

Gulliver's Travels Study Guide

Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift

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Plot Summary

Gulliver's Travels, by Jonathan Swift begins with the protagonist, Gulliver as he sets out for an adventure. He is a surgeon from England who has a taste for adventure, and sets out to find and observe cultures. On his first voyage a storm knocks his lifeboat over and he is the only one to make it to shore. There he is held captive by the Lilliputian people who are only around six inches tall. Eventually Gulliver makes friends and agrees to help them in exchange for his freedom. He takes down the rival town's military and makes peace with them. The Lilliputian leader wants them killed and when Gulliver won't do it he is accused of treason. Eventually the leader cools off and Gulliver is fine but eventually has to leave because he is going to be killed and he is taxing the small country too much with his eating habits.

He is home for five months before he leaves again.

The next Island Gulliver ends up shipwrecked on is an island entirely occupied by Giants. He is taken by a farmer who ends up making him a sideshow for money until the queen of the giants comes and buys Gulliver for a lot of money. Gulliver has a mixed experience while staying in the castle. He is fed and cared for, but not seen as human and is constantly in danger. Gulliver also talks to the king about the politics from his homeland and the king just belittles him, saying how silly it all is. Eventually the box they keep him in is set adrift on accident and he is saved by a ship passing by.

He stays home for around two weeks before he goes away again.

The next Island Gulliver lands on is an island that floats, thanks to a giant magnet. The king of the island is from a race of people who are always caught up in their own thoughts, so much so that they need a servant to remind them to speak and listen. These people are caught up in learning and creating new sciences but never actually having a practical purpose, and most of the studies are actually contradicting themselves. Gulliver learns that the continent below the island is also ruled with an iron fist by the king who will block the sun and rain from a person who doesn't pay. Gulliver becomes frustrated and bored and as soon as he is able, he leaves.

The neighboring island is full of sorcerers where the governor can raise the dead for people to talk to. Gulliver goes there and decides to talk to famous people and learn from them. Gulliver soon realizes the history he knows is not what actually happened. Eventually, Gulliver gets to Japan where he boards a ship after convincing the Emperor he is Dutch.

Once home he is only there for ten days before he leaves, again.

Gulliver is marooned on an island where he meets strange beasts looking vaguely human but more animalistic. On this island Gulliver finds a utopia run by intelligent horses and the humans are savage brutish creatures fueled by lust and hatred. Gulliver falls in love with the horse society and plans on staying. Gulliver eventually even ends



up hating the Yahoos, or the humans, on the island and eventually the entire species. Gulliver is asked to leave one day by his friend and is heartbroken to have to return to the human race, whom he now despises. Gulliver returns home and can't stand to be around anyone and ends up buying horses to make himself feel better.



Part One, Chapters 1-2

Summary

Chapter 1

The story begins with Gulliver explaining where he was born. Gulliver states that he grew up in Nottinghamshire in England and as a small boy studied mathematics and navigation for when he would grow up to be an adventurer. In his early adult years he studied medicine at Oxford and was urged to become a surgeon on the vessel, The Swallow. Gulliver writes that he traveled with The Swallow for many years but decided to come back and settle down. He marries a woman, Mrs. Burton, who had a dowry of 400 pounds. Once Gulliver's old mentor dies his business starts to go downhill fast, so Gulliver decides to go to sea and leave his family for a short time.

After several years, he returns and attempts to settle back into rural life.

Gulliver loves his wife but grows restless after many years and takes to the sea once more. A few years pass and Gulliver grows weary of the sea and decides to come home and move his family and practice to London. This practice, too, fails and he decides to head out again after three years. Once aboard the ship Antelope a huge storm blows them way off course and the captain sends Gulliver and 11 other men ashore. On the way all but Gulliver die when the row boat flips over. Gulliver falls asleep once he gets to shore and wakes up to find he is tied down by small humans called the Lilliputians. They take him back to their citadel where he is chained up to their temple, which is big enough to just allow him to fit inside.

Chapter 2

Gulliver wakes up the following morning and panics due to not having been allowed to go to the restroom for the last two days. Gulliver goes to the bathroom in a corner of his new temple home, stating that he hasn't ever done anything like this before. After this happens the emperor orders two men to come with wheel barrows to collect his urine every morning. During Gulliver's stay the Emperor visits and tries to talk with Gulliver but can't because of the language barriers. The Emperor orders men to teach Gulliver the language and it takes about a week to teach him.

After a week there the Emperor holds a meeting on what to do about Gulliver due to how much he eats. They think about killing him but don't know what to do with a giant rotting corpse so they decide against that. Gulliver then asks the Emperor in his own language for freedom. The Emperor agrees but tells him he must first be searched. They notice his sword and pistol and ask to see it. The Emperor's guards attack Gulliver when he unsheathes his sword since they think he is going to kill the Emperor. He doesn't however. His pistol is shot and everyone is astonished by the noise; even the Emperor is taken back. Once the demonstration is done he is searched and all his



personal items are documented and returned. He doesn't get his sword or pistol back though.

Analysis

In Chapters 1-2 of Gulliver's Travels the story is laid out in the typical fashion of narratives of the time. Gulliver spends a great deal of time laying down the background of his early life all the way to his profession. Through this it is revealed that Gulliver had a very normal life growing up in the Middle-class. By giving the background on how Gulliver lived such a regular life Swift is setting up the idea that Gulliver is a very trustworthy person that the reader can relate to, thus establishing a close connection between the two.

The problem, however, is that upon further reading the previous notion of Gulliver being a trustworthy person is proved to be incorrect upon his meeting with the Lilliputians. Obviously, these people are fictional right out of Swift's own imagination, but they symbolize much more. At the time Swift wrote Gulliver's Travels England was arguably one of the most powerful nations in the world. As the English began their expansion they came into contact with many different cultures, all of which they sought to bring under their control. In this sense the Lilliputians represent these small cultures, being they are only six inches tall, and Gulliver to be the representation of England towering over them.

A significant and slightly ironic characteristic about the allusion to Gulliver representing the powerful nation of England is the fact that he is being held prisoner by the tiny six-inch 'cultures' that he could've so easily crushed. Which brings in another interesting point of: if Gulliver could have broken free of the Lilliputian's hold, despite his fear of their tiny arrows, why did he choose to stay? One reason could be simple curiosity at the seemingly impossible people. The fact that they are so different from him that Gulliver wished to know all about how their society functioned. This also ties back toward the first chapter of the novel where Gulliver's sense of curiosity and knowledge is established. Another reason, however, could be that Gulliver simply takes enjoyment out of being the 'big man' for once. There is the idea that even though he is a 'prisoner' in Lilliput that he is still the most powerful person there who could leave at any time.

Discussion Question 1

What is most likely the reason that Swift wrote this novel?

Discussion Question 2

What are the pros and cons of being Gulliver in Lilliput?



Discussion Question 3

Describe the character of Gulliver.

Vocabulary

scanty, hosier, disadvantageous, computation, babbled, ligatures, conjectured



Part One, Chapters 3-4

Summary

Chapter 3

Gulliver comes to be well liked by the town's people and the Emperor due to his gentle nature. The Emperor puts on a show for Gulliver which involves several games and shows. One show is actually how the Lilliputians elect people into office. Whoever jumps the highest on a taut rope will be the winner and placed on the Emperor's board. Gulliver tries to make up a game but a horse gets hurt and he decides against it again.

The Emperor gets news of a large black thing that has washed ashore and it turns out to be Gulliver's hat. He is happy to get it back. The Emperor orders Gulliver to stand with his legs apart and let the army in formation walk underneath him. Gulliver's pants are so tattered that he is exposed and everyone starts to snicker at it. Bolgolam, who has declared himself the self-appointed enemy to Gulliver, comes up with the rules for the release of Gulliver. The rules mainly entail Gulliver not picking up anyone without consent, lying in any fields or parks, helping build walls and buildings, and finding out how large the island is. If he does this he will be allowed to hang out with the Emperor. Gulliver agrees and he is set free.

Chapter 4

Gulliver goes to the capital city of Lilliput, called Mildendo, where he finds all of the residents terrified of invasion. After Gulliver has been in the city for a few weeks, one of the government officials is sent to talk to Gulliver about the hostilities that have occurred. The entire ordeal had begun because the kingdom is comprised of two groups, the Tramecksan and the Salmecksan. The height of their heels determines to which group they belong. He also tells Gulliver that on top of that sort of internal strife, there is an even greater enemy in a neighboring kingdom called, Blefuscu. One of the greatest arguments is over which side of a boiled egg one should crack. The Salmecksans have aligned themselves secretly with the Blefuscu and are stoking a rebellion that threatens the kingdom.

Analysis

Chapters 3-4 pick out the kinds of commentaries that Swift is making throughout the remainder of the novel in relation to England. The way in which Swift illustrated the way in which the Lilliputians use ridiculous competitions to decide their governing officials can be applied to his opinion of the way in which officials in England are chosen.

Furthermore, the reader could also pick out how Swift comments on the disturbing trend set by politicians; how they will do just about anything to gain favor and elevate their



power. He then goes on to allude to the fact that ambition could also lead to an unfavorable outcome in the end.

The mention of the way in which the Lilliputians march through Gulliver's parted legs is a jab at the superfluous nature of England in respect to the militia. The idea Swift was trying to impart was that armies more than often had their concerns misplaced, putting how they looked above being impressive and effective. This section could also be an allusion to Colossus of Rhodes from Julius Caesar by Shakespeare, as a larger-than-life figure whose legs people could walk through.

With the contract Gulliver signs with the Lilliputians in order to gain his freedom, it further imparts the idea that there is an unequal relationship between Gulliver and the Lilliputians; much like England and the other cultures it sought to 'integrate'. However it should be noted that the contract was symbolic of a treaty with cordial power and despite the fact that he could've broken the contract whenever he felt Gulliver didn't and chose a more peaceful path.

The conflict between the Lilliputians and Blefuscutians can be traced to the conflict between the English and the French. The issue of high heels and low heels can be directly linked to the issue of religion and the practice of it as either Protestants or Catholics. While Swift wasn't downplaying the seriousness of religion, he did attest to the fact that fighting wars over religious preferences was as pointless as the Lilliputians and Blefuscutian's issue on heels, as well as which side of the egg to break.

Lastly, Swift also gives rise to parodies of the political parties in England. The Low Heels were a direct representation of the Tory Party and the High Heels were a direct representation of the Whig party. Swift, having changed parties before, knew the importance of political alignment, however at the same time made mention of how most political bickering was done on unimportant topics about as important as the height of someone's heels.

Discussion Question 1

Describe some of the comparisons between England and Lilliput.

Discussion Question 2

Discuss the significance of the high and low heel political parties.

Discussion Question 3

What is Swift possibly saying about the military of the time?



Vocabulary

endanger, intermingled, disburdened, urgency, momentous, countenance, smattering, condescension



Part One, Chapters 5-6

Summary

Chapter 5

In this chapter Gulliver helps the town of Lilliput put a stop to the Blefuscu army. Gulliver asks the Emperor for fifty bars of iron and rope, and from this Gulliver makes hooks and lines to capture the enemy's naval fleet. The water separating Blefuscu from Lilliput is only 800 meters away so Gulliver swims to it and the men of Blefuscu shoot at him with arrows. Gulliver puts on glasses and is unaffected by them. Once all the fleet is in tow, Gulliver swims back with them.

The Lilliputian inhabitants think the enemy is attacking because Gulliver is underwater. Once ashore everyone sees Blefuscu isn't attacking and the Emperor wants to attack immediately and wipe Blefuscu off the planet and enslave everyone. Gulliver tells the Emperor that he won't be a part of such activities if it means enslaving or killing innocent people. Blefuscu comes with a peace offering and invites Gulliver back to Blefuscu to visit. Gulliver asks for consent from the Emperor to go and the Emperor, unhappily, lets him go.

The Emperor never forgives Gulliver for not helping him wipe Blefuscu off the face of the earth so he starts planning to kill Gulliver. While in Blefuscu Gulliver becomes a Nardac, a royal member of the court, and is now considered to be above his own freedom agreements. One night there is a fire and Gulliver puts out the fire, which was the Empress's quarters. He does so using his own urine. Though it saves her life, the Empress is offended and doesn't even want the place rebuilt.

Chapter 6

Gulliver spends a majority of this chapter talking about the Lilliputian inner societal workings and the animals. First, Gulliver realizes everything is proportional to the Lilliputians, animals, trees, etc... The ways of the Lilliputians are what really seizes Gulliver's interest. The Lilliputians write diagonally on the page and read it as if it were Arabic (left to right). The children are born and immediately put in communal nurseries to be raised, since the Lilliputian society thinks that parents are the last persons who should take care of their children since they made them.

