**Vices and Follies**

**Vice (n):** any kind of anti-social behavior from moral depravity and corruption (ex. prostitution) to a habitual and trivial defect or shortcoming (ex. nose-picking). Because it covers everything from outright wickedness to petty foibles, almost all humans suffer from some kind of vice; thus, the satirist is never at a loss for material.

**Folly (*n*):** a lack of common sense, prudence, and foresight. (*ex.* The folly of man is that he doesn’t understand that history repeats itself). “Folly” and “fool” come from the same French medieval root, *fol*. The good satirist knows that everyone, even the satirist himself, in time will do something really stupid/fo☺lish.

***The Seven Deadly Sins:***

*1. Pride/arrogance/hubris*

*2. Avarice (greed)*

*3. Wrath (anger, violence, sullenness/sulking)*

*4. Sloth (laziness, indolence, slovenliness, sloppiness)*

*5. Lust*

*6. Envy*

*7. Gluttony (excessive love of material comforts, food, drink, etc.)*

**Other Vices and Follies:**

Stupidity

Gullibility

Poor decision making

Narrow mindedness

Intolerance/prejudice

Pettiness

Careless use of language

Lack of self-control

Indecisiveness

Shallow flirtatiousness

Vanity/conceit/egoism

Self-centeredness

Apathy

Callousness

Selfishness

Corruption

Vice

Wastefulness

Hypocrisy

Careless spending

Dishonesty

Irresponsibility

Excess of any kind

Willful ignorance

Timidity

Prudery

Crime

Boorishness

Rudeness

Gross conduct

Silliness

Immaturity

Stubbornness

***Robert Harris “The Purpose and Method of Satire”***

“The best satire does not seek to do harm or damage by its ridicule, unless we speak of damage to the structure of vice, but rather it seeks to create a shock of recognition and to make vice repulsive so that the vice will be expunged from the person or society under attack or from the person or society intended to benefit by the attack (regardless of who is the immediate object of attack); whenever possible this shock of recognition is to be conveyed through laughter or wit: the formula for satire is one of honey and medicine. Far from being simply destructive, satire is implicitly constructive, and the satirists themselves, whom I trust concerning such matters, often depict themselves as such constructive critics.

"Since social pressure seems to be one of the few forces to which fools and knaves will bow, the satirist can more effectively operate by enlisting the readers of the satire to aid him in bringing behavior back in line with publicized values. The satirist by himself is virtually impotent to change the vicious behavior of any particular target, for the satirist as himself is just another small, opinionated prude, and is easily dismissed by any remark that might pass for wit. The target must correct himself when he discovers he is under attack, or he must be driven to correct his behavior when hundreds of his peers join the satirist in ridiculing him or by ostracizing him from their society...”

“But social pressure cannot operate when the satire is aimed at widespread folly or vice, as when a whole country or class joins in a universal debauchery; in such cases the reader himself is the target. When the reader is aggressed, he must be moved to change or correct himself by embarrassment for or shock at recognition of his guilt: his crimes must be presented in such a way that they appear truly odious to him, bringing about a willing change (as opposed to the forceful change of the knave).

“This general satire, aimed at many, is more common and more important than specific attacks on single persons, since the satirist's ideal is the reformation or regeneration of a whole society. The general correction of vice is the primary aim because the satirist can live with a few very evil men more easily than he can with ten thousand somewhat less evil men who are pulling his world toward doom.”