee-house. Advice from Smyrna, that the Grand Vizier was first of all

strangled and afterwards beheaded.

Six o'clock in the evening.—Was half-an-hour in the club before anybody else came. Mr. Nisby of opinion, that the Grand Vizier was not strangled the sixth instant.

Ten at night.—Went to bed. Slept without waking till nine next morning.

55 THURSDAY, *nine o'clock*.—Stayed within till two o'clock for Sir Timothy; who did not bring me my annuity according to his promise.

Two in the afternoon.—Sat down to dinner. Loss of appetite. Small-beer sour. Beef overcorned.

60 *Three*.—Could not take my nap.

Four and five.—Gave Ralph a box on the ear. Turned off my cookmaid. Sent a message to Sir Timothy. *Mem.*: did not go to the club to-night. Went to bed at nine o'clock.

65 FRIDAY.—Passed the morning in meditation upon Sir Timothy, who was with me a quarter before twelve.

Twelve o'clock.—Bought a new head to my cane and tongue to my buckle. Drank a glass of purl³ to recover appetite.

70 *Two and three*.—Dined and slept well.

From four to six.—Went to the coffee-house. Met Mr. Nisby there. Smoked several pipes. Mr. Nisby of opinion that laced coffee⁴ is bad for the head.

75 *Six o'clock*.—At the club as steward. Sat late.

Twelve o'clock.—Went to bed, dreamt that I drank small-beer with the Grand Vizier.

SATURDAY.—Waked at eleven; walked in the fields; wind N.E.

80 *Twelve*.—Caught in a shower.

One in the afternoon.—Returned home, and dried myself.

Two.—Mr. Nisby dined with me. First course marrow-bones, second ox-cheek, with a bottle of Brooke's and Hellier.

85 *Three o'clock*.—Overslept myself.

Six.—Went to the club. Like to have fallen into a gutter. Grand Vizier certainly dead, &c.

¹ A beverage

² Chief administrative officer of the Ottoman Empire

³ A liquor

⁴ Coffee containing spirits

2006 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Question 2

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

The following passage is an excerpt from *Lady Windermere's Fan*, a play by Oscar Wilde, produced in 1892. Read the passage carefully. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how the playwright reveals the values of the characters and the nature of their society.

Line DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*shaking hands*). Dear
Margaret, I am so pleased to see you. You remember
Agatha,¹ don't you? How do you do, Lord
Darlington? I won't let you know my daughter, you
5 are far too wicked.

LORD DARLINGTON. Don't say that, Duchess.
As a wicked man I am a complete failure. Why, there
are lots of people who say I have never really done
anything wrong in the whole course of my life. Of
10 course they only say it behind my back.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK. Isn't he dreadful?
Agatha, this is Lord Darlington. Mind you don't
believe a word he says. No, no tea, thank you, dear.
(*Sits on sofa.*) We have just had tea at Lady Markby's.
15 Such bad tea, too. It was quite undrinkable. I wasn't at
all surprised. Her own son-in-law supplies it. Agatha
is looking forward so much to your ball tonight, dear
Margaret.

LADY WINDERMERE (*seated*). Oh, you musn't
20 think it is going to be a ball, Duchess. It is only a
dance in honour of my birthday. A small and early.

LORD DARLINGTON (*standing*). Very small,
very early, and very select, Duchess.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK. Of course it's going
25 to be select. But we know *that*, dear Margaret, about
your house. It is really one of the few houses in
London where I can take Agatha, and where I feel
perfectly secure about dear Berwick. I don't know
what society is coming to. The most dreadful people
30 seem to go everywhere. They certainly come to my
parties—the men get quite furious if one doesn't
ask them. Really, some one should make a stand
against it.

LADY WINDERMERE. I will, Duchess. I will
35 have no one in my house about whom there is any
scandal.

LORD DARLINGTON. Oh, don't say that, Lady
Windermere. I should never be admitted. (*Sitting.*)

¹ the Duchess's daughter

DUCHESS OF BERWICK. Oh, men don't matter.
40 With women it is different. We're good. Some of us
are, at least. But we are positively getting elbowed
into the corner. Our husbands would really forget our
existence if we didn't nag at them from time to time,
just to remind them that we have a perfect legal right
45 to do so.

LORD DARLINGTON. It's a curious *thing*,
Duchess, about the game of marriage—a game, by the
way, that is going out of fashion—the wives hold all
the honours² and invariably lose the odd trick.³

50 DUCHESS OF BERWICK. The odd trick? Is that
the husband, Lord Darlington?

LORD DARLINGTON. It would be rather a good
name for the modern husband.

55 DUCHESS OF BERWICK. Dear Lord Darlington,
how thoroughly depraved you are!

LADY WINDERMERE. Lord Darlington is trivial.