Based on their parent's social standing a child is schooled, often for many years, before they start apprenticing with a master of the specific trade they will go into. One night Gulliver is visited by the Emperor and his treasurer, who is his secret enemy. The Treasurer accuses Gulliver at dinner of having an affair with his wife. Gulliver assures everyone that he isn't and that it is impossible due to size, and that he couldn't even engage in such activities. The Treasurer then starts in on how much Gulliver eats and that money reserves are getting low. He tries to get Gulliver in trouble all night.



Analysis

In Chapters 5-6 it is obvious that Gulliver's freedom contract was useless. While Gulliver promised to serve the emperor in writing it was shown that when it comes to certain orders he won't. One such example was when the emperor ordered Gulliver to destroy the enemy fleet they captured, to which he refused and there was nothing the Lilliputians could do about it. The idea that Swift was trying to convey was that power in this case was at the top and, thankfully, Gulliver chose the right usage of it. This could be applied to the idea of England as a colonial power considering there were parts of England's rule as a power that were positive.

Further on when the Lilliputian's palace catches on fire and Gulliver puts it out by urinating on it Swift is doing more than applying comedic relief. The message behind this scene is that royalty is short-lived. They are just like anyone else and when something goes up in flames, such as the royal palace, no amount of royal power can make it stop; it's just the reality of the situation and the nasty side of the nature of the world. In this scene Swift made a point of showing the embarrassing needs of royalty, as Gulliver proved that by doing what the Lilliputians couldn't and putting out the fire, albeit in a very culpable way.

Throughout the novel it can be noted that when Gulliver makes a detailed explanation of the society that it is Swift's way of pointing out the faults of England's society. However, it should be pointed out that he can also be demonstrating the difference between his culture and that of another. Many of the Lilliputian's laws are seen to be Swift's personal ideals such as the law that lying is a capital offense. It gives the idea that Swift feels that in his society that lying is a more serious offense than other infractions in England. This can also be seen when the Houyhnhnms are introduced into the story.

Discussion Question 1

What is Swift's point at having Gulliver put out the fire by urinating on it?

Discussion Question 2

How does Swift point out the failures in English society and ruling structures?

Discussion Question 3

With Gulliver's refusal to attack Blufescue, what is Swift suggesting about England?

Vocabulary

confiscate, menial, deniable, clandestine, obdurate, arduous, heartily



Part One, Chapters 7-8

Summary

Chapter 7

Under the cover of night, Redresal comes to Gulliver to tell him of the news about the Emperor and his official's plans against him. Gulliver is told that he has broken several serious rules placed down by the first Emperor. One of the biggest rules was no urinating within the palace unless in the bathroom, so when he put out the fire he technically broke the law. The Lilliputians decide to kill him in several different ways but the Emperor asks Redresal (his advisor) what to do, so he says instead of killing him they should just put out his eyes so he can still be of use.

Then it is suggested that they can starve him so when he dies his corpse will be smaller and more manageable. When Gulliver hears this he thinks about just destroying the whole town and heading to Blefuscu. He decides against it since he took an oath to protect the town and in destroying it he would have gone back on his word. With this in mind he goes to see his friend the King of Blefuscu, but he doesn't disclose his standing with the Lilliputian court or people.

Chapter 8

Eventually, while in Blefuscu, Gulliver sees a rowboat and with the help from 2,000 Blefuscu men they flip the boat over. To Gulliver's relief, it is undamaged. He asks for permission to leave to go back to his homeland and the Blefuscu Emperor permits him to do so since he has brought peace to the Lilliputians and Blefuscu cities. Gulliver wonders why he hasn't heard from the Lilliputian's Emperor and the Blefuscu Emperor says he received a letter demanding they tie up Gulliver and ship him back to Lilliput to be tried for treason against Lilliput. The Blefuscu Emperor says he refused to do that since they were good friends. Instead, he sends word to Lilliput that Gulliver will be leaving on his own steam and would soon unburden them with his presence.

After a month of stocking up, Gulliver sets out to sail to Tasmania, but is intercepted by an English ship heading home. Luck would have it that an old sailor friend of Gulliver's is on the boat and vouches for him. Once back he makes a good living from exhibiting his tiny livestock. This lasts for a short while. He once again grows bored and sets sail.

Analysis

In both of these chapters Swift illustrates and satirizes European political practices. Of particular focus is the role that honesty and trust play in the cohesion of a society. Swift seems to illustrate that dishonesty, in many cases, could be even more dangerous than murder or theft. He is suggesting that there is vast room for improvement in European society, but that there are still those organizations that are reasonable and sensible,



especially those that contribute to the overall health of the group or the nation, instead of focusing on individual rights.

It is interesting to note that people who are not appropriately grateful are given a death sentence, with the thinking being that if someone were to be unkind to someone who has been a benefactor, then they have to be intrinsically flawed and thus a danger to society. Likewise, Swift is poking fun at the institutional views of children and their education, and the role of a parent in general, as regarded by the church. Children, in Lilliput, as in much of Europe at the time, were only capable of being adequately instructed by the church, that parents are incapable of such things.

What comes out in these two chapters, more than in other chapters, is the fact that the Lilliputians have no concept of any other societies other than their own and Blefuscu, and thus accept their cultural rules simply because they have no other comparisons. Whenever change is introduced, such as in the egg breaking arguments, it can turn deadly violent. Lastly, the reader sees Gulliver well rid of Lilliput and with the aid of the more sensible Blefuscu Emperor, he is able to begin the return home.

Discussion Question 1

What do the charges against Gulliver symbolize?

Discussion Question 2

What is Swift's views of the Church in regard to the raising of children?

Discussion Question 3

What is Swift suggesting about a moral person in regards to politicians?

Vocabulary

decadent, flagrant, obtuse, emphatically, gesticulated, clarification, emboldened



Part Two, Chapters 1-2

Summary

Chapter 1

Just like the voyage aboard the Antelope, the new boat called Adventure, hits a storm and they end up sending a crew to an island for bearings. Once on land the crew sees a giant man at least sixty feet tall and they all rush back so fast that they end up leaving Gulliver behind. Gulliver runs into a corn field, where the corn stalks are almost 40ft tall. He can't make much headway in it so he lays down for a while. Eventually a scythe comes a little close for comfort, and in fear of being killed Gulliver screams out. The Giant picks him up and discerns he is a thinking animal and takes him to the big farm boss. Gulliver starts calling him master, and the farmer ends up taking him back to his home where the Farmer's wife screams as if he were a mouse. She does end up liking him, however.

Gulliver is also introduced to the rest of the family. Once the baby is brought in the Mistress gives Gulliver to the baby as a plaything, and in the course of playing with him, Gulliver almost dies. Gulliver goes into great detail about how nasty women's breasts are at a magnified viewing. Later that night he is attacked by two rats. Gulliver kills one and the other runs away. The mistress runs in and sees Gulliver covered in blood and goes to wash him off. He then goes out to the garden to relieve himself. He apologizes to the reader for spending so much time talking about urinating, but he wants to include it for the scholars to discuss when his book is read.

Chapter 2

This chapter is relatively small in comparison to other chapters. Gulliver meets his master's daughter who sews him some clothes and takes care of him. She also teaches him the Brobdingnagian language. In their tongue Gulliver calls her his little nurse. As rumor spreads about the farmer's creature that can imitate humans, the farmer's neighbor comes to see if he can exhibit Gulliver at the farmer's market for cash. The Farmer instead does this himself and realizes he can make quite a profit from this. Gulliver's master decides to take Gulliver on the road with the master's daughter to care for Gulliver. The daughter knows how much Gulliver gets tired by doing these shows and feigns her own tiredness to get her father to slow down or call it a day. At the end of the tour he arrives at the Capital city and the father rents a hotel room and sets up Gulliver's stage for the next day.

Analysis

At the beginning of the second section of the book Gulliver has landed on a new island, Brobdingnag. Once again the sizing is off but rather than Gulliver being the giant the



tables are turned with him being the midget. Also the perspective is altered from what it was in the first part of the novel.

When on Lilliput, Gulliver often was thought of as one of the people, trying to identify with the populace. However, here on Brobdingnag, that is not the thought. It is made clear early on that the Brobdingnagians do not see Gulliver as one of them and feel that Gulliver is inferior 'vermin' to them. It introduces the reader to the idea of almost pitying Gulliver and also realizing that he was more human than at first thought to be.

The Brobdingnagians serve as a foil to Gulliver in some ways. They serve to show all of the things that Gulliver could have been when he was over at Lilliput. The Brobdingnagians treat Gulliver as a pet and a plaything but never as a person, a man. This contrasted Gulliver's treatment of the Lilliputians as he always treated them like they were people, despite how untoward they acted. This comparison gives Gulliver a likeable characteristic to him and changes the perception on the type of man he is.

On the other hand, not many could condemn the Brobdingnagians just because they see Gulliver as someone different from themselves. Swift makes mention of the fact that Gulliver did admire many of the laws that the Brobdingnagians had however had difficulty seeing through their appearances. He goes on to give a detailed account on how they look, grotesque but at the same time made of flesh, the same as Gulliver. It's here that Swift is alluding to the idea that there are all different types of beings in the world and despite the difference in looks that everyone shares common characteristics, despite how hard it may be to acknowledge that.

Also Swift does not allow people to forget that the Brobdingnagians are in fact aliens and very different from Gulliver, hence why they do not see him as one of their own. It is shown that the Brobdingnagians are moral people however. Chapter two shows this fact as Gulliver is given as a pet to a farmer's daughter. While he seems to be mistreated in reality the farmer is very careful with Gulliver despite the fact that the farm's carelessness nearly kills him. This is important because it served to show Gulliver the feeling of being powerless.

There is also the idea that people from different cultures and races have different opinions of those who are not of their origin. An example of this is when Gulliver is disgusted by the sight of the nurse's breast because he could see the deformities of her flesh. This makes him wonder what the Lilliputians must have thought about him. Through this Swift is making a comment to the duality of people and how sometimes they could be moral like the Brobdingnagians but at times can be malicious similar to the Lilliputians.

Discussion Question 1

How do the Brobdingnagians serve as a foil to Gulliver?



Discussion Question 2

What happens to begin shifting Gulliver's perspective on his own mannerisms and beliefs?

Discussion Question 3

How do the Brobdingnagians view Gulliver?

Vocabulary

bombarded, lambasted, ridiculed, sequestered, metered, canopy, mollify



Part Two, Chapters 3-4

Summary

Chapter 3

One day the Queen of Brobdingnag comes by to offer the Farmer a large sum of gold for Gulliver. The Farmer has already decided to make as much off of Gulliver, and since he is getting sickly the Farmer accepts the Queen's offer. Gulliver says he will do as the Queen wishes as long as the daughter of the Farmer will still watch over him. The Queen gives him his request and takes him and the daughter to the palace. Before they leave, the Queen asks Gulliver why he was so cold in his goodbye to his former master. Gulliver replies that he is upset because the Farmer used him and didn't have any use for him but to make money. The Queen had him also say this in front of the King who thought that he was a machine made to say such things. He had Gulliver examined and Gulliver tells them that where he comes from everyone is his size.

The Scholars looking over him dismiss his stories and come to the conclusion he is a freak of nature. The King starts to believe Gulliver's stories and tells the Queen to watch over him. The Queen is delighted because she really likes Gulliver. The Queen makes sure he is comfortable and has little beds and clothes made for him so he can sit and sleep easily. Every Wednesday he has dinner with the King and tells stories of English customs. The King pokes fun at it and at first Gulliver is upset, but the more he stays with them and hears what the King points out as funny, Gulliver begins to realize how silly certain aspects of English customs and politics really are. The Queen remarks how cowardly Gulliver seems to be, but Gulliver says everything is so huge and scary.

Chapter 4

This chapter goes into detail on the cities and states that make up Brobdingnagian as well as the geographical features. The land mass is between California and Japan and is over 6,000 miles long and between 3,000-4,000 miles wide with three sides facing oceans and one to impassable mountains. The Brobdingnagian states number 51. The Queen takes him to visit the city in a special box with windows so he may be carried and can see out. In Brobdingnag he has become very famous and is often ogled at by people in the street. He goes to the Grand Temple of Brobdingnag and is disappointed that it isn't bigger. He actually states he likes the King's kitchen better since it is huge.

Analysis

In Chapter 3-4 Swift puts in a stark reminder of the fact that the Brobdingnagians are not perfect in the fact that they cannot accept anyone different from themselves. Furthermore, he makes mention to the fact that the Brobdingnagians also had a stuck-up way about them, feeling that the English were contradictory and that the Brobdingnagians were better. The king went on to discredit Gulliver and his fellow



Englishmen, which showed how other cultures had their fair share of arrogance and unredeeming qualities.

Furthermore, the king goes about to mock humans and their 'pretenses'. This section serves as a foil once more to part one and Gulliver's time with the Lilliputians. At the first point there Gulliver looked down on the Lilliputians and their ways as they mimicked human tendencies. However here Gulliver is being looked down upon and having to listen to others call out his people's wrongdoings. What the king talks about, however, is nothing new to Gulliver as he agreed with the Brobdingnagians' point of view. This reflects the fact that Gulliver is slowly adjusting to the ways of the Brobdingnagians.

