

satirists identify in the world something or someone that is both unattractive and curiously or dangerously like them, or like the culture or subculture that they identify with or speak for, or sympathetic even as it is repellent—something, then, that is *not alien enough*. (41)

An easy way to illustrate the kind of identification Bogel speaks of is to recount Matt Groening's explanation of his inspiration for Homer. As much mock-heroic mileage as we wish to squeeze out of Péré Simpson's name, the simple fact is that Homer Groening is Matt's father, and Matt has been very forthright in confiding that he based the whole Simpson family around his own. Similarly, in a BBC documentary of the show, entitled "Goin' Down to South Park," Parker and Stone have admitted that, although Kyle and Stan were originally conceived as their creators' animated selves, they have since come to accept that they are much more like Cartman, "big, fat bastards," as Stone puts it. This is saying much, considering that both Homer and Cartman are easily the most obvious satiric characters in both shows, and they share much in common. Both represent the vices of gluttony, greed, selfishness, and sloth, among others. Our culture's willingness to wear these characters' likenesses suggests that a similar kind of identification with the satirized is at work. As Bogel redefines it, "Satire . . . is a rhetorical means to the production of difference in the face of a potentially compromising similarity, not the articulation of differences already securely in place" (42). And maybe, just maybe, this helps to explain why my students "got" the analogy between Augustan and contemporary animated satire because if Bogel is right, and I think he is, then the process of negotiating satiric difference is similar in any case.

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