LORD DARLINGTON. Ah, don't say that, Lady
Windermere.

LADY WINDERMERE. Why do you *talk* so
60 trivially about life, then?

LORD DARLINGTON. Because I think that life
is far too important a thing ever to talk seriously
about it.

65 DUCHESS OF BERWICK. What does he mean?
Do, as a concession to my poor wits, Lord Darlington,
just explain to me what you really mean.

LORD DARLINGTON. I think I had better not,
Duchess. Nowadays to be intelligible is to be found
out. Good-bye! (*Shakes hands with DUCHESS.*) And
70 now—Lady Windermere, good-bye. I may come
tonight, mayn't I? Do let me come.

LADY WINDERMERE. Yes, certainly. But you
are not to say foolish, insincere things to people.

75 LORD DARLINGTON (*smiling*). Ah! you are
beginning to reform me. It is a dangerous thing to
reform any one, Lady Windermere. (*Bows and exit.*)

² high cards

³ round of a card game

2002 AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In the following excerpt from a recent British novel, the narrator, a young man in his early twenties, is attending a play with his new girlfriend Isabel when she unexpectedly discovers that her parents are in the theater. Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the author produces a comic effect.

- Oh my God, I think that's my mum over there,' she gasped.
'Where?'
Line 'By the pillar. Careful, don't look. What is she
5 doing here? And what's that dress? It looks like a willow tree. Where's Dad? I hope she didn't come with one of her gentlemen friends. She's really too old for that.'
'Did you tell her you were going?'
10 'No, I mean, I said I wanted to see the play, but I didn't let on I had tickets for tonight.'
'She's talking to someone. Can you see?'
'Phew, it's my dad. He must have gone off to buy programmes. And he's about to sneeze. Look, there
15 we go, aaahhtchooo. Out comes his red handkerchief. I just hope they don't spot us and we can escape quickly at the end. With any luck, they'll be too busy arguing to glance up here. This is prime argument territory for them, Mum will be asking Dad where he
20 put the car park ticket and he'll get flustered because he'll just have dropped it into a bin by mistake.'
Luck was not on Isabel's side, for a moment later, Christopher Rogers happened to glance up to the gallery and recognized his eldest daughter, in the
25 midst of trying her best not to recognize him. So that she might cease to dwell in ignorance, Christopher stood up in the middle of the elegantly suited and scented audience, and began making the vigorous hand gestures of a man waving off a departing cruise
30 ship. In case Isabel had not spotted this maniac, her mother was in turn informed of her eldest daughter's location, and decided that the presence of four hundred people in the auditorium should be no impediment to her desire to shout 'Isabel' at top pitch
35 and with all the excitement of a woman recognizing a long-lost friend on the deck of an in-coming cruise ship.
Isabel smiled feebly, turned a beetroot shade and repeated in panicked diction, 'I can't believe this,
40 please let them shut up.'
Not a second too soon, Lorca* came to the rescue, the lights faded, and Mr. and Mrs. Rogers reluctantly took their seats, pointing ominously to an exit sign by way of interval rendezvous.
45 An hour and a quarter of Spanish domestic drama later, we found ourselves at the bar.
'What are you doing here, Mum?' asked Isabel.
'Why shouldn't I be here? You're not the only one who does fancy things with your evenings. Your
50 father and I have a right to go out once in a while.'
'I'm sure, I didn't mean it like that, it's just I'm surprised at the coincidence.'
'Where did you buy this dress? Is that the one I paid for at Christmas?'
55 'No, Mum, I got it myself last week.'
'Oh, well, it's very nice, pity you don't have more of a cleavage for it, but that's your father's fault. You know what all the women in his family are like.'
'How are you Dad?' Isabel turned to ask her father,
60 who was looking up at the ceiling with an intent expression.
'Dad?' repeated Isabel.
'Yes, darling, how are you, my bean? Enjoying the show?'
65 'Yup, and you? What are you staring at up there?'
'I'm looking at the light fixtures they have. They're new tungsten bulbs, Japanese things, quite wonderful, they use only a small amount of electricity but give off a very nice light.'
70 'Oh, great, Dad. And, ehm, there's someone I'd like you to both meet.'
'Delighted,' said Mrs. Rogers, confiding in me almost at once: 'She's a lovely girl really,' in case my theatre companion had inspired doubts to the
75 contrary.
'Thanks, Mum,' said Isabel wearily, as though the statement were no one-off.
'Don't mind her, bean, she's had a hard day,'

**2002 AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

- 80 explained Dad, now looking more horizontally at the
world.
‘My day would be fine if I wasn’t lumbered with
someone who kept losing tickets to the car park,’
snapped Mrs. Rogers.
‘Dad! You haven’t?’
85 ‘Yes, I’m afraid I have. They’re so fiddly these days,
they fall right out of one’s hands.’

