

<p>Jonathan Swift (Nov. 30, 1667 – Oct. 19, 1745)</p> <p>Dean of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin</p> <p>Two essays: “A Short View of the State of Ireland” (written 1727, pub. 1728) “A Modest Proposal” (1729)</p> <p>[Both are available on the Gutenberg Project Website: http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/37156</p>	<p>Reading Group at Irish Culture Center and McClelland Library, Central Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona.</p> <p>Meeting Site: Norton Room, basement of McClelland Library, Saturday, September 24 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM</p> <p>Masks are not required, but individuals should determine their own level of comfort in this regard.</p>
---	---

Discussion Guide:

What do you know about Swift and his writings from your experiences in high school and college? What other works have you read by Swift?

What purpose does he have for writing “A Short View of the State of Ireland”?

What is the “modest proposal” that he makes in the essay by that title?

This is one of the great satires of English literature. What do you understand “satire” to mean? Why would he select this genre?

How do you think Swift feels about Ireland? Would you call him a loyal Irishman?

“A Modest Proposal”: This essay follows a strict format, learned by schoolboys in their Latin classes. Can you identify these parts?

- Exordium—states nature of problem and purpose of present proposal
- Narratio—statement of proposal
- Formal Digression—considers and rejects one refinement of the proposal
- Confirmatio—enumerate advantages of proposal
- Rufutatio—Attempts to refute possible objections to proposal
- Peroratio—summarizes strongest argument and disclaims personal interest or gain

Using the essay as evidence, describe the narrator (the one making the proposal).

Poetry: We are looking at one of Swift’s poems today: “A Description of a City Shower” (1710). I will bring copies, but you can probably find it in a collection of Swift’s works or a college anthology for the period. It is one of his popular poems.

Looking ahead→→→Our selection for October takes us into the 18th century theatre. We will read The Rivals by Thomas Sheridan. This work is available in individual texts and in collections of drama. (There’s also a YouTube performance.) The study guide will be available on the website in early October.