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Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), London, Longman, 1972

As I ought to have understood human nature much better than I supposed it possible for my master to do, so it was easy to apply the character he gave of the *Yahoos* to myself and my countrymen, and I believed I could yet make farther discoveries from my own observation.

5 I therefore often begged his favour to let me go among the herds of *Yahoos* in the neighbourhood, to which he always very graciously consented, being perfectly convinced that the hatred I bore those brutes would never suffer me to be corrupted by them; and his honour ordered one of his servants, a strong sorrel nag,<sup>†</sup> very honest and goodnatured,

10 to be my guard, without whose protection I durst not undertake such adventures. For I have already told the reader how much I was pestered by those odious animals upon my first arrival. And I afterwards failed very narrowly three or four times of falling into their clutches, when I happened to stray at any distance without my hanger. And I have

15 reason to believe they had some imagination that I was of their own species, which I often assisted myself, by stripping up my sleeves, and showing my naked arms and breast in their sight, when my protector was with me. At which times they would approach as near as they durst, and imitate my actions after the manner of monkeys, but ever

20 with great signs of hatred, as a tame jackdaw with cap and stockings is always persecuted by the wild ones, when he happens to be got among them.

They are prodigiously nimble from their infancy; however, I once caught a young male of three years old, and endeavoured by all marks

25 of tenderness to make it quiet; but the little imp fell a squalling and scratching, and biting with such violence, that I was forced to let it go, and it was high time, for a whole troop of old ones came about us at the noise, but finding the cub was safe (for away it ran) and my sorrel nag being by, they durst not venture near us. I observed the young animal's flesh to smell very rank, and the stink was somewhat between

30 a weasel and a fox, but much more disagreeable. I forgot another circumstance (and perhaps I might have the reader's pardon, if it were wholly omitted) that while I held the odious vermin in my hands, it voided its filthy excrements of a yellow liquid substance, all over my

35 clothes; but by good fortune there was a small brook hard by, where I washed myself as clean as I could, although I durst not come into my master's presence, until I were sufficiently aired.

By what I could discover, the *Yahoos* appear to be the most unteachable of all animals, their capacities never reaching higher than

40 to draw or carry burthens. Yet I am of opinion this defect ariseth chiefly from a perverse, restive disposition. For they are cunning, malicious, treacherous and revengeful. They are strong and hardy, but of a cowardly spirit, and by consequence, insolent, abject, and cruel. It is observed, that the red-haired of both sexes are more libidinous and

45 mischievous than the rest, whom yet they much exceed in strength and activity.

The *Houyhnhnms* keep the *Yahoos* for present use in huts not far from the house; but the rest are sent abroad to certain fields, where they dig up roots, eat several kinds of herbs, and search about for

50 carrion, or sometimes catch weasels and *Lubimubs* (a sort of wild rat) which they greedily devour. Nature hath taught them to dig deep holes with their nails on the side of a rising ground, wherein they lie by themselves, only the kennels of the females are larger, sufficient to hold two or three cubs.

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55 They swim from their infancy like frogs, and are able to continue long under water, where they often take fish, which the females carry home to their young. And upon this occasion, I hope the reader will pardon my relating an odd adventure.

60 Being one day abroad with my protector the sorrel nag, and the weather exceeding hot, I entreated him to let me bathe in a river that was near. He consented, and I immediately stripped myself stark naked, and went down softly into the stream. It happened that a young female *Yaboo* standing behind a bank saw the whole proceeding, and enflamed by desire, as the nag and I conjectured, came running with all speed, and leaped into the water within five yards of the place where I bathed. 65 I was never in my life so terribly frightened; the nag was grazing at some distance, not suspecting any harm. She embraced me after a most fulsome manner; I roared as loud as I could, and the nag came galloping towards me, whereupon she quitted her grasp with the utmost 70 reluctance, and leaped upon the opposite bank, where she stood gazing and howling all the time I was putting on my clothes.