Discussion Question 1

How does the king of Brobdingnag act as a foil to the King of Lilliput?

Discussion Question 2

How is Gulliver's pride assaulted at the palace?

Discussion Question 3

What is Swift's point in showing the darker nature of the Brobdingnagians?

Vocabulary

malfeasance, alliances, dalliance, constitutional, forthright, gainsay, altercation



Part Two, Chapters 5-6

Summary

Chapter 5

Gulliver almost dies several times while at the palace from birds, hail, and a friendly dog. The Queen knows he loves boats so she has a trough brought up with water and a tiny boat for him to sail in. One of the maids lets a frog accidentally get in and it almost kills Gulliver. The Queen becomes obsessed with his safety and makes sure he is never out of her sight. He becomes saddened by not being allowed to go for his walks, but is soon occupied by the maids of honor. The maids love having him come around and he describes them as nasty because he can see all their imperfections and they smell bad to him because there is just too much human.

The worst part to him is that the Maids do not view him as human, so they urinate in front of him, which really upsets him. One day the Queen leaves her window open and she leaves the room. A monkey comes in and takes Gulliver thinking he is a baby monkey and tries to feed him. The palace people all try to get him back but are also laughing at this spectacle. Gulliver is asked later by the King at dinner how it felt to be taken by the monkey. Gulliver replied that if he had his sword he could have scared it off. Everyone laughs because they consider him a coward.

Chapter 6

The King wants to get all the knowledge he can about the English Empire from Gulliver so he can see if there is anything worth imitating in his kingdom. Gulliver starts by explaining the two houses set in motion to govern. Then goes into the intricacies of the houses and the Lords of houses. The King interjects frequently to poke holes in the logic behind the government, like gambling and how are the Lords tested to see if they are qualified to lead. The King begins to realize that England is run by corrupt cheating usurpers who are actually unqualified to run much of anything. Gulliver tries his hardest, but realizes out loud that the history of England and how they rule just sounds like a lot of murder and treachery.

Analysis

By this time it is shown that Gulliver has started to accept his way of life with the Brobdingnagians. However, Swift still makes mention of the fact that Gulliver still does not fit in with them entirely and no matter how much he tries to identify with the Brobdingnagians he will never truly be one. This is shown when Gulliver is knocked down to size once more.

Throughout the second section of the book Swift is making mention to the minuscule stature of Gulliver and how it served to knock Gulliver down a peg or two. As such it



also illustrates the importance of not only physical strength but mental strength as well. Often times it was Gulliver's manners that kept him in the good graces of those around him.

Another fact of Gulliver's tiny size is that Swift gives insight to that curious, knowledge-hungry side of Gulliver. When Swift gives another mention to the magnified view from Gulliver about the Brobdingnagians and how he wanted to dissect the lice, it brought back up the motif of wanting to learn about new things. However, when he goes on to mention the fact that it would 'turn his stomach' if he did it denotes the idea that while large factors may be disgusting, it is the smaller ones that will really revolt people.

Each time Gulliver began to truly feel like he was belonging in their society as one of them something comes up to humiliate him, something that would never happen to a Brobdingnagian, and thus reminding the reader of his place in society. One example would be Gulliver's mishap with the hailstones. Further on these incidents start to multiply to further remind Gulliver of the fact that he is not revered in this society.

One such incident is when he is interacting with the maids of honor. As they stripped him down, curious to his maleness, they end up ignoring his masculinity altogether and injuring his male pride by insinuating that he has no sexual significance.

Another key incident is when Gulliver was abducted. In this scene he was not even seen as a toy but rather a baby monkey. This reinforces to the reader the idea that Gulliver's small stature made him more in-tune with the animals rather than the people, thus reflecting how the Brobdingnagians really view him. Despite all of these incidents and attacks on Gulliver's emotional make-up, however, he still has a tendency to brag about himself showing that he still isn't aware of the moral superiority of the Brobdingnagians.

Going on further into the novel Swift changes focus more toward institutional superiority and European politics. Here Swift sets up the Brobdingnagian King as an inquisitive student and Gulliver as the expert. However within this set up what shows is Gulliver's naivety and the fact that through his explanation the true inner workings of the English system.

As the King makes his mention about what he thinks of what Gulliver has told him it goes into Swift's own thoughts of the Whig party in particular. He makes reference to the idea that Whigs bought their votes in parliament by granting favors of nobility to politicians and how they appointed writers of their party to higher positions. Furthermore, as the Brobdingnagian inquired on judges and how they dispense partial law is Swift's view of how justices of peace of the time were ridiculous and biased and how the Justices of higher courts made off with the riches not paying attention to anything else.

At this point Gulliver starts to sing the praises of England while banging mallets on the piano. This served to show how ridiculous and boastful England was. Furthermore with his use of insect imagery Swift is alluding to the fact that Europe's morality is lackluster



and hollow. Through the use of the Brobdingnagian King, Swift goes into the idea that the English were "the most pernicious race of odious little vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." which was a famous view on the nature of humankind.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss Gulliver's abduction and how this makes him feel.

Discussion Question 2

What does Gulliver state about the Whigs and what is the larger commentary about politics?

Discussion Question 3

Discuss the imagery of insects. What is the significance?

Vocabulary

bestial, luminosity, frolicked, amnesty, forsooth, abyssal, candor, demeanor



Part Two, Chapters 7-8

Summary

Chapter 7

Gulliver listens quietly to the King as he criticizes England over and over again. Gulliver believes the King to be arrogant and mentally criticizes the King for several things. Gulliver thinks the education system is flawed because they learn practical applications instead of universal mysteries. The laws are all written in basic terminology and no law is ever more than twenty words long. Gulliver also thinks the King is idiotic to not take up Gulliver's offer to make guns and gun powder. The King, having no knowledge of guns, asks for Gulliver to explain what they are. Upon hearing the description of guns the King is mortified and forbids Gulliver from ever mentioning them to him again. Gulliver thinks it is dumb for the King to pass up a possibility for total control. The kingdom of Brobdingnag only has an army to keep peace, nothing more. Gulliver believes it to be odd since there are no real enemies around.

Chapter 8

Gulliver has a cold but not as bad as the Farmer's daughter so she agrees to let him go with a servant down to the beach. Gulliver decides it's a good time for a nap so he sits down a while and sleeps in his small carrying box. While he is sleeping an eagle grabs the box and carries him away. He then awakes to find he has been adrift in the ocean. His box is being filled slowly with water then he hears scraping and moving from outside the box. He calls out and is answered by another man saying he's been lashed to the side of his boat. The Captain of the boat thinks Gulliver is lying once he hears the tales, but then Gulliver shows him his pants made from mouse skin and his comb made of whisker trimmings from the King of Brobdingnagia, the Captain finally believes him and escorts him home where his wife gets on to Gulliver and makes him promise to stay home for good.

Analysis

By the time Chapter 7 rolls around Swift makes it evident that Gulliver was beginning to change for the worse. With the swelling of his pride Gulliver becomes condescending toward the higher power of the Brobdingnagian society, the king. By disrespecting the king and his society Swift is really making remarks toward the patriotic and political influences on Europe's morality. As Gulliver scorns the king's idea of how the government should be a mix of common sense, justice, mercy and understandable laws it shows how what would be ideal for most people is not always what is accepted.

Furthermore, Swift goes on to be quite scathing in his opinion on the follies of English intellectuals. He is very severe on English poets, philosophers, and scientists that would call themselves 'modern'. The example of this would have been gunpowder. Gunpowder



represented a heightened achievement for the English at the time because of the power it gave over others. Here with the Brobdingnagian King, who was not blinded by the need for power, Swift gives way to the idea that there are negatives to the obtaining of power. Though the argument between the two Swift is thus reiterating the idea of the different perspectives of cultures and the fact that no culture is perfect.

With Chapter 8 Swift once more reiterates the idea of the Brobdingnagians moral superiority when Gulliver likens the English to the Lilliputians. This comparison served to further ridicule Gulliver for what he has become and to show the fact that his pride was to be his undoing in this situation.

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Discussion Question 1

How does Swift use Gulliver to make a statement about England's morality?

Discussion Question 2

Why does the King decree that Gulliver never speak to him again of war?

Discussion Question 3

How has Gulliver begun to change from the way he was at the beginning of the novel?

Vocabulary

devastated, reflection, visage, trembling, cordial, rebuke, maneuver



Part Three, Chapters 1-2

Summary

Chapter 1

Gulliver, not more than ten days after being home from Brobdingnag, meets an old captain friend. The captain wants him to come on another adventure. Gulliver is thrilled and quickly hurries along to join him. Once they are out to sea the captain makes Gulliver a temporary captain so he can go enjoy a little time on an island. After this the boat is captured by Asian pirates headed by a Dutchman. Gulliver tries reasoning with the captain but this only makes the Dutch Captain angrier. The captain decides to split the crew up amongst his own vessels and sets Gulliver adrift in a canoe with little provisions. Gulliver rows to a small cluster of islands where he sees a floating island above him with people on it. He signals the people and they send down a chain for him to climb up to them.

Chapter 2

When Gulliver reaches the top he is greeted by strange people. Their heads are turned over to the left or right and one eye goes in while the other one stares up. Gulliver also sees that their clothing has musical instruments printed on them as well as stars. The servants are numerous and each person seems to have one. Gulliver realizes the servants are to help dictate who should speak and who should listen as the people, Laputians, are usually too wrapped up with math and science in their heads that they forget to speak or even walk. Eventually they take Gulliver to their king. It takes a long time for the king to notice Gulliver amongst his mathematical and scientific equipment in his chambers. They talk of nothing but math and science and their language is based solely on math and science. Gulliver picks up on it quickly. Gulliver learns the women of this society freely have open affairs since the men do not have time for them because all they do is contemplate the heavens. They have a hard time making things right for Gulliver since they contemplate nothing but math and science and don't know how to apply it to life.

Analysis

In Chapters 1-2 Swift changes focus once again to the intellect and its use and misuse as well as ideas of several alternative civilizations. As Gulliver is captured by pirates and then rescued Swift introduces his thoughts and ridicule of the Dutch. He first showed this by his comparison between the Dutchman and the pagan pirates. While the Dutchman had no problem killing a christian and then going for Gulliver, Swift shows that the Pagan pirates are at least willing to spare Gulliver's life and instead toss him out to sea to try his luck. As mentioned earlier, Swift had a rather poignant opinion of the



Dutch. He made an indication that along with the Whigs that the Dutch had rather poor conduct of the war against France.

With the arrival of the floating island, Laputa, Swift introduces yet again another civilization that Gulliver has stumbled upon. Laputa already had quite a history in the world of satire but with Swift he took the island from the mythical marvels of impossibility and, through great detailed explanation, turned it into a rather believable operating mechanism. This is important because through the lengthy explanation Swift is alluding to the fact that the Laputians use their floating island as a tool for political tyranny.

It's mainly in Chapter 2 that Swift concentrates satire on the pride of humans in relation to reason. During the time of Swift, reason was highly valued, more so than any other faculty. As science was becoming more prominent during this time and quickly gaining followers Swift found it concerning. He felt that to put all of one's faith in reason that it obscured the elements in a person that made them human. Furthermore etymology of the name "Laputa" indicates Swift's view for this time.

By having Gulliver give his own explanation to what he thought Laputa meant served to show how first impressions of something are faulty. The name "Laputa" is actually derived from the Spanish language meaning "The whore" which also falls in tune with Martin Luther's famous quote on reason "That Great Whore, Reason". Swift, who was an advocate for Lutheran faith, was signalling to the reader his feelings on rationalists and reasoners who have no capacity to take faith into account.

As such with the Laputians they are speculative and rationalistic as well as failures all around. In other words they are completely practical and fail at anything outside of that category, such as marital affairs.

Swift sought to make the unfaithful wives symbolic of his thoughts on the immorality of abstract and prideful reason. Furthermore with his tale from Juvenal relates back to the idea of England's national morality and politics. There is also a jab aimed at Walpole, who was the leader of the Whigs, whose wife supposedly ran away with a slave.

Other jabs at politicians are littered throughout, especially with George I, in relation to the hospitality shown to Gulliver by the Laputian king. He was supposedly famous for putting illiterate Germans in his administration. The reference to the tailor that had mistakes in his calculations was aimed toward Isaac Newton. The main reason for this was because Swift had issue with Newton when the latter had an idea about debasing Irish coinage, to which Swift believed was highly immoral and in poor taste. He also felt Newton incorporated all of the immoral features of one who put entirely too much believe in reason.

Discussion Question 1

What suggests that Swift is concerned about the new sciences of his day and age?



