

## **Public Response to Don Juan, Cantos I and II**

Given the unusual style of writing on display in *Don Juan*, I am wondering how well it was received by the public upon its release. As our textbook says, Cantos 1 and 2 were originally published together anonymously in 1819 (716).

Lord Byron was already at this point a popular and regarded writer, but removing his name from the work certainly altered the way it was received. Did some readers intuit that it was his piece? Because there were growing interests in the poets themselves—a development which apparently Lord Byron had much to do with—did some readers disregard and/or discount *Don Juan*? When later it became known that *Don Juan* had in fact been penned by Lord Byron, to what extents did people's perceptions and criticisms change?

### **Re: Week 4 Discussion**

*Seems to me perhaps Lord Byron had an issue when it comes to dealing with women. Perhaps he was hurt badly by one in his younger days? (His mom???) From there on out he decided it might be best to treat women as things, instead of treating them as people....*

*He had major issues when it came to dealing with women. It would be interesting to see where the original hurt came from, where all the anger and issues stemmed from within him. From what I can gather he seemed to view women as objects....*

Not to turn this into a psychological discussion, but where are you getting this information about Lord Byron treating women poorly? Did you forget about some of our readings, particularly *She walks in beauty*? This does not sound very much like the person whom some of you are describing. Why would he write something like this if he didn't authentically appreciate women?

In Canto I of *Don Juan*, I suspect that he is giving a personal account of his own experiences and upbringing through this new character. I would even venture to say that it is his way of tackling the subject of his promiscuities.

As Greg has mentioned, all he did was have lots of sexual partners, or one night stands. That does not automatically mean that he was a womanizer, misogynist, player, or whatever. It just means that he had a good time. Perhaps the women he was with had a good time as well.

Maybe it's unusual to have that many sexual partners, but this doesn't translate by itself into a particular kind of personality, nor psychological tendency.

### **Re: question**

*If Byron's autobiographical character were to end up going to hell (and I'm suspicious that Byron would get him off the hook somehow) it wouldn't be to grieve and suffer for his actions; rather to make the character a tragic, brooding figure, reflecting on the unfairness of the mores of religion/society. Just a theory.*

Nicely put! Don Juan might be going to somebody else's Hell, but not his own.

How far have you gotten in reading the cantos? I would love to read more than what was assigned, but I haven't the time right now, with my other classes.

**Re: question**

*he may have stated that because it was the "proper thing to do" but otherwise, i think he enjoyed his lifestyle and continued to do whatever he wanted.*

Yeah, but he might have also reflected on his decisions from time to time and thought to himself, "I'm having too much fun..."

He probably wasn't accepted so well in certain crowds, either. Other Lords and people with similar titles likely did not respond endearingly to his gallantries.

**Side Topic: An Interesting Observation About Lord Byron Posts**

Isn't it funny that, similarly to people of his time, many of us are talking about Lord Byron the person as much or more than we are talking about his poetry?

Our conversations have drifted from English and poetry into gossip and sex!