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Section C-Blue

The Spectator

Through *Spectator No. 275* and *Spectator No. 281*, Joseph Addison attempted to reform society. In these works of fiction, Addison describes his experience of attending the dissection of a Beau's head and of a coquet's heart in a wild dream. In order to bring attention to his personal views of society, Addison employs several types of satiric techniques, but concentrates on using reversal, whereby he presents the opposite of normal order to convey his views on the scientific method, human emotion, and the lust for extravagance.

Addison uses reversal in *Spectator No. 281* to mock the scientific method by presenting the opposite of normal order to the opposite of the expected audience. Throughout the article, he recounts several experiments that he and others conducted to find the true nature of the heart. Addison satirizes the first experiment, in which the coquet's liquor was used to measure sensibility, by presenting facts in a non-parallel, non-normal manner and by showing the incongruity between a thermometer and a sensibilimeter. The second experiment, whereby the coquet's heart was weighed, was satirized by reversal in the fact that the author "did not wonder at" the heart's "extremely light" weight. At the end of this article, Addison satirizes the third experiment, where the heart was burned, by exaggerating the events that occurred. Such experiments show that the scientific method was mocked using reversal; however, the author continues to call for change by reversing the intended audience. In general, this piece of writing was aimed at the reformation of coquets; therefore, the intended audience is most likely

coquets. However, in the eighteenth century, the common stereotype was that upper class men were more suited for science and thinking than upper class women were; thus, the intended audience to bring attention to the scientific method would be the beaux. Because these experiments are exclusive to the coquet's heart, it is clear that the author reversed the audience of the writing by bringing attention to the scientific method in *Spectator No. 281* instead of *Spectator No. 275*.

The author also uses reversal by presenting to the opposite of the expected audience when he describes the contents of the Beau's brain. Addison informs the reader that "ribbons, lace, and embroidery" line the beau's forehead. Because people interact facing each other, the first thing that others see would be the extravagance of the beau. In general, *Spectator No. 275* calls for reform of the beau; thus, beaux are the intended audience. Based on the common stereotype that a coquet was considered more extravagant than a beau was, the author would achieve the most reform with an audience of coquets. Clearly, a coquet is not the intended audience because there is no mention of the coquet's extravagance. Because Addison presented his views to the opposite of the expected audience, it is evident that the author uses reversal to satirize extravagance.

Another way that Addison shows reversal is through his depiction of love as it relates to both the beau and the coquet. It is clear that the coquet loved the beau because the beau was "in the very middle of the heart." On the other hand, the author did not indicate that the beau explicitly loved the coquet. At the time, the common view was that the upper class men were more obsessed with love than upper class women were. Addison proves this because he satirizes the beau by indicating that the beau is a

womanizer; also, the beau's brain was filled with love letters, flatteries, and lust. The author makes a satirical statement that the coquet is too focused on love, but the common view of the beau and coquet suggests that the beau is too focused on love. Because the statement should be made to an audience of beaus, the author clearly used the satirical technique of reversal because the statement was made to the audience of a coquet.

In both *Spectator No. 275* and *Spectator No. 281*, Addison uses reversal as a method of satirizing his content. He achieves reversal on two levels. First, he reverses the personality of the common person to portray the characteristics of the beau or coquet. Second, he reverses the audience by presenting his satiric views to the opposite of the expected audience. The author uses reversal, in addition to other satirical techniques, to convey his call for reform.