Discussion Question 2

How might Swift's own religious views have colored his writing, especially in these chapters?

Discussion Question 3

What were the unfaithful wives symbolic of?

Vocabulary

frivolous, ramifications, purification, genuflect, portent, harbinger, baneful, somnambulist



Part Three, Chapters 3-4

Summary

Chapter 3

Gulliver goes on in this chapter to explain in detail the way the Island of Laputia works. Gulliver explains that there is a giant crater in the center of the island that collects the rain water and prevents it from falling off the island immediately. The next geological wonder is a giant crater housing a huge magnetic loadstone. This loadstone is what is keeping the island up in the air. He can only go where the islands below him are and only float up 4 miles high. Gulliver talks with the king and realizes that the senators all have estates on the continent below but deem the area hostile and don't actually live down there. They spend a lot of time researching the heavens and stars. The king also talks about how he keeps everyone in check, as he can block the sun with his island or crush the houses below him. The king doesn't directly control the loadstone, though he just says where it is to go. The navigators actually fly it. The king has a secret, however. The floating island, were he to smash a house with it, might be more than the loadstone could actually lift.

Chapter 4

Gulliver starts to bore of the Laputian people because all they want to talk about is math, science, or music. Gulliver can't even compete in talking to the Laputian people about it due to how much they know. They out smart him in those subjects. There is one man that Gulliver bonds with. His name is Lord Munodi. He is not very bright at the arts or science and Gulliver can talk reasonably with him. Gulliver asks the king if he may go to the continent below with Munodi. The king agrees and Gulliver climbs down.

Once on the ground Gulliver realizes how vastly different it is down there. The workers look exhausted and unhappy. Gulliver tries to talk to Munodi about this but Munodi makes it apparent it is better left unsaid until later, once they are safely at his estates. Munodi's estates are gorgeous to Gulliver but Munodi explains he gets ridiculed for his house since he lets everything stay with the olden ways. Munodi goes on to explain that when the Laputian's first climbed up and came back with new ideas he didn't go with them because he could see that they weren't going to work. Many of the changes had destroyed buildings or hurt crops. Eventually Munodi tells Gulliver about the Laputian academy and promises to get Gulliver in if he would like. Gulliver is very interested in the idea.

Analysis

Upon Gulliver's description of the way Laputa moves is a direct parody of papers that used to be delivered to the royals of society. This is Swift's way of mocking society's concrete, technical language used by the Laputans and how they express their love for



their reason. Furthermore Gulliver's reaction to the Laputian's astronomical discoveries is akin to that of the Royal society's enthusiasm over Halley's comet.

Swift sets up his ideals on political tyranny and terrorism by the descriptions of scientific speculation and his application of it back to how the king attacks Balnibarbi and the general treatment of the people there. This is a link back to England and its treatment of the Irish. The cutting off of rain and sun are references back to how the English cut Irish Trade and the tall rocks mentioned can be a reference to the Irish peers.

As Gulliver is sent down to Balnibarbi it gives a different perspective to the idea of reasoning in that these people were more concerned with the way in which things worked. However, like the other descriptions it is obvious that Swift is discrediting this type of reasoning as well.

Through Gulliver's descriptions of the projects the engineers are taking on it's obvious that Swift felt it was reversing the natural effects of the world. He goes on further to illustrate the difference between the intellect of the engineer and the politics involved. Often people who were good citizens were getting criticized for the silliest infractions, such as Munodi, who was disgraced because he offended an abstraction which happened to be music because he couldn't keep a beat well.

By showing the two different types of societies Swift sets up the idea quickly of elitism and how it can destroy nations. Also he alludes to the idea that in order to thrive a place must be filled with many different kinds of individuals all playing their part.

Discussion Question 1

Compare the people who live on the ground to the people who live in the clouds.

Discussion Question 2

Discuss the character of Lord Mundi.

Discussion Question 3

What is the overall message that is being made about knowledge and learning in this context?

Vocabulary

insatiable, aberration, blaspheme, boorish, contrive, flora, furbish, guileless



Part Three, Chapters 5-6

Summary

Chapter 5

Gulliver at once realizes that the college he is a part of is almost complete nonsense. The students all are coming up with “ideas” to save the world and/or benefit their society, but their ideas completely contradict the goal. Gulliver goes from one class to the next trying to learn. Eventually Gulliver gets sick and goes to the nurse who is famous for getting rid of gas. She says that she’s come up with a new procedure. She sticks a bellow up the rectum and sucks out the bad air and puts in new air. The patient then expels both. Gulliver sees the dog she tried it on beforehand. The dog has died of projectile diarrhea caused by the pressure of the bellow’s placed air. Gulliver decides to go to the universal artist, a genius, who is working on precious experiments. There are many scientists underneath him who are coming up with ideas about how to stop people from miscommunicating. Gulliver states the obvious, and says that people could simply stop talking. This idea is dismissed.

Chapter 6

After Gulliver leaves the School for Science he goes to the political school. Gulliver realizes that the political system is just as full of bad ideas as the science and math buildings. Some ideas are to tax the badness of men, and then others are saying tax the goodness of men. Some say that if the house becomes too split then they should split their brains to argue within themselves. Gulliver finds these ideas funny at first, then it dips into sadness. The projectors think a raffle should be held so hope of being elected is always out there and the fear of being replaced is always present. One man suggests fecal examination and provides his own to show that one can tell how a man feels based on his fecal excretions. Gulliver tells them about how the government is run back in England and they listen but then thank him and go about their business. Gulliver starts to miss home and thinks of leaving soon.

Analysis

Gulliver’s visit to the Grand Academy, which comprises both chapters, and the studying of the projects going on there serves to exemplify Swift’s idea that while society is advancing it is not perfect. He also is going on to the fact that there are concerns about what the advancement of science will have in relation to the study of undeserving things. Also, like most of the projects in Laputa, each one reverses a natural process, showing that it would do more harm than good. Furthermore when the projects fail it shows Swift’s thoughts on the advancement being pointless.

Swift also alludes to the idea that history can’t necessarily be trusted. The royal society and language project are a good example of this. Sprat’s idea of writing in a



mathematically plain written style with pictures for things mentioned is absurd. Not only would it contain more pictures than words but it also showed how it would complicate things even more; considering the fact that pictures have a multitude of meanings while words gave a more concentrated idea of what is being expressed.

Following up on the idea that history is faulty, Swift made an implication to the fact that those who are involved in history seldom write it. This introduced an issue in the idea that when you can't trust what is written then one will often have to trust in themselves, which can also be dangerous without a clear idea of perspective and who a person really is. Without that moral compass guiding a person the results can be disastrous. Which can be seen with the Balnibarrians who condemn those they deemed "insane" who really embody some moral outlines that Swift advocated.

He furthermore offers a critical opinion of the vanity and malice of humans by the means of the taxes set in place. Swift then makes a comparison back to that of English politics. Swift then went on to ridicule England further by using the theory of treason being discerned from signs in excrement, to which such details were derived from the evidence introduced against Bishop Atterbury in England from papers discovered in his bathroom. All of this just points to the idea that people who toss away all semblance of faith and morality for reason will end up making terrible mistakes thus worsening society.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss some of the absurdities within the schools and what Swift is trying to say about knowledge and wisdom.

Discussion Question 2

Discuss the political statement that Swift is making in these chapters.

Discussion Question 3

How is Gulliver humiliated by these giants?

Vocabulary

irksome, jocular, laborious, docile, ephemeral, lea, livid



Part Three, Chapters 7-8

Summary

Chapter 7

Gulliver learns of another Island in which Laputia is in trade with, but the boat won't return for another month. A local tells him of the island Glubbudrib, the isle of sorcerers. The governor is supposedly able to raise the dead but only for a day and has to wait three months to raise them again. The sorcerers apparently only marry within their community. Gulliver travels there and talks with the mayor whose servants are all ghosts. Originally, Gulliver was scared of the ghosts but eventually grows to tolerate them. The governor asks whom he would like to speak to from beyond, but must only ask them questions from their own time. Gulliver talks to many great men such as Alexander the Great, Hannibal or Carthage, and Julius Caesar. These men all have one thing in common: they all fought to overthrow a great ruling power.

Chapter 8

Gulliver sets a day aside to just talk with the ghosts of learned men like Aristotle and Homer. The men both agree that the laws of nature change from century to century and it will change again. Gulliver also meets most of the Roman Emperors and then decides to go thorough royal lineages and learn how they managed to come into power. Gulliver finds that most of them came into power through nefarious ways, such as lying, cheating, and incest.

Gulliver then realizes the only good done to the states have come from supposed criminals and rebels. This leads Gulliver to figure out that history has been brushed over to look prettier or uglier, depending on the political slant of the person being profiled. Gulliver then realizes England is falling prey to the same types of issues, therefore making the English people uglier.

Analysis

In Part Three Gulliver seems to have less complexity than before. While he is not as gullible as in earlier sections he is akin to being more of a spectator than an inquisitor. It goes back to the fact that Gulliver is generally interested in learning about new cultures and the customs that come along with them.

It is important to note, however, that Swift is making satire of the claims of historians to further emphasize how politicians have regressed rather than progressed, especially when he compared the modern parliament of the time to the Roman senate. Furthermore, he returns to the central idea that reason is not a trustworthy enough aspect of human nature to override everything else to become a foundation upon which politics or morality can be built.



Sliding into Chapter 8 shows Swift's attack once more on rational and abstract thinking from Laputa and the pragmatic, amoral thinking in Balnibarbi. From there he starts his remarks on the studies of Moderns once again. His argument was the idea that poetry and ancient philosophy were the more admirable ways to gain knowledge based on the fact that with it they teach morality and decency. He further emphasized this by using authors like Homer and Aristotle in way of the ghost commentators to exemplify his idea that the scholars who write about these people only distort their images and reputations.

Swift's main idea was the fact that those who write history about others often misread and mislead for selfish reasons and that history was not one to be trusted. He based this upon the idea that history was written according to the politicians in which it served to aid. In other words, those with the most power and influence write the history.

Discussion Question 1

What does Gulliver learn from speaking with the philosophers?

Discussion Question 2

What does Gulliver decide about his own country after speaking with Julius Caesar?

Discussion Question 3

What makes Gulliver decide that he's had enough adventuring and just wants to go home?

Vocabulary

menacing, prostrate, mettlesome, occlude, outcry, revile, repellent, ribald



Part Three, Chapters 9-10

Summary

Chapter 9

Once the boat arrives to take Gulliver from Glubbdubdrib to Luggnagg he boards and heads for the island. Once he arrives he says he is Dutch since Japan is ultimately where he is heading and they only let in Dutch people to their lands, not other races. Gulliver gets caught up with legalities and red tape. He ends up having to hire an interpreter to tell the customs official everywhere he has been and who he is. Gulliver is allowed an audience with the king, but must follow customs, such as crawling to the king's pedestal and licking the dust from the ledge in front of the king's feet. This is done so if the king wants to kill someone poison is placed instead of dust and they die at his feet. Luckily the king ends up liking Gulliver and lets him live in the palace. Gulliver realizes he just wants to go home to his family.

Chapter 10

Gulliver finds the Luggnaggians to be extremely nice and chatty. They then start to talk about the social perks and eventually come to the fact that their children, when born, have a chance of being immortal. Gulliver is amazed by this and thinks it is wonderful. They ask what he would do were he a Strudlbrug, which is the name the Luggnaggians give the immortal children. Gulliver jumps right into the heart of this and starts saying how he would record everything and become really rich and have immortal friends and help the youth with his wisdom.

The Luggnaggians he is talking with tells him he is an idiot. The immortals are alive forever, but not eternally youthful. The immortals age like normal and by the time they are 80 they are legally pronounced dead and all their hard earned money goes to their children. The marriage is dissolved due to suffering on both sides. The immortal life starts off good and ends horribly as they begin to lose their teeth and minds and their bodies wither away. The language changes so frequently that the older immortals can't even communicate with the other people around them. Gulliver has second thoughts about wanting to be one since it is so horrible, but the king interjects to say the sight of an immortal cures the fear of death in everyone.

Analysis

Coming back to Swift's dislike of the Dutch chapter nine comes right back for another stab with Gulliver's imprisonment at the hands of the Luggnaggians because he's presumed Dutch. However, with the unmasking of the king's vanity and subservience of the courtiers Swift is showing the idea that there is moral and physical dangers to being so subservient to someone. Furthermore, the mercy of the king is likened to the idea that those in higher positions can play with lives on a whim.



Another satire Swift makes is on experience and the idea that “experience is the best teacher.” With the other methods of gaining knowledge being attacked now Swift started in on accumulated experience. Like many, Gulliver holds the assumption that experience brings not only wisdom but morality.

