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## Oryx And Crake By Margaret Atwood: Satiric Vision Of A Bioengineered Posthuman Future

Oryx and Crake, written by Margaret Atwood, is a speculative dystopian novel that projects its readers into the near future. In the middle of chapter 12, the passage, from the end of page 293 to the end of page and 294, has Jimmy starting his new job at RejoovenEsense, a pharmaceutical company where Crake is now the CEO. On Jimmy's first day, Crake gives Jimmy a tour of his workplace and also introduces the BlyssPluss Pill to Jimmy for the first time. According to Crake, this pill would have protected users against STDs, provide enhanced physical abilities for sexual activity, and would prolong one's youth.

The message Atwood is trying to portray in the following passage is how corporations have an interest in gaining profit through the commodification of anything and everything. With corporations lacking moral or ethical considerations, the corporations freely exploit people's insecurities and weaknesses to sell sex, beauty, health, and the promise of happiness. Her speculations as to the extent to which corporations have power over people suggest that eventually, corporatocracy will destroy the world in which we live.

Throughout the novel, capitalistic society is common throughout the book, describing the implications of corporate governance on the lives of the pleeblanders and compounders. In a previous chapter, *Roses*, Oryx describes how her life has been commodified in regards to her brother having to find more profitable ways to earn money. The insecurity of sexual desires by the men that fall for Oryx is commodified by Uncle En. This is not the first time that the insecurities of their society have been exploited by corporate powers. Commodification has been exemplified through private companies such as *organic* and *NooSkins*, who exploited the societal desire for immortality, and *AnooYoo*, which capitalized on the desire to look beautiful.

The theme statement in regards to our passage is how corporations are profiting upon the insecurities of their society and justify such exploitations with science without any ethical consideration and the arguments to support such statements are that firstly, the ethical considerations are diminishing in the corporate world through commodification. This has been exemplified through the use of Situational Irony and contrasting effects of Euphemism and Denotation. The second argument to support our statement is that The cruel dynamic between corporations and consumers emphasizes the corporation's manipulative intent which has been exemplified through the use of Tone and the utilization of complex Scientific Jargon.

In our passage, the implementation of situational irony was evident through the BlyssPluss pill, which was marketed as a medication that would protect against any and all sexually transmitted diseases, boost sexual energy, prolong youth, and act as a one-time birth control pill. Its logic was to "eliminate the external causes of death" which Crake explained to be factors such as war, contagious diseases, and overpopulation, as they all lead to "environmental degradation and poor nutrition". By marketing BlyssPluss to have desirable attributes of immortality and enhanced sexual abilities, Crake was able to manipulate the population to consume the pill and indeed it did as it was sold by the millions.

At first, the implications of the pills instantly lowered the population by preventing further

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reproduction by sexual intercourse. By doing this, Crake was portrayed to be “altruistic” in his behavior by allowing for fewer people to reap the most possible benefits of an environment that were already dwindling in natural resources. Yet, what Jimmy and the public were unaware of was Crake’s unethical choice of implementing a virus within the pill, which was set to destroy the entire population. Therefore ironically, Crake’s marketed immortality.

It was evident that Atwood’s utilization of situational irony within the passage was important to help the audience understand what had been started, and compare it to the difference of what actually transpires. This is evident through Crake’s marketing of the pill, stating that the pill would give users characteristics of immortality, in order to appeal to their desires but ultimately ended up killing everyone.

Furthermore, the utilization of irony emphasizes the tragedy that persists within the society of Oryx and Crake. The extent to which society is dependent upon achieving immortality puts them in a vulnerable position and susceptible to the ill intentions of corporations. Such intentions are due to the ignorance of scientists when disregarding the dangerous outcomes of their creation and the effects it has on humans.

The recurrence of private corporations manipulating consumers is meant to show the lack of ethical considerations in this dystopian society. HealthWyzer for example depicts how corporations use persuasive language in order to preserve their high profits. However, Atwood cleverly uses the literary devices of euphemism and denotation to expose how corporations, in this passage, unethically conceal negative impacts to convince people to buy their products.

There is evidence of this motif in the passage when Crake concludes the tour for Jimmy by saying that the BlyssPluss Pill is a “sure-fire, one-time-does-it-all birth control pill”. The constant reassurance that is given with “sure-fire” and “one-time-does-it-all”, illustrates that the product provides extensive benefits. This depicts Crake’s beliefs towards the technology that he has developed and how he conforms to his powerful corporate role to convince consumers to purchase the product. This contradicts Crake’s usual use of straightforward and scientific language as he normally relies on facts or simple language that is not very imaginative to prove his point.