—Alain de Botton, *Kiss and Tell*

*Federico Garcia Lorca (1898-1936): Spanish poet and playwright

Question 2

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In the following passage from Maria Edgeworth's 1801 novel, *Belinda*, the narrator provides a description of Clarence Hervey, one of the suitors of the novel's protagonist, Belinda Portman. Mrs. Stanhope, Belinda's aunt, hopes to improve her niece's social prospects and therefore has arranged to have Belinda stay with the fashionable Lady Delacour.

Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze Clarence Hervey's complex character as Edgeworth develops it through such literary techniques as tone, point of view, and language.

Clarence Hervey might have been more than a pleasant young man, if he had not been smitten with the desire of being thought superior in every thing, and of being the most admired person in all companies. He had been early flattered with the idea that he was a man of genius; and he imagined that, as such, he was entitled to be imprudent, wild, and eccentric. He affected singularity, in order to establish his claims to genius. He had considerable literary talents, by which he was distinguished at Oxford; but he was so dreadfully afraid of passing for a pedant, that when he came into the company of the idle and the ignorant, he pretended to disdain every species of knowledge. His chameleon character seemed to vary in different lights, and according to the different situations in which he happened to be placed. He could be all things to all men—and to all women. He was supposed to be a favourite with the fair sex; and of all his various excellencies and defects, there was none on which he valued himself so much as on his gallantry. He was not profligate; he had a strong sense of humour, and quick feelings of humanity; but he was so easily led, or rather so easily excited by his companions, and his companions were now of such a sort, that it was probable he would soon become vicious. As to his connexion with Lady Delacour, he would have started with horror at the idea of disturbing the peace of a family; but in her family, he said, there was no peace to disturb; he was vain of having it seen by the world that he was distinguished by a lady of her wit and fashion, and he did not think it incumbent on him to be more scrupulous or more

attentive to appearances than her ladyship. By Lord Delacour's jealousy he was sometimes provoked, sometimes amused, and sometimes flattered. He was constantly of all her ladyship's parties in public and private; consequently he saw Belinda almost every day, and every day he saw her with increasing admiration of her beauty, and with increasing dread of being taken in to marry a niece of 'the *catch-match-maker*,' the name by which Mrs Stanhope was known amongst the men of his acquaintance. Young ladies who have the misfortune to be *conducted* by these artful dames, are always supposed to be partners in all the speculations, though their names may not appear in the firm. If he had not been prejudiced by the character of her aunt, Mr Hervey would have thought Belinda an undesigning, unaffected girl; but now he suspected her of artifice in every word, look, and motion; and even when he felt himself most charmed by her powers of pleasing, he was most inclined to despise her, for what he thought such premature proficiency in scientific coquetry. He had not sufficient resolution to keep beyond the sphere of her attraction; but frequently, when he found himself within it, he cursed his folly, and drew back with sudden terror.

Madam and The Rent Man by Langston Hughes

The rent man knocked.
He said, Howdy-do?
I said, What
Can I do for you?
He said, You know
Your rent is due.

I said, Listen,
Before I'd pay
I'd go to Hades
And rot away!

The sink is broke,
The water don't run,
And you ain't done a thing
You promised to've done.

Back window's cracked,
Kitchen floor squeaks,
There's rats in the cellar,
And the attic leaks.

He said, Madam,
It's not up to me.
I'm just the agent,
Don't you see?

I said, Naturally,
You pass the buck.
If it's money you want
You're out of luck.

He said, Madam,
I ain't pleased!
I said, Neither am I.
So we agrees!

Who is the speaker in this poem?
What is her argument with the rent man?
What does "pass the buck" mean? How has the rent man passed the buck?
What is the "message" of this poem? [The poem suggests that people should fight for their rights and that they should not neglect their responsibilities. It also suggests that a little give-and-take is necessary to resolve a standoff.]
What *tones* do you hear expressed in this poem? Think of both the speaker and the rent man.