Foolishly, Gulliver voiced the dream of many humans: immortality and with it the idea that living forever will entail immense experience and wisdom. However, Swift countered this notion with his presentation of the Struldbruggs. The idea was that while they were immortal they still aged. They would wrinkle and degenerate and ultimately lose much of what made life seem beautiful by emphasizing a lack of kindness, affection, honesty, innocence, simplicity, generosity, and hope.

Discussion Question 1

What is Gulliver forced to conclude after learning about the immortals?

Discussion Question 2

What illustrates the point that Gulliver is not opposed to lying when it gets him what he wants?

Discussion Question 3

What might have possibly caused Gulliver to become homesick?

Vocabulary

effervesce, egress, ablution, languid, supposition, sycophant, transcend



Part Three, Chapter 11 - Part Four, Chapter 1

Summary

Chapter 11

The king of Luggnaggia offers Gulliver a position in his court but Gulliver wants to just go home to his family. The king understands and sets him up with a ride and a lot of gold. The boat lets him get to Japan where the King of Luggnaggia's letter of recommendation gains him an audience with the Emperor of Japan. Since Gulliver studied in a college in Holland, his Dutch is very good and he tricks the Emperor into believing he is Dutch. They speak in Dutch and Gulliver asks the Emperor to honor his Dutch customs which will not allow him to not stomp on the cross for the Luggnaggian King. The Emperor grants this but tells him to tell no one or he will have Gulliver killed. Gulliver gets on a boat and heads home by fooling them into thinking he is Dutch, once again. The boat ride is long and boring for Gulliver but he finally arrives home after five years.

Part Four, Chapter 1

Five months pass before Gulliver sets sail again. The change this time is that he is actually a captain of his own ship, The Adventurer. He was to sail and trade with people across the seas. During one voyage most of his crew die due to tropical fevers. Gulliver hires new crew members who end up mutinying and abandoning him on an island. Gulliver walks around and tries to get his bearings when he sees a hairy beast with large claws. The beast approaches him and Gulliver smacks it with the broadside of his sword, so as not to harm it. The beast screams and calls more beasts to its aid. Gulliver, frightened, seeks refuge in a tree. The beasts throw feces at him. Suddenly, a horse appears and the beasts scatter. Gulliver climbs down and the horse calls over another horse and the two seem to be conversing. They are clearly discussing Gulliver. Gulliver asks for their help in exchange for his knife and bracelet. The horse neighs, indicating Gulliver should follow him.

Analysis

Chapter 11

The whole idea behind this is Swift attempting to make the reader realize that reason is something that shouldn't be relied upon solely and exalted. In his opinion people can't depend on abstract, impersonal reason because they will lose what makes them human. Also, it is unwise to depend only on technological innovation, humane studies calling themselves 'modern', or history. No, in Swift's opinion the best guides for obtaining knowledge are poetry and ancient philosophy.



In wrapping up with part three the circle comes around to completion with Swift's attack on the Dutch. He set this up with the intention to show a contrast between them and the charitable Portuguese captain who will appear later. Also, he strikes a comparison between the Dutch and the Japanese, who were not terribly favored in this time either. While the Japanese were not nearly as malicious as the Dutch, they allow Gulliver to escape trampling a crucifix based on the knowledge that if Gulliver's 'fellow' Christians found out about it they would kill him.

Part Four, Chapter 1

Gulliver's arrival on this new island, courtesy of his mutinied crew, reveals another civilization Gulliver has yet to understand. With Gulliver's dry tone and use of great nautical detail Swift is once again showing Gulliver's unimaginative and frankly credulous character. While he reports what happens in Hovhnhnm land it is as reliable as his explanation of all of the nautical facts.

With Gulliver's description of the Yahoos the reader is privy to Swift's most effective technique of describing the familiar in new terms. While the Yahoos are familiar, what or who they are is undetermined. However, just like that, Swift shows his opinion on what they are: humans. By capturing the interest of his reader this way Swift also poses a problem. He doesn't give the idea that the Houyhnhnms are rational in the first chapter and so the reader, much like Gulliver, is left to solve the issue of what or who they are.

Discussion Question 1

What is evident about this new island that Gulliver has landed on?

Discussion Question 2

What is the author's purpose in depicting the Yahoos as animalistic?

Discussion Question 3

What indicates that not all of Gulliver's English perspectives have changed?

Vocabulary

unction, vacuous, vassal, asperity, graceless, barbaric, perusal, prattle



Part Four, Chapters 2-3

Summary

Chapter 2

Eventually, Gulliver, after following a horse he now calls 'Master Horse', arrives at a large low building where there are many horses doing everyday chores. Gulliver can't quite wrap his head around what he is seeing and wonders where the humans are that are responsible for training the horses so well. Along the back wall Gulliver sees some of the creatures from before, chained up eating roots and dead animals that have been accidentally killed. Gulliver realizes very quickly the 'Yahoos' as the horses call them, are humans, albeit hairier humans with claws. The horses seem to be confused as to what Gulliver is since he has the head of a Yahoo but not so much the body. They don't grasp that Gulliver's clothing is not a part of his skin. Eventually another horse appears drawn in a cart by four Yahoos. He is very well mannered and they all sit down to eat. Gulliver drinks some milk and the horses worry he isn't getting enough food, so he makes a bread from the oats and drinks milk. That night Gulliver sleeps next to the Yahoo stables and the house.

Chapter 3

Gulliver tries quickly to learn the Houyhnhnms language. Gulliver states it is like German but more elegant. Master Horse asks Gulliver his whereabouts and Gulliver tries to explain that he sailed to the island, but Master Horse can't grasp the idea that a Yahoo could be smart enough to build a ship, let alone sail it. One of the Master Horse's servants is brought in to be the tutor for Gulliver to help learn the Houyhnhnms language. He finds out through these teachings that the word Houyhnhnms means both "horse" and "perfect beings". Eventually, Gulliver shares that his clothes aren't a part of his skin. Gulliver is worried that this will make them fear him, or find him disgusting, but the Master Horse likes him more now that his body is completely different than other Yahoos. Gulliver explains clothing and asks to not be called a Yahoo and to keep the clothes thing a secret. Master Horse agrees. Master Horse asks how the Houyhnhnms of his land would allow such brutes to pilot vessels. Gulliver makes him promise not to get mad and tells him in his homeland the Houyhnhnms are the brutes.

Analysis

Chapter 2

The Yahoos behavior is very much disgusting, as Gulliver has to resort to threatening to try and get them away from him. However with his description of the Houyhnhnms, who are horses, shows them in an almost idyllic manner. The fact that they rescue him from the Yahoos just by showing up gives the feeling that they are almost larger than life.



By showing the extreme contrast between the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos, Swift is making his point clear that the yahoos are depraved while the horses are more civilized. He takes the stance that the Houyhnhnms are like Adam before the Fall from heaven and they are the representation of what humans should have been more like. Instead, they became like the Yahoos; filthy, smelly, belligerent and a scourge upon the planet.

Swift has positioned Gulliver midway between the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos. Firstly, Gulliver shows a quick detestation for the Yahoos and was beyond horrified upon discovering the similarities between himself and them. As such he lacks the humanity to identify that he is like a Yahoo and instead will fight to become a Houyhnhnm.

Gulliver has the physique like a Yahoo yet because he had clothes on it kept the Houyhnhnms from considering him one. In this case Gulliver's clothes act as a sort of status symbol in which Swift is saying that humans basic difference from those ape-like humanoids called Yahoos was largely artifice and that the only difference between them was the clothes in which Gulliver wore.

Another thing that leaves Gulliver at a half-way point is his diet. He cannot live on just oats alone like the Houyhnhnms and he must have variety in his diet like meats and dairy. As much as he would try to become like the Houyhnhnms in the end he just can't because of his diet and his physique.

It was Gulliver's pride that lead him to try and be a Houyhnhnm and in such Swift is alluding to the idea that a person can't become dispassionate and virtuous like a Houyhnhnm because it's futile. Just thinking that if you believe in something hard enough that it will come true will only end in frustration and disappointment.

Chapter 3

In Chapter 3 Swift continues on with his implications from the first chapter on dietary references being akin to belonging. He goes on to mention many different people who attempted various tasks in order to be closer to heaven and live in a better state of being. A Germanic scholar who 'proved' Adam and Eve spoke High Dutch, was offered as proof. Charles V who supposedly said he'd spoken to his God, friend, mistress, and horse all in different tongues. These all tie into the idea of identifying different categories of people by different means and thus, separating them.

From early on in Part Four Swift emphasizes the difference between the Houyhnhnms, Yahoos, and Gulliver and the fact that Gulliver is having a hard time trying to fit in. From the beginning he tried to separate himself from the Yahoos, which was very different from Parts One and Two where he tried to assimilate himself into the culture. However it is Swift's explicit point in defining the Houyhnhnm as the perfect being and introducing an important distinction.

Discussion Question 1

What does Master Horse find appalling about Gulliver's homeland?



Discussion Question 2

What observation does Master Horse make about strength and intelligence?

Discussion Question 3

How does Master Horse view Gulliver?

Vocabulary

precipitant, grandiose, complaisance, amenable, invective, redress



Part Four, Chapters 4-5

Summary

Chapter 4

Master Horse becomes disgusted to learn that the Houyhnhnms in Gulliver's country are the brutes and even ridden. Gulliver tells Master Horse of the poor conditions the horses are sometimes kept in and how they are used for work. Gulliver then goes through the processes that a stable owner would go through to 'break' a horse. Master Horse is outraged but admits that if the Houyhnhnms were stupid then it makes sense that they could be overrun by Yahoos since intelligence beats strength every time. Master Horse asks if the Yahoos there are more like Gulliver or like the ones here. Gulliver replies that they look similar in features to Gulliver. Master Horse sees this as a disadvantage since humans in Gulliver's land are weaker and not as protected from the elements.

Chapter 5

The Houyhnhnms ask Gulliver about England and Gulliver recounts several wars that have recently occurred. He tells of the Spanish King everyone is waiting on to die so they will know who is the next King. Master Horse says that it a good thing that with the Yahoo war-like nature that they aren't designed for easy biting. Gulliver then explains the machines of war. Master Horse is very deeply unsettled by this and also is confused about how laws are bad if they are meant to keep people safe. Gulliver then explains the corruptness of lawyers and how the law seems to favor those who put up more of a fuss than what the actual law states. Gulliver tells the Master Horse that lawyers are taught from birth to defend anything even if it's wrong. Master Horse thinks that humans should spend more time creating wise and knowledgeable people.

Analysis

Chapter 4

While the Houyhnhnm are uncorrupted by passion they are also devoid of charity. While not subject to the idea of temptation they also are very ignorant and cannot understand lying. While Swift never indicates they are perfected ideals of human nature he does suggest that they are the manifestation of innocent human nature. On the other side of that the Yahoos are very sensual and also very depraved. Furthermore, the issue with Gulliver is the fact that he falls between these extremes and has no knowledge of how to fit into the one he wants to be with.

However it's in chapter four where Swift really shows how the innocence of the Houyhnhnms contrasts with the depravity exhibited by the Yahoos, which represent Europe. By repeating the earlier discussion on lying Swift emphasizes the Houyhnhnms'



uncorrupted reasoning. However, he balances this with the discussion of clothing and Houyhnhnm vocabulary. He introduced the idea that things such as law, government, power, and punishment are really artificial. Furthermore, the Houyhnhnm have no equivalent word in their language for the word punishment, further showing their view on it.

This ties in with the discussion on clothing and the nature of it, concealing and restructuring the body's appearance. As such clothing restructures people, something Swift makes a note to show that it is the moral equivalent to the physical clothing European Yahoos are wearing. He then goes on to being satirical and attack the legislation and its power in the way that the Houyhnhnms also have no such words for law because they require no lawyers based on the fact that they have natural virtue.

Chapter 5

In Chapter 5 Swift shows satire through the use of paradoxes. On his explanation of war he gives many paradoxical explanations to contrast actual motives with those motives people and especially rulers profess to the public. He's denoting the idea that men will say one thing and do another for wars in order to excuse what they are doing. While people are not physically dangerous it is human's ability to reason that will make them dangerous and thus increase the chance for killing.

He further goes into an explanation on the fact that as humans' reasoning increases so do their immorality. From earlier there is the mention of the gunpowder and Swift applies this to law and lawyers. He places an emphasis on the fact that lawyers, while seeming to fight for justice, really do injustice by destroying any reasonable conversation, fight against knowledge, and use reason to dignify injustice.

Discussion Question 1

What indicates that the Houyhnhnms have never had a war?

Discussion Question 2

How does Gulliver explain greed to Master Horse?

Discussion Question 3

What does Master Horse think of the European Yahoos?

