

Neoclassical Period (1660-1785)

- called Age of Reason as people begin asking *Why?* and seeking proof and evidence
- scientific discoveries lead to questioning of religion and beliefs
- appreciation of the mind and reason in contrast to the body and instinct
- time of emotional restraint and focus on logic, balance, and order
- discussion of the dualistic and imperfect nature of mankind
- criticism of passion, desire, and instinct as human flaws
- **satires written to ridicule human weakness and inspire social reform**
- essays written as means of political reform to allow citizens to make informed decisions