

Satire vs. Parody

from *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 8th Edition. Ed. M.H. Abrams. Thomson Wadsworth.

SATIRE

Satire can be described as the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn, or indignation. It differs from the *comic* in that comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end in itself, while satire derides; that is, it uses laughter as a weapon, and against a butt that exists outside the work itself. . . . Satire has usually been justified by those who practice it as a corrective of human vice and folly . . . Its frequent claim (not always borne out in the practice) has been to ridicule the failing rather than the individual, and to limit its ridicule to corrigible faults, excluding those for which a person is not responsible. . . .

Satire occurs as an incidental element within many works whose overall mode is not satiric – in a certain character or situation, or in an interpolated passage of ironic commentary on some aspect of the human condition or of contemporary society. But for some literary writings, verse or prose, the attempt to diminish a subject by ridicule is the primary organizing principle, and these works constitute the formal *genre* labeled “satires.” [One such sub-genre within satire is as follows and applies to *The Monk*:]

2. **Indirect Satire** is cast in some other literary form than that of direct address to the reader. The most common indirect form is that of a fictional narrative, in which the objects of the satire are characters who make themselves and their opinions ridiculous or obnoxious by what they think, say, and do, and are sometimes made even more ridiculous by the author’s comments and narrative style

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PARODY

Parody (n.) 1. a. A literary composition modelled on and imitating another work, esp. a composition in which the characteristic style and themes of a particular author or genre are satirized by being applied to inappropriate or unlikely subjects, or are otherwise exaggerated for comic effect. In later use extended to similar imitations in other artistic fields, as music, painting, film, etc.

1607 T. WALKINGTON *Optick Glasse* v. 35 All which in a parode, imitating Virgil wee may set downe. **1616** B. JONSON *Every Man in his Humor* (rev. ed.) V. v. 26 in Wks. I, Clem. [reads some poetry] How? this is stolne! E. Kn. A Parodie! a parodie! to make it absurder then it was. **1693** DRYDEN *Disc. conc. Satire* in tr. Juvenal *Satires* p. xx, From some Fragments of the Silli..we may find, that they were Satyrique Poems, full of Parodies; that is, of Verses patch'd up from great Poets, and turn'd into another Sence than their Author intended them. **1774** J. BRYANT *New Syst.* II. 132 (note) The history of Aristæus is nearly a parody of the histories of Orpheus and Cadmus. **1791** T. PAINE *Rights of Man* I. 22 But if the age of aristocracy..should fall..Mr Burke, the trumpeter of the Order, may continue his parody to the end, and finish with exclaiming, 'Othello's occupation's gone!' **1803** *Ann. Rev.* 1 383/1 The singularity of the parody has given to such notes a selling value analogous to current value. **1875** B. JOWETT tr. *Plato Dialogues* (ed. 2) IV. 134 The derivations in the *Cratylus*..are a parody of some contemporary Sophist. **1910** *Encycl. Brit.* I. 211/2 Adolphus was called to the bar in 1822, and his *Circuiteers*, an *Eclogue*, is a parody of the style of two of his colleagues on the northern circuit. **1958** *Daily Mail* 19 July 8/8 Parody of a French film sequence set in a sleezy bistro. **1977** *Listener* 13 Oct. 481/2 The songs are pleasant parodies of Nashville, of torch songs and even of grand opera. **2003** *Washington Post* 18 Feb. A25/4, I produced a ribald parody..which not only was published but won an award.

Parody (v.) 2. trans. In extended use: to imitate in a way that is a parody; esp. to copy or mimic for comic or derisive effect; to make fun of, satirize.

1801 R. SOUTHEY *Thalaba* IX. (note), I could show that it is the trick of Beelzebub to parody the costume of religion. **1869** J. E. T. ROGERS in *A. Smith Inq. Wealth of Nations* (new ed.) I. Pref. p. xx, After his death, his [sc. Pitt's] finance was parodied by incapable successors. **1878** J. E. A. BROWN in *Sunday Mag.* Dec. 42 Children of the period, who parody the ways and the worldliness of men and women. **1927** V. WOOLF *To Lighthouse* I. iii. 27 All these young men parodied her husband, she reflected; he said it would rain; they said it would be a positive tornado. **1954** G. GREENE *Twenty-one Stories* 223 A class world that you could still see parodied at the Wormsley Common Empire by a man wearing a top hat and a monocle, with a haw-haw accent. **1980** E. BLISHEN *Nest of Teachers* II. xi. 122, I realised that, in the attempt to convince myself that I was a teacher, I was parodying the men who taught me. **2002** *Washington Post* 8 Apr. C2/3 The glib slimeballs whom Newhart manages to parody without merely ridiculing.