Vocabulary

predominant, reciprocity, outstrip, voluble, benign



Part Four, Chapters 6-7

Summary

Chapter 6

Gulliver next tries to explain greed to Master Horse using England as an example. Gulliver explains that England grows enough food to comfortably feed everyone, but others want to live better than their peers, so England exports crops and such for more things that they do not need. This leads him to talk about diseases and how doctors are profiting from the sickness of other humans, and how doctors can be used to get rid of someone you didn't like. Gulliver then goes on to talk to Master Horse about how the doctors even sometimes make people think they are sick just to sell them things they don't really need. Master Horse wants to know what a minister of state is and Gulliver explains that he is a man who is useless but is still better than others.

Chapter 7

The more Gulliver talks about the Yahoos from his homeland the more he realizes he never wants to leave Houynhnhnm island. After hearing everything Gulliver has said, the Master Horse gives his conclusion on mankind. Master Horse states that even though Yahoos cut their nails and have grown soft in England, they are all essentially the same at their core. They hate like no other animal and engage in such depravities that no other animal even begins to think about. Master Horse goes on to say humans like to hoard shiny rocks but no one knows why, and they will think they are sick even though they aren't. Master Horse admits the European Yahoos have more art and class, but at their essence they are still Yahoos.

Analysis

Chapter 6

In keeping with the notion of stigmatizing gunpowder, now money is in the lime light. Swift advocates the idea that money is only for people to satisfy their indecency and widen their ways for misusing reason. He then goes on to explain that private indecencies are also not a viable excuse to make money. To him any indecency, private or not, is really public.

Swift then segways into talking on diet and how it is symbolic of public indecencies that are cajoled to by money. Sums of money allow people to eat high end food in copious amounts which is really unnecessary and undermines health. It shows a status symbol that is valued among people and thus is paralleled with the idea of the unwholesomeness symbolic of the Yahoos.



Chapter six is arguably the most complex and unified in the entire book. The way in which Swift starts on the idea of money and luxury before linking it around to health and the morality of it all alludes to the idea that as a whole nation subscribing to this way of life it will inevitably alter the way the world is for years to come.

Chapter 7

In Chapter 7 Swift once again sets up a detailed comparison between the Houyhnhnms' Yahoos and the European Yahoos. He outlines the flaws of the Europeans morality in very vivid fashion such as their love of collecting stones to that of collecting money. He then mentions that they are greedy and fight amongst themselves. He mentions how they are drunkards and embarrassments.

However, for all of their faults the Houyhnhnms' Yahoos are better by nature. Their flaws had been exacerbated by the European Yahoos' increase and intensity due to the perversion of their reasoning. Much of this chapter is also spent exploring pride, mainly in Gulliver, and the fact that it was this pride that made him work so hard to aspire to be a Houyhnhnm.

Discussion Question 1

What would lead Master Horse to make the conclusions he did about mankind?

Discussion Question 2

Compare the Houyhnhnms' culture to that of English culture.

Discussion Question 3

How has Gulliver changed from how he originally was at the beginning of the novel?

Vocabulary

bedlam, habitable, regimen, vicarious, deviltry



Part Four, Chapters 8-9

Summary

Chapter 8

Gulliver has been living among the Houynhnms for three years. He has been given the opportunity to observe the Yahoos by Master Horse, as long as Gulliver has a guard. One day while Gulliver is trying to swim, a female Yahoo tries to seduce him. Gulliver yells and Master Horse's guards scare off the female. Gulliver knows that he is a Yahoo now. Gulliver finally discusses the social behaviors of the Houynhnms. There is no such things as opinions to the Houynhnms' culture; why argue about something you do not absolutely know to be true. And likewise in their culture one does not seek to dominate others with superior knowledge. Houynhnms are married by the parent's arrangement and remain always faithful. Each household is to only have two foals: one boy, and one girl. This is to help with overpopulating. Once a year they all come together as a nation to make sure everyone has all they actually need. Should a family have two boys and another have two girls they will trade so they will have the set gender limit.

Chapter 9

During the three years Gulliver stays in Houynhnm land he's a part of one of their massive assemblies that only happens every four years. The gathering is so they can come together and talk about events and problems. An age-old debate pops up pertaining to the Yahoos: should they be killed off or allowed to live? Many want the Yahoos dead simply because they are hateful and lustful creatures, while others believe that they are their responsibility since they tamed them from the originals who washed up on the shores many years ago. Master Horse steps up and tells them all of Gulliver and how he is a civilized Yahoo. Then he talks about how the Houynhnms are slaves in Gulliver's country and how Yahoos in that land castrate male horses to make them less aggressive. Many think this is a fine idea to impose upon the Yahoos.

Analysis

Chapter 8

The Houynhnms are a breed of animal vastly different for the Yahoos or the Europeans. As it was mentioned earlier they are rational and live in a utopic society. Many of the details were influenced from Plato and More but in true Swift fashion he's quick to point out that utopias such as these were only suited for fully rational and innocent creatures. In other words utopias were suitable for those who didn't need to be cured.



The fact that Swift spends so much time reiterating the difference between the Houyhnhnm and the Yahoos serves to show to duality to humankind. In the beginning many start out as Houyhnhnm; innocent. However as time goes on they go through life and start to become more like Yahoos, their innocence being stripped from them. Gulliver is shown to be in the middle of this facing the dilemma of who he really is.

Swift continued his assault on humanity through representation of the Yahoos. His most obvious example is the constant debate over their status. There are many arguments for extermination of Yahoos based on the fact that they are filthy, deformed, malicious, ect. They are looked upon as degenerate. However Gulliver is the one that advocates the fact that Yahoos are only rounded up into herds because the Houyhnhnms had need of others to do other laborious tasks in their society.

This is basically alluding to the fact that Yahoos are unnatural beasts and are hated by every other thing around. Swift also makes a stab at the philosophers and their ideas of progress when he suggested Yahoos are only a little further off the road to degeneration than Europeans.

Chapter 9

Despite the fact that Gulliver cannot stand the Yahoos and offers a way to exterminate them the point is still made that he is a Yahoo. That begs the question of why is he acting like this? The answer is his pride. Because of his pride he is unwilling to see how alike he really is and instead seeks to turn away from the ugly side to human nature. In his opinion the alien, cold and rational horses are the better race to try and be like.

As seen previous Gulliver's pride has been his undoing. His unwillingness to see that his is a Yahoo leads him to try and identify with being a horse. The only problem is that despite how alien the Houyhnhnms really are he feels the Yahoos are the aliens. Therefore, he starts separating himself from his depraved cousins and is driven to near madness - all because of his pride.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss the arguments for keeping or getting rid of the Yahoos.

Discussion Question 2

Why was Gulliver's leaving inevitable?

Discussion Question 3

How far does responsibility for others extend, based on the discussion at the assembly?

Vocabulary

diffidence, insensible, disarrange, ceremonious, moderator



Part Four, Chapter 10

Summary

Chapter 10

One day Master Horse comes to Gulliver, who is content and very happy, and tells him that he must leave Houyhnhnm land. Gulliver faints at this, and when he wakes up Master Horse tells him it's not anything he has done but simply what he is, a smart Yahoo. Many fear that being smart will cause an uprising among the other Yahoos. Gulliver is given two months to build a boat, so he finds a small island off the coast of Houyhnhnm Land, and then sets sail. Master Horse tells him that he will be very sorry to see Gulliver leave. Gulliver cries when the day for him to go arrives, and he kisses Master Horse's hoof. It is a teary goodbye for them both.

Analysis

Swift sent out a warning of this with his phrase "Devoted to destruction" and exemplifying this when the Houyhnhnms sent Gulliver away. It's the idea that excess pride and rejecting charity and humility will lead to a lonely existence full of suffering. Essentially at this point Gulliver had rejected the society he came from and tried to assimilate into the 'perfection of nature' with the Houyhnhnms. In essence, though, he fails to see that there is one undeniable maxim that will forever separate him from where he wants to be "once a Yahoo, always a Yahoo".

Discussion Question 1

How has Gulliver's time with the horses changed him?

Discussion Question 2

Why might Gulliver's time with the horses have changed him for the worse?

Discussion Question 3

What is Swift's overall message in this chapter?

Vocabulary

transience, nondescript, exemplary, caustic, cede



Part Four, Chapter 11-12

Summary

Chapter 11

When Gulliver is sent from the Houyhnhnms' Land he finds a small Island where he stumbles upon naked men sitting around a campfire. Gulliver is disgusted by mankind and tries to row away fast, but they shoot him with a poisoned arrow that leaves a scar. He manages to paddle away, and soon he spots a European sail. He rows back to the Island because he hates the European Yahoos more than the men around the campfire.

The Europeans land on the island anyway and find Gulliver. He tells them he is English and they take him to the captain, Don Pedro de Mendez. They decide to take him to Portugal, and on the way there Gulliver tries to kill himself several times. Eventually Gulliver is convinced he has to go home, though the thought of that grieves his soul. Gulliver's family is excited to see him and Gulliver hates the thought that he brought two Yahoos into the world. Five years pass since he has been back home, and the reader sees that even after all of that time Gulliver still can't stand to live with his family. Gulliver goes out and buys two horses and keeps company with them. He talks to them for hours on end.

Chapter 12

Gulliver states his experiences are true and his intention was to show the world the example of the Houyhnhnms and their far superior society. The English state tells Gulliver to tell them of the lands so they may have an opportunity to invade. Gulliver goes through the list of the places he has seen and rationalizes none are to be invaded because they do not wish to be. Taking land from them by force is cruel. After five years of being home, Gulliver can finally let his wife sit at the far end of the dinner table. He doesn't hate Yahoos, he realizes one day. He hates that they are prideful of things they should not be prideful of. They are prideful of the good things they have done instead of just doing them to do them. Houyhnhnms are born good and know no other way, while Yahoos are prideful and only do good things in order to elevate themselves.

Analysis

Chapter 11

With Chapter 11 Gulliver's pride is shown to have been the factor alienating him from his own kind. He now is almost no different from the savages who shot arrows at him early on, as exemplified by his treatment of Pedro de Mendez, a respectable christian. He cannot see the kindness of the man and instead treats him as though he is little better than a Yahoo and as such believes a Yahoo impossible of showing virtue.



In reality this Chapter shows how depraved Gulliver has become. Swift has shown his own take on the humans' basic nature, and the fact that Gulliver is by nature a Yahoo, not a Houyhnhnm. He is not innocent nor rational. Despite the fact that he is a European Yahoo Gulliver still uses his reason to magnify his worst trait, his pride. By allowing his pride to swell, and reasoning that he is better than the Yahoos on the island Gulliver has basically degraded himself below them.

In essence, by Gulliver rejecting his own species and throwing away his nature, he has become a madman trying to find a way to change his who he is just by thinking, or reasoning; hence this is why he has failed, Swift suggests.

Chapter 12

In the end Swift returns back to his normal, ironic self. Gulliver swears that he is saying the truth and denies that he ever used political allusions at all, which is a lie. To make this joke even clearer Swift makes Gulliver quote Sinon, who despite swearing he is being truthful is in fact completely lying. The last view of Gulliver is of him still attempting to become a Houyhnhnm. The scene comes across as ridiculous, showing that pride and arrogance will be mankind's undoing. The book concludes in a deep pit of irony; Gulliver ended up becoming the best example of the very pride he claimed to condemn.

Discussion Question 1

What indicates that Gulliver is not adjusting to being home?

Discussion Question 2

What ironic request does the English government make of Gulliver about the islands he explored?

Discussion Question 3

What has Gulliver learned as a result of all of his travels? Is he better, or worse off, than he was initially?

Vocabulary

apprehensible, formidable, equine, furtherance, harbinger



Characters

Gulliver

Gulliver is the main protagonist in the story, Gulliver's Travels. Gulliver is a man who loves the ocean and all the adventure it brings. Gulliver ends up on four separate occasions lost at sea (capsizing, mutiny, stranded, etc..) where he washes up on unknown islands and meeting new cultures. Gulliver has a family back home in England and constantly leaves them. On the last adventure he plans to never go home.

Gulliver fancies himself an above average human being, but as the book progresses he finds out that that doesn't mean anything if one is morally corrupt. Each new society teaches him something new until he realizes humans are, by nature, flawed. This knowledge really ends up messing with him when he is forcibly returned home from his last adventure.

Gulliver has two main things he is good at: watching people and using his mind to free himself from trouble. Being from a middle-class family he has a relatively flexible social standing, so he can do pretty much whatever he likes in relation to work. Gulliver's main driving force behind traveling is to watch and observe new people and to learn new cultures and languages. His drive for knowledge delivers him from many sticky situations.

Mary Burton

Mary is Gulliver's wife, and she is not ever developed more than a few details. The reader learns that she married Gulliver, had children with him, and waits for him to come home....constantly. Mary never has a role more than being a symbol of home in the book, and the fact is that Gulliver keeps leaving because he doesn't want to be home.

Master Bates

Master Bates is the man who Gulliver trained under and learned his trade from. The man was responsible for getting Gulliver started in his career, but after Bates died the business went south. This name is meant to be a joke and high satire by the author.