SARAH CYNTHIA SYLVIA STOUT WOULD NOT TAKE THE GARBAGE OUT



Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout
Would not take the garbage out!
She'd scour the pots and scrape the pans,
Candy the yams and spice the hams,
And though her daddy would scream and shout,
She simply would not take the garbage out.
And so it piled up to the ceilings:
Coffee grounds, potato peelings,
Brown bananas, rotten peas,
Chunks of sour cottage cheese.
It filled the can, it covered the floor,
It cracked the window and blocked the door
With bacon rinds and chicken bones,
Drippy ends of ice cream cones,
Prune pits, peach pits, orange peel,
Gloppy glumps of cold oatmeal,
Pizza crusts and withered greens,
Soggy beans and tangerines,
Crusts of black burned buttered toast,
Gristly bits of beefy roasts. . .
The garbage rolled on down the hall,
It raised the roof, it broke the wall. . .
Greasy napkins, cookie crumbs,
Globs of gooey bubble gum,
Cellophane from green baloney,
Rubbery blubbery macaroni,
Peanut butter, caked and dry,
Curdled milk and crusts of pie,
Moldy melons, dried-up mustard,
Eggshells mixed with lemon custard,
Cold french fried and rancid meat,
Yellow lumps of Cream of Wheat.
At last the garbage reached so high
That it finally touched the sky.
And all the neighbors moved away,
And none of her friends would come to play.
And finally Sarah Cynthia Stout said,
"OK, I'll take the garbage out!"
But then, of course, it was too late. . .
The garbage reached across the state,
From New York to the Golden Gate.
And there, in the garbage she did hate,
Poor Sarah met an awful fate,
That I cannot now relate
Because the hour is much too late.
But children, remember Sarah Stout
And always take the garbage out!

Shel Silverstein, 1974

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

The poems below, published in 1789 and 1794, were written by William Blake in response to the condition of chimney sweeps. Usually small children, sweeps were forced inside chimneys to clean their interiors. Read the two poems carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, compare and contrast the two poems, taking into consideration the poetic techniques Blake uses in each.

The Chimney Sweeper

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry "'weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!'"*
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

Line
5 There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head
That curl'd like a lambs back, was shav'd, so I said,
"Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

10 And so he was quiet, & that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping he had such a sight!
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, & Jack,
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black;

15 And by came an Angel who had a bright key,
And he open'd the coffins & set them all free;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing they run,
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun;

20 Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark
And got with our bags & our brushes to work.
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm;
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

* The child's lisping attempt at the chimney sweep's street cry,
"Sweep! Sweep!"

William Blake, "The Chimney Sweeper," *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman (1789; 1794; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965).

(1789)

The Chimney Sweeper

A little black thing among the snow
Crying "'weep, 'weep,'" in notes of woe!
"Where are thy father & mother? say?"
"They are both gone up to the church to pray."

Line
5 "Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil'd among the winter's snow;
They clothéd me in the clothes of death,
And taught me to sing the notes of woe."

10 "And because I am happy, & dance & sing,
They think they have done me no injury,
And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King,
Who make up a heaven of our misery."

William Blake, "The Chimney Sweeper," *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman (1789; 1794; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965).

(1794)

WASHINGTON—Painting a stark portrait of a phenomenon that appears to be irreversible, a report published Thursday by the American Historical Association has found that the past is currently expanding at an alarming rate.

The comprehensive 950-page study, compiled by a panel of the nation's most prominent historians, warns that the sum total of past time grows progressively larger each day, making it unlikely anything can be done to halt, or even slow down, the relentless trend.

"We believe the past is larger now than it's ever been before," said College of William and Mary professor Timothy Gibbon, lead author of the report, observing that whole generations of people have already become a part of history, and that if nothing changes, an untold number more can expect the same fate. "Many things that are in the past today were, during our parents' and grandparents' time, still in the present—or even the future. Based on precise measurements of its size, we believe the past has subsumed every single person and event that has ever existed."

"It's shocking to contemplate, but in the relatively short stretch since 1984, when I first began tracking its growth, the past has expanded by more than 30 years," he added.

The report predicted this disturbing pattern will only continue, with one occurrence after another becoming part of a "colossal" historical record that, by all indications, appears intent on seizing absolutely everything without any discrimination. To date, nothing, no matter how significant, has been able to escape the past, which historians say has taken hold of episodes as momentous as the invention of the printing press, the execution of Louis XVI, numerous ice ages, the westward expansion of the United States, and the year 1995, among billions of others.

"This massive, unrestricted accrual of time is quickly becoming unmanageable—it's growing bigger and bigger even now as I speak," said Gibbon, who confirmed the past grew by more than six months in the time it took to research and write the new report. "Presidential administrations, extinct species, ancient empires—all have been claimed by a relentless past. There was some speculation that World War II would end history, but it didn't."

"Neither did the moon landing, the signing of the Magna Carta, the formation of Pangaea, the extinction of the dinosaurs, the fall of the Ming dynasty, the breaking apart of Pangaea, or the discovery of the Higgs boson," he continued. "Indeed, these events have only served to make the past even larger."

The report went on to state that concerns over the expanding past were outweighed only by fears about the future, which is assumed to become vanishingly small with each passing moment. 🍀