This was matter of diversion to my master and his family, as well as of mortification to myself. For now I could no longer deny that I was a real *Yaboo*, in every limb and feature, since the females had a natural 75 propensity to me as one of their own species: neither was the hair of this brute of a red colour, (which might have been some excuse for an appetite a little irregular) but black as a sloe, and her countenance did not make an appearance altogether so hideous as the rest of the kind; for, I think, she could not be above eleven years old.

80 Having lived three years in this country, the reader I suppose will expect that I should, like other travellers, give him some account of the manners and customs of its inhabitants, which it was indeed my principal study to learn.

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Francis Bacon, *The Essays or Counsels,  
Civil and Moral, of Francis Ld Verulam  
Viscount St Albans*, 1625

Of Discourse

4 SOME, in their discourse, desire rather commendation of wit, in  
 being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment, in discerning  
 what is true; as if it were a praise, to know what might be said, and  
 not, what should be thought. Some have certain common places, and  
 5 themes, wherein they are good and want variety; which kind of  
 poverty is for the most part tedious, and when it is once perceived,  
 ridiculous. The honorablest part of talk, is to give the occasion; and  
 again to moderate, and pass to somewhat else; for then a man leads  
 the dance. It is good, in discourse and speech of conversation, to vary  
 10 and intermingle speech of the present occasion, with arguments, tales  
 with reasons, asking of questions, with telling of opinions, and jest  
 with earnest: for it is a dull thing to tire, and, as we say now, to jade,  
 any thing too far. As for jest, there be certain things, which ought to  
 be privileged from it; namely, religion, matters of state, great  
 15 persons, any man's present business of importance, and any case that  
 deserveth pity. Yet there be some, that think their wits have been  
 asleep, except they dart out somewhat that is piquant, and to the  
 quick. That is a vein which would be bridled: Parce, puer, stimulis, et  
 fortius utere loris. And generally, men ought to find the difference,  
 20 between saltness and bitterness. Certainly, he that hath a satirical  
 vein, as he maketh others afraid of his wit, so he had need be afraid  
 of others' memory. He that questioneth much, shall learn much, and  
 content much; but especially, if he apply his questions to the skill of  
 the persons whom he asketh; for he shall give them occasion, to  
 25 please themselves in speaking, and himself shall continually gather  
 knowledge. But let his questions not be troublesome; for that is fit for  
 a poser. And let him be sure to leave other men, their turns to speak.

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Nay, if there be any, that would reign and take up all the time, let him find means to take them off, and to bring others on; as musicians use  
30 to do, with those that dance too long galliards. If you dissemble, sometimes, your knowledge of that you are thought to know, you shall be thought, another time, to know that you know not. Speech of a man's self ought to be seildom, and well chosen. I knew one, was wont to say in scorn, He must needs be a wise man, he speaks so  
35 much of himself: and there is but one case, wherein a man may commend himself with good grace; and that is in commending virtue in another; especially if it be such a virtue, whereunto himself pretendeth. Speech of touch towards others, should be sparingly used; for discourse ought to be as a field, without coming home to  
40 any man. I knew two noblemen, of the west part of England, whereof the one was given to scoff, but kept ever royal cheer in his house; the other would ask, of those that had been at the other's table, Tell truly, was there never a flout or dry blow given? To which the guest would answer, Such and such a thing passed. The lord would say, I thought,  
45 he would mar a good dinner. Discretion of speech, is more than eloquence; and to speak agreeably to him, with whom we deal, is more than to speak in good words, or in good order. A good continued speech, without a good speech of interlocution, shows slowness: and a good reply or second speech, without a good settled  
50 speech, showeth shallowness and weakness. As we see in beasts, that those that are weakest in the course, are yet nimblest in the turn; as it is betwixt the greyhound and the hare. To use too many circumstances, ere one come to the matter, is wearisome; to use none at all, is blunt.

George CRUIKSHANK, *Inconveniences of a Crowded Drawing Room*, 1818, Andrew Edmunds,  
London, 272 x 375 mm