The Lilliputians

These are the first race of beings Gulliver makes contact with after he washes up on their shore and they capture him. These people are tiny, only 6 inches tall. Everything on the island is in direct proportion to the Lilliputians. The town is run by an Emperor with his heads of state. Gulliver has more in common with them than he wants to admit.



The Lilliputians are not governed by any rational means and always seem to be plotting against each-other.

Lilliputian Emperor

The Emperor seems to be a hesitant, but nice guy. The only issue is that he is easily manipulated by his heads of state. Only after Gulliver refuses to kill the neighboring town does the Emperor start to grow to hate him. The Emperor is a war fueled man who wants to dominate everything. This is a satirical statement against King George (the King of England at the time the book was written).

Redresal

Redresal is the Lilliputian Royal Advisor to the Emperor, and is a self-appointed friend to Gulliver. He speaks on Gulliver's behalf when they plan to kill him. Redresal goes for the kinder alternative, which is to blind him and starve him.

Brobdingnagians

These are the polar opposites of the Lilliputians. These people are giants and Gulliver is now the tiny one. The King of the Brobdingnagians treats him as he treated the Lilliputians' ideas and politics - as a joke. Gulliver is very vulnerable here in Brobdingnagia and gets into danger from doing simple things.

Laputians

These are a race of odd people, as they always have their heads cocked to one side and their eyes are never on what is in front of them. The Laputians are very adept at math and science and are always pondering. Even though they are so gifted in math and science they don't apply it to anything practical. The women are very loose when it comes to sexuality since the men are always way too busy with learning. The women have affairs left and right with visitors who enter the city. The city floats thanks to a large magnet.

Houyhnhnms

The Houyhnhnms are a race of horses that are an advanced race. The humans on the island are called Yahoos. This society is perfect in Gulliver's eyes and forces him to step back and look at humanity to see it for what it truly is. Gulliver is mortified. The horses have their own language that Gulliver learns. He stays there for many years and plans to stay. The Houyhnhnms force him to leave due to the fact they are afraid he will cause an uprising of the general population of Yahoos.

Yahoos

These are manlike creatures, but with more hair and longer claws. They are treated as pets and beasts of burden in the Houyhnhnms society.

Master Horse

Master horse is the horse that Gulliver first meets when he is being attacked by the Yahoos. He is a grey horse and very intelligent. Master Horse is the one who opens Gulliver's eyes to the cruelty that is humanity and gets Gulliver to start doubting his own beliefs. Eventually, Master Horse meets with his council and they kick Gulliver out of Houyhnhnm.



Symbols and Symbolism

Gulliver

Though he is the main character, he, as well as almost all of the other characters are also representative and used symbolically. Lemuel Gulliver is representative of a person who has found enlightenment. At the beginning of the novel, he is very concerned with his appearance and his social standing. However, by the end of the book, he could care less about money, and doesn't worry about what he is wearing at all (much to the embarrassment of his wife).

Mary Burton

Mary Burton is the woman that Gulliver marries. However, she is never fully developed within the confines of the novel. She is symbolic of hearth and home. This is reinforced by her pregnancies, the children playing about her feet, the cooking that she does, and worrying about her husband.

Lilliputians

The Lilliputians represents England. Swift is making satirical references to their politics, mannerisms, and belief systems. When he discusses the high heeled versus low heeled parties, he is really depicting the Tory and the Whig political parties in England.

The Emperor

The Emperor of Lilliput is also a satirical play on the ruling monarch during Swift's time: King George I. Like the Lilliputian Emperor, King George was known to engage in war simply because it seemed to alleviate his boredom. He hated the Tories and took every opportunity to berate them and discredit them (this is where the high heel versus low heel comes from). Additionally, King George was not considered to be a very attractive individual, and this Swift also works into his commentary.

Redresal

Redresal is symbolic of the warped perceptions of those who work for the very rich and powerful. Redresal argues that it would be a better alternative to simply blind Gulliver rather than kill him. Redresal believes he's being kind, when, in reality, he's as cruel as his King.



High Heels/Low Heels

These are the political parties in Lilliput, but are really symbolic of the Tories and the Whigs, which were the predominant parties during Swift's time.

Blufescue

This country represents France. Swift clearly favors France, since this is the country that Gulliver flees to when the Lilliputians decide that they are going to blind him. He depicts the Blufescu leader as level headed, moral, ethical, and kind. He values peace.

Brobdingnagians

The Brobdingnagians represent humanity, larger than life. Gulliver is repulsed by the simple biology of them, which he sees magnified because of their size. Whether it is the Farmer's Wife's breast, or the hairy mole on one of the people there, it is clear that Swift is stating that human beings shouldn't be so cocky about their own beauty in comparison to other creatures.

The Brobdingnagian Dwarf

This dwarf is still taller than Gulliver, and represents the human tendency to be cruel to those who are considered weaker.

Struldbrugs

These are immortal people living in Luggnagg. Swift uses them to represent the selfishness of mankind, in that Gulliver doesn't understand why the Luggnagg people would impose such stiff penalties on those who choose to be immortal. However, it is because Gulliver himself is vain and thinks that nothing around him would change, and that he would be the only one to change and grow more intelligent with the passing years. He would deprive others of the chance of discovery. The greed and selfish nature of mankind are exemplified through this group of people.

Lord Mundi

Lord Mundi lives in Laputa and represents the fact that Swift believes that mankind can act sensible. Mundi's largest characteristic is that he doesn't quickly jump to adopt new fads. He carefully weighs their contribution, and then makes a decision. Just because something 'could' be done doesn't mean that it 'should' be done, in other words.



Glubbudrib

This is the place where Gulliver talks to the dead. The ghosts that he talks with represent the notion that all tyrants must be disposed of, and that history, or the report of it, can't actually be trusted.

Houyhnhnms

These horse people are representative of the type of people who pursue reason at any or all costs. While they live in a Utopia of sorts, they also seem to be without any highs or lows, just steady mediocrity.

Yahoos

The Yahoos are the beastlike humans that live on the same island as the Houyhnhnms. They represent class and social divisions.



Settings

England

Though Gulliver is from England, he is rarely depicted there. The reader only learns this when he has tired of being onshore and is ready to set off on another adventure away from England's shores. England is where Gulliver has his home with his wife and family. This is also where he had a fairly successful medical practice until his partner died.

Lilliput

The Isle of Lilliput is an island where the Lilliputian people live. These people are only six inches tall and very skilled with machinery. Part one takes place here as Gulliver learns their language and customs.

Brobdingnag

This is the setting for all of part 2. The inhabitants are all giants and Gulliver is tiny. This is by far the most dangerous place Gulliver visits just simply because of his size. The land is bordered by ocean on three sides and inaccessible mountains on the other. The land is ruled by a monarchy.

Laputa

Laputa is a floating island tethered to the continents below by a large magnet in its center that controls where and how high the island floats. Part 3 is here on the island with the Laputian people. They are all odd and never focus on things that are practical. They are skilled in Math and Science but never apply it to practical uses.

Glubbudribbia

Glubbudribbia is an island that Gulliver visits while waiting to leave Laputa. This is a secretive city inhabited by a race of Sorcerers. The governor can raise the dead but only for a day and do it again for that specific dead person for three months after. He lets Gulliver talk to any ghost. Gulliver talks to great men of history.

Houyhnhnm

Houyhnhnm is where Gulliver fell in love with a people and its culture. This island is run by advanced horses that teach Gulliver how evil humanity is and also how flawed.

Gulliver spends Part 4 in this setting and in the timeline of the book he spends 5 years living with them. He never plans to leave but they send him away.



Themes and Motifs

Lying

Lying is a very prominent theme in this book due to Gulliver having to lie on a constant basis to stay alive or out of harm's way. However, many of the cultures Gulliver meets do not understand the concept or need for lying, and many don't even have words for it in their own tongues. Gulliver lies to the Houyhnhnms about his clothing being a part of his body so they won't strip him. The Houyhnhnms don't even have a word for lies and Gulliver uses this to his advantage to avoid getting hurt. Gulliver explains to the Master Horse that lawyers lie to confuse people. Gulliver also finds out when talking to the sorcerer's ghosts of famous people that many who formerly held famous positions of power lied their way to the top.

What seems to come from the theme of Lying is that those who are truly in power have no need to lie because they can simply dispose of anyone who is in their way. This is why many of the islands Gulliver lands on don't have any concept of lying. However, it is evident that Gulliver has no problem inventing lies at the drop of a hat. This does not make him the most reliable of narrators. Additionally, it is the one of the key aspects that keeps him from being accepted into the Houyhnhnms' way of life, of being allowed to remain on the island. His ideas challenge the previously held concept about Yahoos and it is difficult to explain.

When Gulliver finds that he is about to be asked to leave, what in his mind is paradise, he invents all sorts of reasons that this should not be done. But, ironically, in doing so, places the last nail in his coffin as Master Horse can tell that he is being deceitful, and thus proving once and for all that he is, at his core, just like the rest of the Yahoos.

Likewise, Gulliver learns from the ghosts of dead leaders that lying was what often got them into power; that deceit served its purpose as a tool. However, Gulliver is quick to state that those who use lying to get what they want are often viewed with contempt. This is specially true of lawyers, according to Swift (and Gulliver). With the island of the Houyhnhnms, the concept of lying is met with consternation because the horses cannot fathom why someone would lie when it goes against all reason.

Class and Society

During the trips Gulliver has had he meets many different cultures vastly different than his own. When Gulliver first left he was set in the ways he was raised with and thought it odd to act, think or believe anything differently. Each place taught him a little more humility and he was able to see his own culture with unburdened sight. Since Gulliver was an outsider to the cultures he visited, he was taught the language and the beliefs of the people. He found that nearly all of the societies had no knowledge or words for lying or deceit. This seriously made him ponder his own society. When he stayed with the



Houyhnhnms, he learned a better way of life and found out that the things he originally found to be normal were actually very barbaric to the Houyhnhnms. Because of this Gulliver began to hate human beings.

Gulliver, however, is not as noble as he would like the reader to believe, initially. Consider that he believes that there should be a distinction between a servants and the nobles. Gulliver, hailing from a middle class family, would have had the opportunity to marry up, had he so chosen to. However, there is the depiction of the very wealthy nobility as being out of touch with reality, their people, and their own humanity, in some instances.

Gulliver speaks to the fact that noble families should not marry down because it removes from their bloodline the very essence of what made them special to begin with. Therefore, Swift, through Gulliver is basically saying that everyone should know their place in society and that this struggle to better oneself is a pointless - and possibly disastrous - pursuit.

Likewise, Swift offers up the idea of a utopia existing, or the perfect community. What Swift illustrates with this nod to several famous utopias such as Thomas More's Utopia, is that ultimately utopias favor the collective over the individual's rights, and this is seen exemplified in the way that the Lilliputians raise their children collectively, instead of allowing the parents to do so.

Gender

Gulliver talks poorly about most women in the books. He talks of them as carriers of disease and prostitutes that bring down royal families. Many of the cultures he visits do not support his seeming contradictory hatred for females. Gulliver, himself, argues it is necessary to have the mother of your child remain illiterate and uneducated. Many of the cultures he lives with have equal educational and working rights for both genders. Gulliver reasons that 'reason' and 'sexual desire' are not compatible qualities and since he relates sexual desires to females he sees them as not being able to reason as well as men. This is contradicted in the Houyhnhnms society where they are taught to have both.

In general, Swift is not kind where women are concerned. With the exception of poor, long suffering Mary (Gulliver's Wife) most of the other women that are seen in his travels are often shown to be sexually charged, disease carriers, and incapable of having reason or rational thought. He goes on to say that the downfall of most men of noble birth or virtue is through their alliance with a woman.

Most of the women shown in this story are vacuous, vain, and conniving. The Queen who places Gulliver in a carrying box and puts him in the care of her maids, in particular, offers insight into Swift's view towards women and how they spend their time focusing on things that are of little importance. His portrayal shows women to be



more concerned with worldly and superficial things while the men surrounding them are given to deeper thought and the desire to better the world around them.

Swift's depiction of Mary is rather one sided and one dimensional. She is shown to be virtuous, hard working, coming from a good family who provided an ample dowry, she cooks, and she is fertile. These seem to be the characteristics that Swift believes should typify the female of the species.

Politics

Gulliver seems to be of the notion that more politics within a country means they are more corrupt. As seen in several of his adventures the Lilliputians were very politically driven and eventually ran him out of town due to corrupt people holding high power. The only society that didn't have a huge political undertone was the Houyhnhnms While they had a loose political stance, it was only for the benefit of all Houyhnhnms, since they had no literal concept of deceit.

In short, Gulliver (and thus Swift) detests politics. He offers many examples of how those in power use their political power and position to levy jobs for their family members and friends, often placing inept people in power simply because of who they are related to. Secondly, he illustrates that those in power often exploit those who have less power for their own gain, mainly because they can get away with it, and also because they enjoy the sense of power it gives them.

He introduces the idea of 'might versus right' in many of the various cultures that his character, Gulliver, visits. The advantage of 'might' is shown when he is the giant living in Lilliput, but when he is in Brobdingnag, he is the smallest. In both cases the physical ability of someone to place others under a constant state of fear is shown to be an ineffective way to govern. It eventually leads to rebellion and war.

Swift also pokes fun at the governments of his day in that he states that those who often come into power are the least qualified for the job, having no prior training that would make them fit for the post. Swift uses the islands of Lilliput, Luggnagg, and Laputa as extreme examples of power corrupting absolutely and what the consequences are to the poor people who must live under such rule.

Morality and Ethics

In the novel, Gulliver's Travels, a great deal of time and description is given to illustrate the characteristics of good morality and bad morality, good ethics versus bad ethics. HE does this to combat the rampant corruption that swift saw occurring in his society at the time. He talks against war mongering, and those who pursue lavish luxury items at the expense of others.

As an example of a morally and ethically corrupt society, the reader only needs to revisit Lilliput, or Luggnagg. Both have despots for Kings, and both have very little



compunction about ending someone's life, or taking their property. They are depicted as having very little in the way of noble characteristics which would forge and maintain a living working society, and most often are shown to be shallow, egotistic individuals.

The issue of morality is featured in the egg controversy between Lilliput and Blefuscu. Their beliefs are not just cultural but are based upon their religious and moral issues based on each country's bible. Each considers the other an infidel and clearly justifies war. Swift shows the absurdity of the claim of moral justice stating that it is just a pretty wrapping that rulers use when in the end it always comes down to a show of force, regardless of the reasoning behind it.

Comparatively, when one looks at the examples of Blufescue, Brobdingnagians, and the Houyhnhnms, Swift is clearly indicating that a good leader, a moral and ethical leader, is one that takes the time to actually know their people, who will walk among them, fight beside them, and don't waste their people's lives on the pursuit of things of little consequence. Those kinds who are friendly and caring seem to be depicted as the most capable of societies, ones that will create a virtuous society that will inspire its citizens.



Styles

Point of View

The point of view for *Gulliver's Travels* is told from the first person narrative by Lemuel Gulliver, a ship's surgeon from England. However, it becomes apparent that his narration isn't always truthful or reliable. He is often more than a little naive and doesn't see situations for what they actually are.

Gulliver's viewpoint is quite limited and made moreso often because Gulliver doesn't understand what is happening and how completely absurd the situation and his perspective is at the time. When he is trying to convince several of the islands of the wisdom of having weapons of war, he completely believes that he is doing the rulers there a favor by telling them all about it. And yet, at the end of the novel, he develops a broader understanding and becomes less enchanted by the human race. He wants humans to be as perfect as some of the kingdoms that he encountered, but realizes that this will never happen. This leaves him quite disillusioned.

Language and Meaning

The language utilized in *Gulliver's Travels* is the language of the time (1700s) which means that while it is written in English, the way in which the sentences are constructed may make comprehension difficult for moderate to lower level readers. There are the inclusion of many words that have fallen from popular use, and many words that have been created by the author for the various fictional islands where the protagonist lands.

Told in first person, the reader may often determine the meaning of many of the words by reading it in context, and therefore it is accessible to upper level readers. The vocabulary used is appropriate for high school and college students, and would pose no problem to those students who are avid readers.

The story, itself, is layered with rich metaphors, extravagant imagery, and sparkling dialogue. However, there are many social and sexual situations that many may not wish to have younger readers exposed to.

Structure

The structure of *Gulliver's Travels* is divided into four sections/parts. Each part serves as a next step in Gulliver's evolution and eventual 'awakening' to mankind's greatest weaknesses, and their utmost potential should they choose to embrace it. The first two sections tend to outline all of the foibles that make human beings often seem ridiculous. This allows Swift the ability to quickly follow those two sections with sections that offer opposing principles and ethics for governance. He also takes aim at organizations and philanthropic endeavors when not meant in earnest. Lastly, he offers up a critique of

enlightenment, as they knew it during his day and age. He questions whether science and math are really the path to universal knowledge, and offers in the very last sections a critique of humanity's very nature and the perspective on aging.



Quotes

But I confess, that, after I had been a little too copious in talking of my own beloved country, of our trade and wars by sea and land, of our schisms in religion, and parties in the state; the prejudices of [the Brobdingnagian King's] education prevailed so far, that he could not forbear taking me up in his right hand, and stroking me gently with the other, after a hearty fit of laughing, asked me, "whether I was a Whig or Tory?" Then turning to his first minister, who waited behind him with a white staff, near as tall as the mainmast of the Royal Sovereign, he observed "how contemptible a thing was human grandeur, which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as I.

-- Gulliver (Part Two, Chapter 3 paragraph 9)

Importance: This is important because Gulliver is shown that his political parties are just as ridiculous to the Brobdingnagian King as the Lilliputian's politics were to Gulliver. This takes a jab at the idiosyncrasies of the English governmental system at the time and how ridiculous the warring parties were.

His majesty, in another audience, was at the pains to recapitulate the sum of all I had spoken; compared the questions he made with the answers I had given; then taking me into his hands, and stroking me gently, delivered himself in these words, which I shall never forget, nor the manner he spoke them in: "My little friend Grildrig, you have made a most admirable panegyric upon your country; you have clearly proved, that ignorance, idleness, and vice, are the proper ingredients for qualifying a legislator; that laws are best explained, interpreted, and applied, by those whose interest and abilities lie in perverting, confounding, and eluding them. I observe among you some lines of an institution, which, in its original, might have been tolerable, but these half erased, and the rest wholly blurred and blotted by corruptions.

-- Gulliver (Part Two, Chapter 6 paragraph 18)

Importance: The King is telling Gulliver his opinion on the politics in England based on the information that Gulliver had given him. This is important because the King points out that in the English culture being qualified as a government official is not based on knowledge of the job or tasks but simply on how well a man can lie and cheat his way to the top.

But great allowances should be given to a king, who lives wholly secluded from the rest of the world, and must therefore be altogether unacquainted with the manners and customs that most prevail in other nations: the want of which knowledge will ever produce many prejudices, and a certain narrowness of thinking, from which we, and the politer countries of Europe, are wholly exempted. And it would be hard indeed, if so remote a prince's notions of virtue and vice were to be offered as a standard for all mankind.

-- Gulliver (Part Two, Chapter 7 paragraph 2)

Importance: Gulliver is musing to himself about how the King could possibly know what intricacies go on within the government in England since he has been secluded. This is



important because this frame of mind is changed later. By being separated from humanity they didn't grow into beings of greed or hatred. Seclusion saved them.

The king was struck with horror at the description I had given of those terrible engines, and the proposal I had made. "He was amazed, how so impotent and groveling an insect as I could entertain such inhuman ideas, and in so familiar a manner, as to appear wholly unmoved at all the scenes of blood and desolation which I had painted as the common effects of those destructive machines; whereof," he said, "some evil genius, enemy to mankind, must have been the first contriver. As for himself, he protested, that although few things delighted him so much as new discoveries in art or in nature, yet he would rather lose half his kingdom, than be privy to such a secret; which he commanded me, as I valued any life, never to mention any more.

-- Gulliver (Part Two, Chapter 7 paragraph 4)

Importance: Gulliver describes the war machines used in the battles in England. The King is appalled with how calm and so unmoved by the blood shed Gulliver is that the king commands him to never speak of the machines again. This shows how far humanity has gone to be desensitized to violence, so much so that it just becomes normal.

It is first agreed and settled among them, what suspected persons shall be accused of a plot; then, effectual care is taken to secure all their letters and papers, and put the owners in chains. These papers are delivered to a set of artists, very dexterous in finding out the mysterious meanings of words, syllables, and letters: for instance, they can discover a close stool, to signify a privy council; a flock of geese, a senate; a lame dog, an invader.

-- Gulliver (Part 3, Chapter 6 paragraph 12)

Importance: Gulliver explains to the Lilliputians that people back home would sue the state and the state would have artists forge letters to accuse people of wrong doings they hadn't committed and lock them away. This is another stab at how the judicial system at the time is failing.

Golbasto Momarem Evlame Gurdilo Shefin Mully Uilly Gue, most mighty Emperor of Lilliput, delight and terror of the universe, whose dominions extend five thousand blustrugs (about twelve miles in circumference) to the extremities of the globe; monarch of all monarchs, taller than the sons of men; whose feet press down to the centre, and whose head strikes against the sun; at whose nod the princes of the earth shake their knees; pleasant as the spring, comfortable as the summer, fruitful as autumn, dreadful as winter: his most sublime majesty proposes to the man-mountain, lately arrived at our celestial dominions, the following articles, which, by a solemn oath, he shall be obliged to perform.

-- Lilliputians (Part One, Chapter 3 paragraph 9)

Importance: This is important because it shows how narrow minded the Lilliputians are and how written histories can be tailored to flatter or even deceive the later generations.



Nothing angered and mortified me so much as the queen's dwarf; who being of the lowest stature that was ever in that country (for I verily think he was not full thirty feet high), became so insolent at seeing a creature so much beneath him, that he would always affect to swagger and look big as he passed by me in the queen's antechamber.
-- Gulliver (Part 2, Chapter 3 paragraph 11)

Importance: This makes fun of how many people will always make fun and berate smaller beings to make themselves feel better or superior.

This is the court style, and I found it to be more than matter of form: for, upon my admittance two days after my arrival, I was commanded to crawl upon my belly, and lick the floor as I advanced; but, on account of my being a stranger, care was taken to have it made so clean, that the dust was not offensive. However, this was a peculiar grace, not allowed to any but persons of the highest rank, when they desire an admittance.
-- Gulliver (Part Three, Chapter 9 paragraph 4)

Importance: This makes a point to address what outsiders will do to follow another's customs. Licking the floor is not normally acceptable anywhere, but in Luggnagg it is a common practice when meeting a king.

The nurse, to quiet her babe, made use of a rattle which was a kind of hollow vessel filled with great stones, and fastened by a cable to the child's waist: but all in vain; so that she was forced to apply the last remedy by giving it suck. I must confess no object ever disgusted me so much as the sight of her monstrous breast, which I cannot tell what to compare with, so as to give the curious reader an idea of its bulk, shape, and colour. It stood prominent six feet, and could not be less than sixteen in circumference. The nipple was about half the bigness of my head, and the hue both of that and the dug, so varied with spots, pimples, and freckles, that nothing could appear more nauseous.
-- Gulliver (Part 2, Chapter 1 paragraph 11)

Importance: Gulliver's distaste for women is continued with this quote. He states that seeing a breast that huge up close was too much and the beauty of such an organ was lost on him because at that size he could see every imperfection.

That which gave me most uneasiness among these maids of honour (when my nurse carried me to visit then) was, to see them use me without any manner of ceremony, like a creature who had no sort of consequence: for they would strip themselves to the skin, and put on their smocks in my presence, while I was placed on their toilet, directly before their naked bodies, which I am sure to me was very far from being a tempting sight, or from giving me any other emotions than those of horror and disgust: their skins appeared so coarse and uneven.
-- Gulliver (Part 2, Chapter 5 paragraph 7)

Importance: What really bothers him is that they don't consider him a man at all since they urinate and undress in front of him. This really hits his ego hard.



I began last week to permit my wife to sit at dinner with me, at the farthest end of a long table; and to answer (but with the utmost brevity) the few questions I asked her. Yet, the smell of a Yahoo continuing very offensive, I always keep my nose well stopped with rue, lavender, or tobacco leaves. And, although it be hard for a man late in life to remove old habits, I am not altogether out of hopes, in some time, to suffer a neighbour Yahoo in my company, without the apprehensions I am yet under of his teeth or his claws.

-- Gulliver (Part Four, Chapter 10 paragraph 12)

Importance: This quote shows how assimilated he had been to the culture of the Houynhnms, and how difficult he finds it trying to fit back in to his own home.

The two horses came up close to me, looking with great earnestness upon my face and hands. The gray steed rubbed my hat all round with his right fore-hoof, and discomposed it so much that I was forced to adjust it better by taking it off and settling it again; whereat, both he and his companion (who was a brown bay) appeared to be much surprised: the latter felt the lappet of my coat, and finding it to hang loose about me, they both looked with new signs of wonder. He stroked my right hand, seeming to admire the softness and colour; but he squeezed it so hard between his hoof and his pastern, that I was forced to roar; after which they both touched me with all possible tenderness. They were under great perplexity about my shoes and stockings, which they felt very often, neighing to each other, and using various gestures, not unlike those of a philosopher, when he would attempt to solve some new and difficult phenomenon.

-- Gulliver (Part Four, Chapter 1 paragraph 7)

Importance: This is the first time that Gulliver encounters the Houynhnms. His perspective at this point is that they are just horses.